

No. 4.—INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION.

Education Department, Wellington, 31st May, 1912.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

I SUBMIT the following report on the work of the Department in respect of infant-life protection for the year 1911.

It will be seen that the bulk of the infants were in foster-homes—that is, with women who have the motherly capacity, and the time and accommodation necessary to satisfy the Department's requirements for the license prescribed by the Act. The remainder were in various benevolent institutions, of which particulars are given below.

NUMBERS.

The number of infants in licensed foster-homes on the 31st December was 707, which is 27 more than there were at the beginning of the year. The individuals changed to a much greater extent than those figures indicate, however; the total number of individuals dealt with in connection with foster-homes during the year, by admissions, withdrawals, transfers, &c., being 1,183. The number placed in foster-homes was 48 more than in the previous year, and the number removed from the homes was 27 less.

In the institutions there were 427 at the end of the year, making in all a total of 1,134 infants being dealt with under the Act on the 31st December, 1911—an increase of 32 over the number on the books a year previously.

The following table exhibits the transactions of the year in respect of infants in licensed foster-homes :—

PARTICULARS OF ADMISSIONS TO AND REMOVALS FROM LICENSED FOSTER-HOMES DURING 1911.

	Under 6 Months.	Between 6 Months and 1 Year.	Between 1 and 2 Years.	Between 2 and 3 Years.	Between 3 and 4 Years.	Between 4 and 5 Years.	Between 5 and 6 Years.	Over 6 Years, and still in Foster-homes.	Total.
<i>Entered on the Books.</i>									
On the books at the beginning of the year	56	83	150	136	94	63	60	38	680
Placed in licensed homes during the year	246	60	76	39	30	15	24	..	490
Adopted with premium (exclusive of those already on the books)	8	1	1	1	..	1	1	..	13
Total	310	144	227	176	124	79	85	38	1,183
<i>Withdrawn from and remaining on the Books.</i>									
Removed from foster-homes by parents or guardians	41	42	92	53	48	16	21	10	323
Deaths	6	2	4	..	..	..	..	1	13
Adoptions from licensed homes without premiums	3	5	5	4	3	3	1	..	24
In homes to which exemption was granted	1	4	2	2	2	2	2	..	15
Brought under operation of the Industrial Schools Act	1	..	5	3	..	1	..	..	10
Written off the books for various causes	3	10	11	10	4	4	1	48	91
On the books at 31st December, 1911	73	87	151	110	108	79	59	40	707
Total	128	150	270	182	165	105	84	99	1,183

FOSTER-HOMES.

The 707 infants in foster-homes at the end of the year were distributed as follows :—

In 460 homes each having one ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	460
In 76 .. two ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	152
In 21 .. three ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	63
In 4 .. four ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
In 2 .. five ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
In 1 .. six ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6