

Of the 343 children living with relatives or friends at 31st March, 1950, 139 were attending school, 132 were in employment, and the remainder were either under school age or, for special reasons, unable to attend school.

#### COMMITTALS AND ADMISSIONS

During the year the Children's Courts committed to the care of the Child Welfare Superintendent 431 children, as compared with 440 during the previous year.

In 84 cases, as compared with 134 last year, children were, by voluntary agreement between the parents or guardians and the Child Welfare Superintendent, either admitted to institutions or otherwise taken under control of the Superintendent.

#### DISCHARGES FROM CONTROL

While the Superintendent may, where he considers it necessary, retain control of children committed to his care until they reach the age of twenty-one years, the large majority are, in fact, discharged several years before they reach that age. During the year, 559 children were discharged at an average age of sixteen years and nine months. As soon as the Superintendent is satisfied either that a State ward has reached the stage where he can manage his own affairs or that the full responsibility for his care and training can safely be assumed by his parents or other suitable persons, the Department relinquishes its control.

#### ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS

On notification by the Registrar of Births of illegitimate births, Child Welfare Officers make confidential inquiries to ascertain whether the child is satisfactorily provided for and, where necessary, assist the mother and her child. At 31st March, 1950, of the 1,848 such children whose births were notified during the year 778 were residing with their mothers, 43 were with other relatives, 470 were in registered foster-homes or nursing-homes, 239 had been adopted, and 32 had been committed to the care of the Child Welfare Superintendent.

#### INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION

As required by the Infants Act, 1908 (Part V), children under the age of six years boarded away from their parents for more than seven days must be in homes approved and registered by the Child Welfare Superintendent. At 31st March, 1950, there were 817 such children placed in 740 registered foster-homes.

#### ADOPTIONS

In order to assist the Courts in considering applications for adoption of children, Child Welfare Officers, when requested, make inquiries in respect of applications and furnish reports to the Courts. An analysis of the applications to adopt children and of the adoptions completed shows the following points of interest :—

- (a) Girls are usually preferred by applicants, although the actual numbers of adoptions completed show the numbers of children available of either sex ; for instance, of the total of 1,256 children adopted in the year ended 31st December, 1949, 659 were boys and 597 were girls.