

Consideration of these objections, and further consultations with the Christchurch City Council and other local authorities and public bodies in the locality, indicated it was not desirable to proceed with that scheme in its present form in the meantime. Instead, the local authorities decided an attempt should be made to formulate a more comprehensive scheme covering the whole of the metropolitan area. The preliminary stages of the work are being undertaken.

V. LAND-AGENTS AND AUCTIONEERS.

Six hundred and eighty-eight land-agents' licenses were issued and 11 transfers granted, as compared with 704 licenses issued and 7 transfers for the previous year. One case of a defaulting land-agent came before the Department, and it was still under investigation at the end of the year. Four hundred and forty-six auctioneers' licenses were issued, 6 transfers granted, and 74 changes of endorsement of seller made, as compared with 490 licenses, 4 transfers, and 114 changes of endorsement for the previous year.

VI. PRISONERS OF WAR.

The Department is responsible for taking action in regard to the notification of civilian and merchant service prisoners of war. During the year a number of cases were notified and the next-of-kin advised where these could be ascertained. The Prisoners of War Inquiry Office was kept advised of all notifications received.

On the outbreak of war with Japan in December, 1941, a considerable number of people of New Zealand origin were resident in places which were subsequently occupied by Japanese forces. The Department received a considerable number of inquiries from the next-of-kin or relatives of such persons, and these inquiries have been transmitted to the British Government with the object of ascertaining information in regard to the persons inquired for. Unfortunately, it was not possible for these inquiries to be advanced beyond this stage as no information could be obtained from the Japanese Government with regard to persons who were resident in places occupied by Japanese forces. Every endeavour is being made, however, to obtain some reliable information to convey to the inquirers in New Zealand.

VII. PHYSICAL WELFARE AND RECREATION.

In all districts, officers gave very important services, especially in the training of leaders until they became qualified to take classes of Home Guardsmen in physical instruction. Altogether, many hundreds of leaders were thus trained. This proved beneficial to the Army when large numbers of these instructors were drafted into camps.

The scope of officers' usefulness for the Home Guard was inevitably reduced when this organization was placed under the control of the Army Department.

The Air Department's decision to entrust the physical training of cadets of the Air Training Corps to Physical Welfare Officers has proved successful from various viewpoints. In addition to the special courses in physical training, these officers have given keen attention to the organizing of suitable recreational activities for the lads. For this purpose they have had the friendly co-operation of sports bodies. Hundreds of Cadets were taught to swim well.

When opportunities offered, officers have arranged and conducted physical-training courses for units of E.P.S., E.F.S., fire brigades, police, and other bodies. Shortage of staff sets a limit to activities in this field.

An important development during the year was the planning of programmes of tabloid sports for members of the Air Force, units of the Home Guard, and other bodies.

Following the successful formation of the Southland Provincial Council of Sport and the Otago Fédération of Sports Bodies, in which the Department's officers took a leading part, a similar federation has been established in the Waikato district as the result of an energetic campaign by the Department's officers. Preparations are being made for similar operations in other districts.

Women officers have given good service for the Women's War Service Auxiliary, particularly in the training of leaders' classes. The scope for helpful work was widening out at the close of the year as the result of consultations between representatives of the Department and the W.W.S.A.

The recreational needs of girls in their "teens," especially those employed in factories, continue to receive earnest study. A beginning has been made with suitable programmes.

The co-operation of officers with the Tourist Department in the North Island and with the Group Travel Association in the South Island assured very pleasant trips for several large parties.

The assembly of men and women officers at Frederic Wallis House, Lower Hutt, for a fortnight in January proved well worth while. In addition to the "refresher" syllabus, the personal contacts of officers with one another and with members of Head Office were distinctly beneficial.

During his mission overseas, Mr. A. G. Harper, Officer in Charge of the Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch, had opportunities of seeing the impressive results of physical training in the efficiency of soldiers of the British Commonwealth and the Netherlands East Indies. He also made valuable contact with, and obtained much helpful information from, the authorities controlling physical welfare and recreation in the Commonwealth of Australia and in the States of New South Wales and Victoria. In New South Wales he met and addressed the National Fitness Council for that State. He found the Australian authorities very interested in the progress of the work in New Zealand and keen to obtain the benefit of our experiences in this field of activity.

Among the many activities of this branch may be listed coaching and assistance in various sports, training in life-saving and resuscitation, promotion and encouragement of girls' interhouse associations, and the organization of week-end camps and hikes.

VIII. PATRIOTIC PURPOSES.

A. PATRIOTIC PURPOSES BRANCH.

An outline of the functions of this Branch was made in my last annual report. The activities of the Patriotic Purposes Branch have been materially increased during the year owing to altered