

WHEN GIRLS LEAVE SCHOOL

Vocational Guidance Is Growing

WHEN Miss C. E. Robinson, of Christchurch, recently took over her new duties as senior women's vocational guidance officer and inspector of vocational guidance centres in New Zealand, we called on her for her impressions of the work and the future of it in this country.

Miss Robinson was pleased with the way the work was shaping, but thought that more rapid progress could be made if more people were aware of what the vocational guidance officers were doing. "But you know," she added, "the work is being appreciated by all who come in contact with it. We are constantly receiving visits from parents who come to tell us how grateful they are, or to bring along the younger members of the family because big brother or sister have been given so much help. And the children themselves frequently keep in touch and let us know how they are getting along. Of course we have a follow-up for a year of all the boys and girls for whom we have plans to see that everything is satisfactory, but all the same, it is surprising how many

after that come in to the centre from time to time and also remember us with a card at Christmas."

"Do you find much opposition to your work?"

"No. In the first place, vocational guidance is entirely voluntary, and then no one is obliged to take our advice; we only suggest possibilities. The parents have the final responsibility. Now and again we have cases of a father wanting Johnny to be a doctor when Johnny is far more fitted to be a farmer, or the other way about, but as a rule, they are fairly open-minded, and only anxious for their child's happiness and success.

A Question of Qualifications

"We have not yet all the staff available to deal as thoroughly as we would like with the numbers of children who come to us. Only special cases can be tested psychologically. During this term, for instance, I'll be interviewing about a thousand children leaving primary school, and I should like more time to discuss future education and careers with both children and their parents.

"Are there so few willing to take up the work or is a high qualification such as a philosophy degree necessary?"



Spencer Digby photograph
MISS C. E. ROBINSON
Psychology is not enough

"Well, it's not a case of either. I certainly haven't a degree in philosophy. I did study psychology at university, but I took honours in English and French, and have taught those subjects. There are plenty who are very keen to take up vocational guidance work, but there are not so many who are suitable for it. A course in psychology is hardly sufficient preparation.

(continued on next page)

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