

This, I think, can be regarded as extremely satisfactory, bearing in mind that the whole hundred cases were classified as troublesome and delinquent upon admission.

As to sport and recreation, an unexpected feature is the quite high percentage of boys who show no desire to take part in any sport whatever. Despite this, however, the centre fielded four American indoor basketball teams, two softball teams, and, in addition to one football team, frequently provided players to augment one of the local third-grade teams. With the exception of football, the teams were entered in the district competition, and it is pleasing to record that one of the softball teams was close runner-up in the district finals.

The general standard of health at the centre is still high, there being the minimum of ills and a complete absence throughout the year of any epidemic sickness. It is still the practice to have all new boys examined by both a doctor and a dentist at the earliest possible time.

The buildings at Hokio are in need of alteration, and this matter is now under consideration. At the Senior Section the main buildings have been maintained in good condition and, with the grounds, present a very pleasing picture. The new wing, comprising sixteen cubicles, has been completed and is now in use. The whole of this work was done by the boys under the direction of the staff, and it is a very creditable job.

Due largely to the difficulty experienced in finding suitable board homes for boys of school age, the Hokio Section has generally little empty accommodation, the roll number being close upon the maximum of twenty for the greater portion of the year.

Fareham House, Featherston.—This institution, which provides for older Maori girls requiring training before placement in the community, has now been operating for over a year and results have been very satisfactory. Accommodation is still limited owing to building alterations not having been completed. There were 11 girls in residence at the 31st March.

The programme of training includes domestic work in all its branches, indoor crafts, gardening, and small farming.

After a period of training depending upon the capabilities and responsibilities of the individual girls, they are placed in suitable situations, where their supervision is continued under the local Child Welfare Officer.

An extract from the Principal's report reads as follows :—

During the year the girls exhibited in the domestic section at the Wairarapa East Coast Show and gained prizes in the cooking and handwork sections.

All girls are linked with Church choirs in their respective Churches and all are members of the local Fellowship Club, which meets fortnightly. One girl is a committee member, and periodically the Fareham House girls are responsible for the programme, when they feature their Maori songs and dances.

New Institutions.—A new receiving home will be opened in Palmerston North early in the ensuing year. It will serve more particularly the needs of the Manawatu, Wanganui, and Taranaki districts.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Schools for Backward Children.—The Special School for Boys at Otekaieke, near Oamaru, and the Special School for Girls at Richmond, near Nelson, provide for children who, being mentally retarded, cannot for one reason or another be taught at the ordinary school or provided for at a special class.

The curriculum in these schools is designed to meet the needs of the pupils, and handwork in a wide variety of forms is given prominence.

The Manager at Otekaieke reports as follows :—

At the 31st March, 1946, the number of boys in residence was 122; of these, 89 were in the day school and 33 in the industrial section. Thirty-eight new pupils were admitted during the year, 39 boys left the institution, and 1 died. Of those who left, 30 returned to active life in the community and 9 were found to be unsuitable for special school training; of these, 7 were transferred to a custodial home and 2 to the Boys' Training Centre, Levin.

The average chronological age of the boys in the day school was 12 years 10 months, average mental age 9 years 1 month, and the average I.Q., 71.3; and in the industrial group, 17 years 2 months, 10 years 1 month, and 63 respectively.

Despite the shortage of staff, the training and recreational activities have proceeded as usual.

Again we are indebted to the members of the Oamaru Branch of Toc H and several visitors for providing entertainments for the children.

The health of the inmates during the year was good.