

persons concerned who, after passing out of the control of the schools, are able to give evidence of good character, provided that satisfactory investments for the money are shown.

INMATES AND PAST INMATES OF INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS WHO HAVE ENLISTED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE.

It is difficult to estimate the number of present and past inmates who have enlisted for active service. Some hundreds have left New Zealand with the Expeditionary Forces, in a great many cases as N.C.O.s, and some have gained commissions in the field. Almost every casualty list contains the names of some of these boys, who have either been wounded or have made the supreme sacrifice. As soon as it is possible to do so a list will be prepared of all the names of these lads. No greater proof of the value of the training given under the industrial-schools system is necessary when it is remembered that prior to commitment the majority of these lads have been at some time or other well on the road towards a socially inefficient or criminal career.

INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION.

The purpose of this system is to provide supervision and protection for infants boarded out by their parents or guardians in circumstances that might lead to their neglect or ill treatment. Unless licensed as a foster-parent, no person in consideration of any payment or reward may receive or take charge of an infant for the purpose of nursing or maintaining it apart from its parents or guardians for longer than seven consecutive days. "Infant" means a child under six years of age. Besides the district agents, duly appointed officers who are qualified nurses have full power to inspect the licensed homes. If necessary the Education Department may take over the maintenance of a child, recovering the cost from the parents or guardians, and the foster-parent's license may be revoked, the children in the home being otherwise provided for as the Minister may direct. Payment of a premium on the adoption of a child brings the case within the provisions of the Act.

The number of homes licensed at the end of the year was 1,054, and the total number of children in them during the year was 1,250, a decrease of 190 for the year. Of this total the number of infants under one year was 365. Seventeen children died, being 1·36 per cent. of those in the homes. Of that number, nine died in foster homes and eight in hospitals or nursing-homes to which they had been removed for treatment, so that the deaths in foster-homes represented 0·72 per cent. only of the total number dealt with.

The expenditure in connection with infant-life protection for the year ended 31st March, 1917, was £1,350; for the preceding year the amount was £1,476.

SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, SUMNER.

Number of pupils who returned to the school in February, 1916, after the summer vacation	98
Number admitted during the school year	14
Left during or at the end of the school year	14
Number remaining on the roll after the close of the school year	98

Thirteen pupils were removed from school during the year, having reached a satisfactory standard of education. One day-school pupil died at home from heart-disease. The length of the school life of deaf children varies from two to ten years.

The necessity for sending deaf children to be properly treated at as early an age as possible is imperative, since the process of educating the deaf must be slower and more arduous than in the case of normal children. Of the fourteen new pupils admitted during the year six had reached an average age of eight years and one month, one was ten years and four months, one eleven years and ten months, two fourteen years and seven months, and one fourteen years and eleven months; the difficulty of educating these children thus being greatly