

Contrasts Between Holland And New Zealand

(Continued from previous page)

much more the rule than it is here. In New Zealand, of course, most children attend a co-educational primary school, but there are in most cases, separate secondary schools for boys and girls. If they go on to the university, they meet again, but I feel that it is a pity that during the formative years of growth they should be kept apart. If you go to school with a boy and see him standing in front of the class stumbling over his lesson, you can never have that feeling of irrational admiration for him which may wreck your relationship in later life. That is merely an example, but I do feel that men and women would be able to understand each other so much better if they had been at school together all along.

—And When They Grow Up

"That separation during the impressionable years of adolescence is perhaps a partial explanation of a New Zealand characteristic which has always amazed me—the tendency of men and women—particularly women—to get together in separate little groups. I can't understand the division which precedes the 'Shall we join the ladies?' In Holland we have no such custom. When men and women find themselves together, they stay in a single group and talk together. But at a mixed party in New Zealand the men seem to gather at one

side of the room and talk business or racing, while the women cohere in another little group to talk babies or housekeeping. After marriage, the New Zealand woman seems to enjoy herself more in an assembly of women than she would at a mixed party. One can only conclude that mixed parties are for the unmarried, and have one main purpose.

"In New Zealand also, I am amazed at the number of clubs for women that one finds in the main centres. We have nothing corresponding to them in Holland, where the only women's clubs are for women belonging to a particular profession, and the object of which was

to discuss various problems in which the women were interested professionally. But here in New Zealand, you have clubs whose only purpose is that to discuss various problems in which women can go there and talk to each other over a cup of tea."

"Perhaps it will not be very long before you discern in yourself signs of this tendency to 'get together with the girls,'" I suggested.

"I find myself showing signs of it already," said Mrs. Schwimmer. "The New Zealand woman and the Dutch-woman are not so different in outlook or unbringing. We have the same independence, the same sense of equality, and we have both been brought up in the tradition of freedom, not only of individual freedom, but of political and financial freedom."

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• RICHARD HUDNUT •



S. P. Andrew photograph

PETI PARATA (Mrs. P. Parata Olsen), will be the vocalist when a concert by the Trentham Military Band is broadcast by 2YA on Friday evening, November 28. Her numbers will be "Pokarekare," "Tahineitarikino," "In Fairyland," and "Haeri Tonu Ra." Well known as a member of the Plunket Society, and as president of the Petone Free Kindergarten, Mrs. Parata Olsen is also actively engaged in Maori welfare work. She is a regular visitor to the Maori Girls' Club at Lower Hutt, where native crafts are taught, and she is a helpful friend to many young Maori girls who come to work in the city.