

to very great advantage. By this means the Department hopes to enlist the services of local organizations, with the object of dealing with the various classes of children in their own districts and in their own homes, where possible, by private effort directed from the nearest child-welfare centre.

The total number of children under the supervision of the Child Welfare Branch at the 31st March, 1928, was 5,816, classed under the following headings:—

Boarded out, at service, in receiving-homes, &c.	..	..	..	4,014
Under supervision	..	..	..	493
Infant-life protection	..	..	..	902
Deaf children	..	..	..	122
Feeble-minded children	..	..	..	285
Total	..	..	..	5,816

The number of children committed to the care of the Superintendent during the year ended 31st March, 1928, was 592, classified according to reason for committal as follows: Indigent, 241; delinquency, 24; detrimental environments, 75; not under proper control, 120; accused or guilty of punishable offence, 81; neglected, 51; and in addition 38 were admitted by private arrangement (section 12, Child Welfare Act), while 14 were temporarily admitted, making a total of 644.

Classified according to age at the time of admission, the numbers are as follows: Under six months, 65; over six months and under one year, 33; from one to five years, 123; from five to ten years, 146; from ten to fourteen years, 143; and over fourteen years, 134: total, 644.

NUMBERS UNDER THE GUARDIANSHIP OF CHILD WELFARE BRANCH.

Fully 95 per cent. of the children under fifteen years of age under the guardianship of the Child Welfare Branch are placed in foster-homes in country districts, where they have the opportunity of becoming members of some family and of being gradually absorbed into the community.

So far as their scholastic education is concerned, the interest of the Child Welfare Branch in them is really similar to that of any guardian. They attend the public school and take part in the ordinary everyday activities of the community as does the child brought up by his own parents. The remaining 5 per cent. represents those who on account of anti-social habits or subnormality are not fit to be placed in foster-homes or allowed to attend the public school. For this small residue institutions are provided, with facilities for the training and education of the inmates along specialized lines suited as far as practicable to the peculiar needs of the individual cases.

At the end of the year there were 4,014 children under control (excluding those mentioned under separate headings below), and of these 266 were in residence at Government receiving-homes and probation homes (many of these, of course, only temporarily), training-farms, and training institutions, and 67 in the four private schools recognized under the Child Welfare Act; 1,981 children were boarded out in foster-homes, 902 were in situations, and 631 residing under license with relatives and friends. The remainder were in various private institutions.

Of the boarded-out children, 130 were over the age of fourteen years, of whom 78 are still attending primary schools, and 52 are receiving higher education (35 technical and 17 secondary).

The children over school age in employment number 758 males and 394 females (included in the total of 4,014). Of the males, 570 are farm-workers (201 skilled in dairy-work and cheesemaking, and 369 competent to milk and carry out general farm-work), 56 are apprentices (of which number some are receiving assistance), and 132 others are employed in various trades. Of the girls, there are 317 domestic workers, 42 factory employees, and 35 engaged in various employments, such as shop-assistants, nurses, dressmakers, &c.

SYSTEM OF SUPERVISION.

The number of cases dealt with by the Courts last year was 1,685, and of these 448 were placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers or brought under the "Big Brother" scheme as carried out by the Y.M.C.A. and the Roman Catholic authorities. The number actually admitted to institutions such as