

No. 1.—EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

AFFLICTED AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN.

Children under State Guardianship.

DURING the year 1912 the number of children brought under the operation of the Industrial Schools Act was 405, the number discharged from control 238, and the number under control at the close of the year was 2,784—viz., 1,701 boys and 1,083 girls. There were 625 in residence at the eight Government institutions (of whom 142 and 65 were at the reformatories for boys and for girls respectively), and at the four private (Roman Catholic) schools there were 257 in residence.

Of the 951 children boarded out with foster-parents all but one belonged to Government industrial schools. The increase in the cost of living has made it necessary to reconsider the rates of payment to foster-parents, and it has been decided that from the beginning of the current year they are to be as follows: For children under one year old, 10s. a week; between twelve and eighteen months, 9s.; and then on to fourteen years, 8s.

Of the total number belonging 918 were in situations, with friends on probation, boarded without payment, or otherwise not a charge on the public funds; the remaining 1,866 being either boarded out, in residence at industrial schools, or paid for by the Government at other institutions. The parental contributions under orders of Court or agreement amounted to £7,828 15s. 8d., being at the rate of £4 3s. 11d. per head of the children maintained.

The net expenditure on account of industrial schools, exclusive of new buildings and works and purchase of property, increased during the year from £32,635 to £35,306, an increase which is very largely accounted for by the fact that 105 more children were maintained.

Tables I1 and I2 give details of the expenditure on industrial schools during the year.

	1911.	1912.
Payments by Charitable Aid Boards for maintenance of children who came into Government schools owing to indigence (included in the total sum recovered)	£10,681 5s. 4d.	£9,506 9s. 8d.
Number of children at the end of the year belonging to Government schools who were so paid for	713	766
Number maintained at the expense of Charitable Aid Boards at private industrial schools. .	106	117

The amount paid by the Charitable Aid Boards on account of children sent to the private industrial schools as indigent is not stated here, as the Managers of these schools make their claims upon the Boards without reference to the Education Department.

At the end of the year the total amount deposited in the Post Office Savings-bank on account of the earnings of young people who are now or were formerly under the control of industrial schools was £32,254 1s. 4d., the Government schools accounts having £28,539 14s. 6d. to credit, and the private (Roman Catholic) schools £3,714 6s. 10d. The withdrawals from these accounts during the year were £4,206 18s. 1d. and £143 8s. 3d. respectively. The disposal of these moneys is by law at the discretion of the Minister of Education, who may direct that payment be made either to the earner or to the Public Account. In practice payment is made to an applicant who after the control of the school has ceased shows evidence of good reputation, and that the proposed investment of the money is likely to be satisfactory. On the other hand, the Minister may order forfeiture of the money when a former inmate proves that he is unworthy of consideration.

INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION.

The number of foster-homes licensed under the Infants Act to maintain children for payment apart from their parents was 569; the number of children so maintained for the whole or part of the year was 1,228, of whom 487 were under one year old. There were twelve deaths, equal to 0·98 per cent. of the number in the homes.