

confinement. They say that in Eire the unmarried girl who wishes her baby to be adopted has to stay for one or two years, without pay, in a Catholic institution.

There are two Magdalen Homes in Dublin, at Gloucester Street, and St. Mary's, Donnybrook. Girls may leave these Catholic Homes at will but efforts are made to retain them when possible. Regarding Protestant Homes there is Mrs. Smyllie's Home, known as the Bird's Nest at 19-20, York Road, Dun Laoghaire and there is the "Irish Church Mission" at No. 5, Townsend St. Dublin. At 112-116 Orwell Road, Rathgar, there is "The Bethany Home" open to girls in distress.

The proselytising influence of these homes has been largely negatived by the Home of the Legion of Mary - Regina Coeli - which caters for prostitutes and unmarried mothers irrespective of religion.

In England, some Irish girls

~~Some~~ come direct from Euston Station to the Crusade of Rescue. In some cases the Irish Catholic priest, to whom the girl told her condition, gives her five pounds and the following advice - "Go to England for your confinement. Leave your baby there to be adopted and return to Eire." That is charity because in Eire the girl who is known to have had an illegitimate child is the prey of every rascal in the parish. But this charity is done at the expense of English Catholics.

The Crusade of Rescue is a charitable society founded

in 1859 and incorporated in 1905. From the Administrator's Report for 1954 I quote -

"The Crusade of Rescue exists to save and protect the Faith of the deprived Catholic child; to this object all our energies are directed. We believe the deprived child by reason of its misfortune is in special danger. The child who has the good fortune to be brought up in a family, owes to its parents the first and most valuable religious lessons, the example which first shows the practice of our Faith in daily action and builds the foundations on which more detailed knowledge and practice will be built. If then we would save the Faith of children in our care, our first efforts must be to keep the family spirit in being. We have tried to do this in the past year, just as has always been done by the Crusade of Rescue. Each new case submitted to us has been carefully examined from this angle. If there is any family we do anything we can to keep it together. The background of children in our care is carefully reviewed, together with the circumstances of any home they may have, to discover what, if any, are the possibilities of reuniting the child with its family. We are conscious of criticism on occasions for refusing to take children into care but we honestly believe we are working on the right lines. We will certainly not refuse to take a child if other means of saving its Faith cannot be found.

As family life is so essential to establish the real

religious foundations in the life of the child, we have set out to replace it, as far as possible, where our children have lost their heritage. For this reason we consider our adoption work of paramount importance. To many children deprived of their own family and parents, especially those who are still babies, adoption does give a real home and family, providing the much needed parental affection and stable background. It is not just a question of putting the first child in the first family available but much work and careful consideration must be given to each case until, as far as possible, we see that the right home takes the right child. While, of course, every consideration is given to the adopting parents, the main concern is and must be the religious and material welfare of the child. We have placed 100 children for adoption during the past year, and reports to date show that all is going well with them. It is especially pleasing to note that 20 children were adopted by parents who have already adopted another of our children. In 19 cases the adopters have already children of their own and have been happy to open their family circle to welcome one of our babies.

The pleasure it gives us to be able to report that so many children have been placed in such good and happy homes, makes us sadly conscious of the much larger number of children for whom we have, so far, been unable to find suitable adopters. We cannot help feeling that the Catholic Community of this country as a whole is unaware of the great need of so many of

our deprived children. This is especially emphasized when we find that whereas for ten Catholic deprived children we have only one adopting couple, there are for every one non-Catholic deprived child some ten possible adopters. We cannot conceal the fact that many of our unmarried mothers, faced with the knowledge that the adoption of their child into a Catholic family may involve a long waiting period, are having their babies adopted by non-Catholics who, good as they may be, will not bring up these children in the Faith to which they have a right. We do all in our power to avert such a tragedy, but until we have many more Catholic adopters we cannot hope to be more successful. We are using every means known to us of making this need more widely known - extensive press advertising, church appeals and talks to Catholic Societies. We hope and pray that as this need becomes more widely known, Catholic families will find room in their homes and give these children the opportunity of growing up in the knowledge and love of Our Lord....."

"We have referred to the unmarried mother, whose care makes up a proportion of our work and is ^{the} responsibility of the Welfare Department. It is a matter for great concern that week by week large numbers of these girls seek the help of the Crusade. In one week recently no less than thirty-three unmarried mothers made application. Fortunately we are able to arrange for these girls to go to St. Pelagia's Home at

Highgate, St. Nicholas Mother and Baby Home at Highbury or Loreto House. The work done by the Sisters at the first two Homes and the Legion of Mary at the third is wonderful, but with the best will in the world, the numbers involved make it difficult to provide all the care we would desire. Even when we are able to deal successfully with the mother and rehabilitate her in daily life again, there remains the question of the child. However, many of these mothers decide to keep their babies, with few exceptions they are unable to look after them and must rely on the nursery of a foster mother. For most of them the latter is by far the best solution as the mother is enabled to be in close touch with her child and see it often. We have some 209 babies placed in this fashion but we need twice the number of foster mothers."

In that year the Crusade of Rescue had 322 children at Homes at Enfield and Feltham, and 184 children were boarded out at other Catholic Homes. The expenditure of the Crusade is one hundred thousand pounds per annum. The Salvage Department, 13 Blenheim Crescent, W.11, will send a motor van once a month to collect your waste newspapers and unwanted furniture, etc.

In conclusion here are the legitimate and illegitimate birth rates since 1950 for Scotland, for England and Wales,

and for Eire.

LEGITIMATE BIRTH RATE PER 1000 OF POPULATION.

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1953</u>	<u>1954</u>
SCOTLAND.	17.0	16.8	16.8	16.9	17.2
ENGLAND & (WALES.)	15.0	14.7	14.6	14.7	14.5 (1) Provisional.
EIRE.	20.86	20.70	21.37	20.79	20.65 (1) Provisional.

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTH RATE (PERCENTAGE OF LIVE BIRTHS)
PER 1000 OF POPULATION.

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1953</u>	<u>1954</u>
SCOTLAND.	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8
ENGLAND & (WALES.)	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7 (1) Provisional.
EIRE.	0.55	0.54	0.55	0.46	0.45 (1) Provisional.

In Eire the legitimate birth rate is higher and the illegitimate birth rate is lower than in the two other countries.

The Irish illegitimacy figures do not include the girls who come to England for their confinement

(1) Provisional