

## Aboriginal Wards

A child may be admitted as a ward of the Board on application by a parent or guardian, or may be committed as such by a competent court.

The Aborigines Protection Act provides for the establishment of homes for the reception, maintenance, education and training of such wards. There are two homes at present operating, one at Kinchela for boys and the other at Cootamundra for girls.

The Kinchela Aboriginal Boys' Training Home, fourteen miles from Kempsey is for boys from five to seventeen years. At the end of 1959, fifty boys were in residence.

Fourteen boys were in attendance at the Kempsey High School and thirty at the school at the Home.

The health of inmates during the year was good.

Senior inmates are trained in the use of modern milking machines, farming machinery and equipment. They also receive instruction in poultry farming and market gardening.

The Cootamundra Home caters for boys of tender years and girls up to school leaving age. At the end of 1959, there were forty children in residence.

Health of the children was satisfactory and all received vaccine injections against Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough and Tetanus.

There were thirteen children enrolled in the High School at Cootamundra, and nineteen at the Public School.

From former inmates, there are ten girls in domestic employment in the district and one in training as a nurse at the Cootamundra District Hospital.

Authority is also given under the Act for a ward to be boarded out in a selected foster home and for an allowance to be paid in this regard. In addition, the foster parent is entitled to claim Child Endowment and to be recouped by the Board for medical and dental expenses incurred on behalf of the ward.

In most cases children who are committed as wards of the Board, are maintained until they reach sixteen years of age, approximately. They are then placed in employment and remain under regular supervision of Welfare Officers until they reach the age of eighteen years.

Committal action is never taken in the case of a destitute child, unless the neglect is such as to make removal from its own home necessary, and after every effort by a Welfare Officer to have the parents improve the living conditions of the home has proved abortive.

## Aboriginal Stations Generally

Sixteen Aboriginal Stations were maintained by the Board during the year, the population of each varying from 322 down to as low as 44. The average number of persons residing on a Station, however, was 180.

Each Station is under the supervision of a Manager, assisted by a Matron, with additional assistant staff on the larger Stations.

The population on stations has not varied much over the last three years, the total number of station residents being a little under 3,000. The number of ration recipients has fallen slightly.

Station residents are assisted to obtain employment, and encouraged to take work of a permanent nature as far as possible.

A medical treatment room is established on each station where minor ailments and injuries are attended to. On the coastal stations, all children receive regular treatment for the eradication of worms.



Mrs. Margaret Witt and Kay Castle, of Michelago