

PAKENHAM REFORMATORY.

I HAVE the honour to report that the last year's work in this Home has been very successful in very many ways. During the year we received nineteen boys from the Royal Park, and have every reason to believe that a fair percentage of them will turn out well and appreciate the efforts made on their behalf. A few of those received during the year have shown extraordinary leanings to vice and crime, and consequently have caused the officials a good deal of care and worry; yet we are glad to say that in several of them there is a marked improvement.

Three boys have been allowed home on probation and are giving satisfaction. The general health of the lads has been excellent, there being only one sorrowful exception—viz., one of the boys accidentally ran a thorn into his ankle, and, although treated in the Melbourne Hospital, blood-poisoning set in, and he died in that institution. We buried him in the Heidelberg Cemetery, all the boys being present, and each placed a bouquet of flowers on the coffin of their late mate. A few lads are doing well at their situations. The greatest trouble to deal with is the restless dispositions of the lads, and their desire for the life of the city. Now and then an extra wave of feeling seems to sweep over them, and results in a few absconders; these we endeavour to have returned quickly, and the Home soon assumes its usual condition. We expect our next year's work to surpass anything of the past, as plans and schemes are now being prepared which will provide for giving the boys a thorough training in agriculture and dairying at our new reformatory farm for lads at Bayswater.

C. H. JEFFRIES.

MOUNT PARADISE FARM REFORMATORY.

SINCE starting, in September last, with two boys, I have gradually added to them until, on the 31st December, the number remaining in the school was five. The boys are taught all kinds of farm work, including ploughing, harrowing, potato-digging, chaff-cutting, &c., also fruit-picking, grading, packing, case-making, pruning, and spraying, which they like very much, and one coming on to the farm would never think that the boys were but a few weeks ago running about the streets of Melbourne. Their conduct in the past has been highly satisfactory, showing a great improvement in the demeanour of the lads under our care.

Even opportunity is taken of carrying on the boys' education, and instilling moral and religious principles into them. They are instructed in the "Christian doctrine" at home, and prizes are given for the best at catechism and school work, which encourages them to learn and forget their roving disposition. They are very contented, and some of the boys have been visited by their parents, who did not know them, they had grown so strong. The boys are allowed to ride and drive to mass, and are very trustworthy; also are visited at home by Father Lee, of Dandenong. Those placed at service are reported to be doing well. They are also all in perfect health.

J. J. MILLANE, Superintendent.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,500 copies), £7 11s. 6d.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1897.

Price 6d.]