

Tables I 1 and I 2 give particulars of the expenditure during the year.

	Year 1914-15.	Year 1915-16.
Payments by Charitable Aid Boards for maintenance of children who came into Government schools owing to indigence (included in the total sum recovered) ..	£11,383	£12,810
Number of children at the end of the year belonging to Government schools who were so paid for ..	769	855
Number maintained at the expense of Charitable Aid Boards at private industrial schools ..	164	167

The amount paid by the Charitable Aid Boards on account of children sent to the four 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.

Moneys are on deposit at interest in the Post Office Savings-bank that were earned by young people who are, or while under control were, in situations, or who, though it is advisable to have them in residence, are able to do work of more value than the cost of their keep. 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 character, and that the proposed investment of the money is likely to be to his lasting advantage.

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 £40,173, the Government schools accounts having £36,017 to credit, and the private (Roman Catholic) schools £4,156. The withdrawals from these accounts during the year were £3,275 and £335 respectively.

INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION.

The infant-life protection system deals with children under six years of age who are placed privately by their parents or guardians in foster-homes for payment. To a large extent they are the illegitimate children of young girls. They are not, as industrial-school children are, under State guardianship, but the homes of the foster-parents are licensed to receive children, the number that may be retained in the home being limited strictly by the license according to the capacity of the home.

The number of homes thus licensed was 941 at the end of the year, and the number of children in them during the year was 1,440, an increase of 17 over last year. Of this total the number of infants under one year was 325.

Fourteen children died, being 0·98 per cent. of those in the homes. Of that number ten were in foster-homes, and four in hospitals or nursing-homes to which they had been removed for treatment, so that the deaths in foster-homes represented 0·75 per cent. of the total number dealt with. This continued low death-rate reflects great credit on the district agents, their assistants, the local visitors, and the foster-parents. Generally speaking, the Department has reason to be well satisfied with the homes in which these infants are placed.

The expenditure for the year ended the 31st March, 1916, was £1,476, as follows :—

	£
Salaries of visiting nurses and local representatives	1,079
Travelling-expenses of district agents, visiting nurses, and local representatives	285
Payment to foster-parents for board of infants	77
Medical attendance	6
Office expenses (including rent) and sundries	69
	1,516
Less recoveries	40
Total	1,476

For the preceding year the amount was £1,374.