

The sports and physical education programme has expanded with the increased interest of the girls. The inter-house competition for the Justices of the Peace Cup has continued with enthusiasm, in the winter the competition covering indoor sports, and in the summer swimming and athletic sports alternately. Thirty girls earned swimming certificates during the year. Keep-fit classes, previously taken by an outside instructor, have been continued under one of the housemistresses attached to the Centre. The girls' basket-ball teams competed in the local competitions. Interest has been retained in hikes and picnics.

The general training scheme has been planned carefully to give each girl a thorough knowledge of the domestic arts so that she will be able to care for her own home one day. The programme covers training in housework and gardening, cooking, including preparation of meals, baking, preserving and jam making, and sewing. In the sewing classes the girls are taught cutting and fitting and they make dresses, suits, and overcoats.

Three pupils in the primary section gained their Primary School Certificates. Ten girls took correspondence courses to secondary-school standard. Several of them received commercial training as a preparation for office positions.

The girls attended their own Churches regularly throughout the year, and also were visited by local ministers of their own denomination. The Maori girls received fortnightly visits from the Maori deaconess. The girls have continued to join Bible classes in their own Churches and to attend their rallies and socials.

As has been done previously, parcels of food and baby clothes have been made up and sent regularly to Britain and Europe.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Schools for Backward Children. At the Special School for Boys, Otekaieke, which provides for mentally retarded children who cannot for one reason or another be taught at an ordinary school or in a special class, there were 116 boys in residence at 31st March, 1949. Of these, 93 were in the day-school section and 23 in the industrial section. In addition, 1 boy was on holiday and 2 were in hospital. During the year 38 new pupils were admitted and 31 left. Of those who left, 27 returned to active life in the community and 4 were found to be unsuitable for special-school training. Three of the 4 were transferred to a custodial home and 1 to the Boy's Training Centre, Levin.

At the Special School for Girls, Richmond, which is similar in function to Otekaieke, there were 55 girls in residence at 31st March, 1949. During the year there were 22 new admissions, 13 girls were placed out in the community in other districts, and 5 were returned to relatives or transferred to other appropriate institutions.

Extracts of interest from the Principal's report are as follows:

Carefully graded work within the capacity of the individual gives the backward girl, who in a class of normal children has experienced only frustration and failure, a feeling of success which acts as a stimulus in other directions also. Every possible avenue for the girls to express themselves adequately is exploited.

Early in the year the District Commissioner of Guides enrolled 24 of the girls at a very pleasant ceremony when they formed the first company of Extension Guides in New Zealand. Afterwards over 50 visiting Guiders and Guides were entertained to supper prepared and served by our girls. Some of the girls have already gained several passes for their second-class certificate.

In addition to the school girls' basketball teams which performed successfully in inter-school fixtures, a team from the House Girls' Section was entered in the Nelson "B" Grade competition. The captain and the vice-captain elected by the girls were responsible for a neatly turned out, well-conducted team taking the field each Saturday afternoon in Nelson. They enjoyed the games immensely and made many friends among opposing teams. Officials and opponents were impressed by their sportsmanship and good conduct.

Many of our girls learned to swim during the season and three competed in the Nelson Schools' Swimming Sports. In the athletic sports, too, we gained several places. Groups of girls attend the Sunday School or Bible class and Church services of their own Churches as well as participating in choirs, Sunday teas, hikes, socials, concerts, and picnics in connection with their Churches.

Increased interest has been shown in cookery, dressmaking, needlework, and other handwork. An interesting and instructive course in gardening has been introduced under a trained horticulturist who illustrates practical lessons with lantern-slides. With the erection of an up-to-date poultry-run we are able to train the girls in the care of poultry with the assistance of the District Poultry Instructor. Flowers and vegetables were grown by the girls and marketed by them. Entries of cooking, needlework, flowers, and decorative work received prizes and commendation at both Richmond and Nelson Flower Shows. The girls have cooked and prepared suppers for all social gatherings at the school. A dancing class is held every week and a ballet group is being entered in the Nelson Competitions. Friends of the girls and staff and young people from organizations in Nelson participated in social