

Numbers under Control.

At the end of the year there were 3,830 children under control (excluding those mentioned under separate headings below), and of these 136 were in residence at Government receiving-homes, probation homes, training-farms, and training institutions, and 167 in private industrial schools; 2,035 children were boarded out in foster-homes, 754 were in situations, and 477 residing under license with relatives and friends. The remainder were in various homes or institutions. Of the boarded-out children 120 are over the age of fourteen years and are still attending primary schools, 30 are receiving higher education (10 technical and 20 secondary), and a number are apprentices partly maintained by the State.

The children over school age in employment number 643 males and 350 females (included in the total of 3,830). Of the males, 496 are farm workers (18 skilled in dairy-work and cheesemaking and 478 competent to milk and carry out general farm-work), 36 are apprentices, and 111 others are employed in various trades. Of the girls there are 315 domestic workers, 14 apprentices, 21 factory employees, and 14 engaged in various employments such as shop-assistants, nurses, dress-makers, typists, kindergarten trainees, &c.

Juvenile Probation System.

The functions of Juvenile Probation Officers are to assist the Courts in ascertaining the full facts regarding parents, conditions of homes, and environment of all children brought under the notice of the police, to supervise and befriend any juveniles placed on probation by the various Magistrates, and to undertake, on the application of the parents, the supervision of any children who are inclined to become uncontrollable. In addition, all male inmates of industrial schools or training-farms placed in situations, or with relatives or friends, are supervised by the Juvenile Probation Officers. There were 1,121 cases dealt with by the Courts in the principal centres of population throughout the year, and of these only 412 were actually admitted to receiving-homes or training institutions, 249 were placed on probation and supervised in their own homes, and the remainder were dealt with generally in a summary manner not calling for supervision by Probation Officers.

Infant-life Protection and Adoption of Children.

At the end of the year there were 706 children under the age of six years maintained in 562 foster-homes. Of these 460 homes each had one child, 73 had two children each, and 20 homes had three each. The payments for the maintenance of each child ranged from 7s. 6d. to £2 2s. a week, but the average rate of payment was approximately 14s. a week.

Adoptions.

During the year 420 children were adopted, and in 39 of these cases premiums were received by the Department's agents and paid out at the rate of 15s. a week for each child concerned. Of the total number of children adopted, 73 were under the age of six months, 53 under twelve months, and 182 under the age of six years.

CARE AND TRAINING OF AFFLICTED CHILDREN.

School for the Deaf, Summer.

The pupils under instruction during the year numbered 148, and of these 36 were day pupils and 112 boarders.

In 1920 special day classes for partially deaf children and for stammerers were established in Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin, which have been continued with highly successful results, about 100 children being in attendance at the classes. Provision has also been made in these centres for night classes for the instruction of the adult deaf, 70 persons afflicted in this manner attending the classes in 1921.

During the winter vacation lectures on the principles and teachings of speech were delivered by the Director of the school to teachers and students in several of the centres of population.