

SECTION IV.—HOSTELS AND CAMPS

14. Reference was made in the last annual report of the National Service Department to a decision to continue to operate hostels and camps for the accommodation of workers within the framework of the National Employment Service.

15. By virtue of the accommodation made available in these hostels and camps the Department is in a position to offer between-season employment in areas where jobs are available to seasonal workers from areas where winter employment is hard to find. Furthermore, the greatest shortage of labour in important industries exists in the Auckland and Wellington districts, where there is also a pronounced shortage of accommodation of all types. By operating camps and hostels in these centres the Department is able to contribute materially towards building up the supply of labour available for important industries.

16. During the past year an additional hostel was established in Wellington for the accommodation of shorthand-typists recruited from other centres to assist in meeting the very serious shortage of shorthand-typists for Government Services. This hostel, which accommodates 55 girls, was filled to capacity shortly after it was opened.

17. Suitable premises have recently been acquired for a hostel in Christchurch with a view to increasing the accommodation available for women workers in important industries. It is expected that this hostel will be opened in the near future.

18. Hostels were also established during the year in Auckland and Wellington to provide accommodation and training centres for Home Aids (see Section VIII, Home Aid Service). These are smaller hostels accommodating only from ten to fifteen girls, and, in addition to their use as training establishments for the Home Aid Service, will enable the Department to accommodate girls who join that Service.

19. A change in location was made during the year in respect of two of the workers' camps operated by the Department. In Auckland the Avondale camp, which was used for accommodating Maori workers engaged mainly in the freezing-works, and which was located at the Avondale Racecourse, was transferred to a more convenient situation at Mangere, where the men have the advantage of a much better standard of accommodation. In Wellington the area in which the Naenae workers' camp had been situated during the war years had to be vacated and a new camp was sited in Jackson Street, Petone. In view of the heavy demand for accommodation for male workers in essential industries in the Hutt industrial area, the opportunity was taken to increase the capacity of this camp from 300 to approximately 420.

20. In addition, a new camp was established at the Winter Show Buildings, Wellington, to help towards meeting the increasing demand for accommodation for male workers there.

21. At the present time proposals are also under way to establish hostels for miners in several of the larger coal-mining districts. The lack of sufficient accommodation in the mining centres has for some time been a deterrent to the recruitment of labour for the coal-mines, and, in view of the importance of increasing our coal production, one of the keys to which is to increase the labour supply, the Government has decided to erect hostels at Huntly, Ohura, Reefton, and Ohai, to accommodate 100, 50, 50, and 40 men respectively.

22. The aim of the Department in all of its hostels and camps has been to provide the most comfortable living-conditions possible having regard to the nature of the establishment, and adequate food of good quality at a reasonable charge. The charge for board at the girls' hostels is 30s. per week and at the camps for male workers, 32s. 6d. per week.

23. With the exception of the Woburn and Orient Hostels for girls in Lower Hutt and Wellington respectively, the hostels and camps are operated directly by the Department. The two girls' hostels referred to were operated by the Y.W.C.A. for the