

(The position, however, was different with regard to defaulters transferred to prison, whose protests in some instances took the more serious forms of refusal to work and hunger-striking.) Generally, as the result of the good sense of the majority of the defaulters and due also to the firm and tactful handling of the staffs, more serious trouble was averted. There were only four escapes from the camps during the year, two of the escapees voluntarily giving themselves up after a few days absence.

SECTION VIII.—WOMEN'S AUXILIARY SERVICES

(i) The Establishment of Women's Auxiliary Services

134. The formation of the Women's War Service Auxiliary, as well as auxiliary Forces with each of the three Service arms and the Women's Land Service, resulted from the need to conserve man-power for active service or essential industries, and the desire of women to play their part in the effective prosecution of the war. Over 75,000 women served with the Women's War Service Auxiliary and affiliated organizations. Over 15,000 volunteered for service with the Women's Auxiliary Armed Forces, and 2,700 applied to serve with the Women's Land Service.

(ii) The Women's War Service Auxiliary

135. The Women's War Service Auxiliary was established in 1940 to provide a national organization, co-ordinating the war effort of New Zealand women. The Auxiliary compiled a register of all women volunteering for work calculated to assist the war effort. The strength of the Auxiliary and affiliated organizations reached a peak of over 75,000 in 1942, when 250 district committees were operating under the Central Executive.

136. The fields of contribution made by the Auxiliary included the organization of the following groups:—

(a) *Land Group*, with about 600 members organized to grow vegetables for Service clubs, or to raise money for patriotic funds.

(b) *Clerical Section*, in which 10,000 members of the Auxiliary served. This section performed the bulk of the clerical and typing work of the Home Guard and the Emergency Precautions Scheme, and also performed a considerable amount of work for the Armed Forces. When the threat of invasion was imminent, section members attended nightly at Army offices and Service camps to overtake arrears of clerical work.

(c) *Canteen Section*, in which 25,000 members served. Members of this section volunteered to staff canteen huts at military camps, as well as Service clubs and hostels throughout the Dominion. Members also provided valuable service in cooking for Home Guard manœuvres and in staffing accommodation and evacuation units of the Emergency Precautions Scheme. More recently, members of the Canteen Section assisted in catering for returning drafts of ex-servicemen.

(d) *Hospital Group*, in which about 2,000 members served. Women in this group were called upon to do hospital visiting work and to undertake training as hospital aids in kitchen and laundry work. Members also performed voluntary work for Hospital Boards by way of clerical and telephone work, admission of patients, &c.

(e) *Obstetrical Group*, numbering 250, making a valuable contribution as obstetrical voluntary aids.

(f) *Signalling Group*.—At the time when Japanese invasion threatened, members of this group, numbering over 1,000 women, undertook intensive training in Morse and semaphore, being attached to the Home Guard and the Emergency Precautions Scheme.

(g) *Transport Group*.—About 5,000 women trained in all sections of civilian transport. In most districts members of the Transport Group were seconded to the Emergency Precautions Scheme, undertaking convoy duties, collection of waste paper, &c. The group conducted tests for mechanics and over 1,000 were successful in passing the examination.

137. The Auxiliary was responsible for the recruitment of women for the Women's Auxiliary Armed Forces up to October, 1942, and throughout the war assisted with national campaigns, such as loans, bond sales, and patriotic-fund appeals. The Auxiliary also assisted in the manufacture of camouflage nets, in sewing and knitting for Service personnel, and in encouraging women to undertake first-aid courses. The