

1949
NEW ZEALAND

EDUCATION:

**CHILD WELFARE, STATE CARE OF CHILDREN, SPECIAL
SCHOOLS, AND INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION**

[In continuation of E-4, 1948]

Presented to Both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency

SIR,—

24th June, 1949.

In presenting my report on the work of the Child Welfare Division for the year ended 31st March, 1949, I refer those interested to E—4, 1946, for fuller information about the functions of the Division.

A development during the year, leading to an extension of the work of the Division, was the passing of the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1948, which primarily made legislative provision for the Superintendent of Child Welfare to assume the guardianship of the immigrant children who are being brought to this country under two official schemes. The first concerns children from the United Kingdom, whose settlement in New Zealand is the subject of arrangements between the Government of New Zealand and the parents or guardians of the children. These children will be placed by the Superintendent in the care of suitable persons to whom the guardianship may, in certain circumstances, be transferred after six months. The second scheme relates to refugee children ("displaced persons"), who are coming to New Zealand pursuant to an arrangement between the Government of New Zealand and the International Refugee Organization. These children will be available for adoption.

Now that the schemes have been started, it is anticipated that substantial numbers of British children will be coming to this country in small parties spaced at fairly regular intervals, but indications are that only a very small number of refugee children are available for settlement here.

Some hundreds of people have submitted applications to take immigrant children into their homes. The applicants are being interviewed and their homes inspected as a necessary safeguard for satisfactory placements.

Following negotiations with the Prime Minister's Department, the Army Department, and the Polish authorities, arrangements were completed for the Child Welfare Division to assume administrative responsibility, as from 1st April, 1949, for the Polish children who came to New Zealand during the war and who were formerly accommodated in the Polish Camp at Pahiataua. Extra specialist staff have been attached to the Head Office of the Division to cope with this work.