

REPORTS ON SCHOOLS.

REPORT of the RECEIVING DÉPÔTS, Royal Park, for Year 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit my report on the operations of the dépôts for the year 1896. The health of the children has been very good, notwithstanding the crowded state of the Girls' Dépôt during the summer months, necessitating my asking for increased accommodation, and which I trust will be provided before the next hot weather sets in. Four deaths of infants occurred during the year. The conduct of all the inmates has been good, and the work done in the different divisions satisfactory.

I have great pleasure in acknowledging the kindness of the following ladies and gentlemen in imparting religious instructions at the Girls' Dépôt—viz., Rev. M. Whitton, Mr. Veal, the Misses Rae, Leitch, McMillan, and Wilson, from the Presbyterian Church, Brunswick, and Misses Simmons, and Maunsell, who come on Sunday afternoons. At the Boys' Dépôt the Rev. M. Whitton and Mr. and Miss Hannay have been most attentive, while the Roman Catholic children in both dépôts have been zealously attended by the Rev. O'Reilly and the Sisters of Mercy.

When the weather has permitted, the children have attended their respective places of worship. The members of the visiting committee were most attentive in their visits, and gave the children their usual annual treat. Mr. Peterson's gifts came as usual and were distributed, giving great pleasure to the recipients. I have also to thank the young ladies of the Presbyterian Church for their entertainment to the children, and to Mr. Hutchinson for his kind present of Christmas and New Year cards.

The Secretary,

JANE WILSON, Matron.

Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools.

REPORT of VISITING COMMITTEE on the RECEIVING DÉPÔTS, Royal Park, for Year 1896.

EARLY in the year there were several changes in the constitution of the committee, caused by the departure and resignation of Mesdames Adam and Bardin and Mr. Loudin. The committee bear their testimony to the care and devotion bestowed by them in their work of visitation during the past year, and desire specially to mention the valuable services of Mrs. Bardin, who acted as honorary secretary since the formation of the committee in 1890 till her severance, owing to her removal northwards, on 31st December, 1895. The appointment of Mesdames Camm, Field, and Fleming, and Messrs. William Howat and William Strong has enabled the visitation of the schools to be carried out regularly.

It is with great pleasure the committee has to report that the excellent order and management of the institution of previous years has been maintained. The internal cleanliness of every department and the surroundings of the buildings have been such as to stamp at once the care and diligence bestowed.

In the Boys' Dépôt very considerable and useful work has been done during the year. The aspect of the grounds are generally such that a visitor sees at once that the boys have been actively employed in useful work. The demeanour of the inmates of the schools has always been exemplary during visitation, and the reports concerning their conduct generally good.

The health of the children has received great attention, and, considering the nature of the cases often admitted, it is with thankfulness so many have been restored to health, and rescued from what would, in all human probability, have otherwise been a path of sorrow and sin.

The annual treat was given to the children early in the year, and was much enjoyed by every one able to take part in it, especially by those for whose benefit it was prepared. The committee cordially thank Miss Wilson and her assistants for the help given on the occasion.

The committee has always had full access to all the compartments of the dépôts, and every assistance has been given by the officers to insure a thorough inspection of the children and dormitories, and the greatest courtesy has been experienced without exception.

It is with pleasure the committee learn from time to time of the general good conduct and comfort regarding the wards of State sent out to service in the homes provided for them. Personal visitation by some members of the committee has also been satisfactory. The religious instructions by visitors to the institution has not been lost sight of, and the committee sincerely thank all the ladies and gentlemen who have so kindly carried out this most important work for the spiritual good of the inmates. The committee is, however, deeply impressed with the great need of a higher conscience in the community on the part of parents, in taking care of and training their own children in paths of purity and righteousness, and that they should, in a much larger measure, feel the responsibility concerning the welfare of their offspring.

On behalf of the Committee,

M. L. HUTCHINSON, Honorary Secretary.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, ABBOTSFORD.

I HAVE the honour to forward my report for the year ended 31st December, 1896.

During the year there has been very little sickness among the children. Two deaths occurred; the causes being heart disease and pneumonia. Very favourable reports have been received of most girls at service. Those far away in the country return for holidays from time to time as recompense for good behaviour. Those within easy distance come to visit about once a month. There was a general reunion of as many as possible of the girls who had left the institution, when all spent a pleasant afternoon and enjoyed a social repast before leaving.