

- (d.) *The Neglected Children's and Juvenile Offenders Act*, 1905, has provided for the establishment of Children's Courts throughout the State. The Act deals with the disposal of neglected and uncontrollable children and juvenile delinquents who come before the Courts. It contains provisions for the supervision of truant children, and for the introduction of machinery necessary to carry out the purposes of the Act.
- (e.) *The Public Instruction Act*, 1880.—The supervision of all children of school age is carried out by officers of the State Children's Relief Department, and action in regard to truancy and prosecutions for breaches of the compulsory clauses of the Public Instruction Act are undertaken.

(ii.) *General Supervision of Conditions of Infant Life*.—The principal functions of the State Children's Relief Department are as follows : (a.) Provision for sickly infants, with or without their mothers, at the homes at Paddington and Thirlmere. About twenty children are treated in each home. (b.) The compulsory attendance of guardians of infants, boarded out independently by their mothers under the Children's Protection Act, at the Metropolitan Hospital fortnightly, in order that the children in their charge may be systematically supervised by the doctors, and the development of ailments checked. (c.) A home for healthy babies, twenty in number, at Croydon, with their mothers, the object being to free the latter from the more or less contaminating influences of large institutions, and at the same time to protect the children from dangers of infection. (d.) The establishment of separate cottage homes for invalid children, according to their ailments, including special cottages for the scientific treatment of epileptic and feeble-minded children. (e.) The supervision of all children dealt with at the Children's Courts, with the exception of those sent to the training-ship "Sobraon," the Carpenterian Reformatory, and the Industrial School for Girls. A special aspect of the Board's work under this heading is the supervision of children released on probation, and of children committed to the Farm Home, Mittagong.

3. VICTORIA.—The conditions of infant life in Victoria are to some extent supervised by the Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools under the Neglected Children's Act, 1890, the Crimes Act, 1890, and the Infant-life Protection Act, 1907. In Melbourne the Lady Talbot Milk Institute was established in 1908 in order to provide a supply of pure milk for infants. In the first annual report of the Institute it is stated that out of about three hundred infants supplied with milk by the Institute during 1908-9 only eight died. Crèches have been established in many of the suburbs of Melbourne.

(i.) *The Neglected Children's Act*, 1890.—This Act provided for the establishment of receiving houses and probationary schools, and for the committal of neglected children to the care of the Department already referred to, or to approved private persons or institutions. Assistance is afforded to the Department by ladies' committees in finding suitable homes for boarded-out children, and in supervising these homes. A receiving depot has been established, and special schools are provided for boys who are backward in their education. A certain number of boys, who bear the best of characters, are sent to learn farming at the Rutherglen Viticultural College. During the year 1908 there were 1,240 children committed to the care of the Department. The total number of children who were a cost to the State at the end of the year 1908 was 4,163. During the same year 132 boys and 85 girls were placed in service.

(ii.) *The Crimes Act*, 1890, provided, *inter alia*, for the establishment of reformatory schools for convicted children. During the year 1908 there were fifty-two Court committals and ten transfers from gaol to reformatory schools.

(iii.) *The Infant-life Protection Act*, 1907.—This Act came into force on the 31st December, 1907, and all infants then in registered homes were transferred to the care of the Department. Provision is made for the inspection of registered homes, which are divided into districts, allotted to four inspectors. The Act does not provide for the registration or supervision of Maternity Homes. The number of children in registered homes at the end of 1908 was 304 ; the number of deaths during the year was 48. It is stated that this large number is in a great measure accounted for by the inability of the infants, most of whom are in an unsatisfactory state of health when received, to withstand the unusual heat that was experienced.

(iv.) *The Children's Court Act*, 1906.—This Act provides for the establishment of Children's Courts in every place in the State where a Court of Petty Sessions is appointed to be held. Any boy or girl under the age of seventeen years may be released by the Court on probation under the supervision of a Probation Officer, who may at any time bring before the Court any child under his supervision who has broken any of the terms of his probation. The Courts have power to commit children to the Neglected Children's Department or to reformatory schools.

4. QUEENSLAND.—The Infant-life Protection Act, 1905, is administered by the Commissioner of Police. This Act provides that, with certain exceptions, no person may receive, in consideration of any payment, into his house any infant under the age of three years for the purpose of nursing such infant apart from its parents for a longer period than forty-eight hours, or of adopting such infant, unless the person is registered as the occupier of the house and the house is registered as a nursing-home. Registration of adopted infants is compulsory, and notice of the birth or death of illegitimate infants must be given within three days. Police investigation occurs in the case of every illegitimate child born, whether the child be finally sent to a nursing-home, adopted, or taken charge of by parents or relatives.

At the end of the year 1908 there were 123 homes (of which 62 were in Brisbane) registered under the Act, the number of infants in these homes being 182. During the same year there were 113 prosecutions for breaches of the Act, convictions resulting in 112 cases.