

The month following the opening, the first wedding was held there. The business girl who was married was given away by the Principal and attended by another business girl as bridesmaid. The reception was held in the hostel dining-room. There were forty guests, including business girls, staff, and friends.

Girls have received training in all branches of housework, cooking, including baking, preserving, and jam-making, laundry-work, gardening, and sewing.

The sewing-room trainees, under instruction, make all the dresses, suits, coats, and underwear for the girls in the Centre, besides being responsible for making sheets, pillowcases, curtains, and cushions as required. This year, as well as the sewing for the Centre, they have made curtains and cushions for the School for the Deaf, Sumner.

Girls have been placed in positions in hospitals, at shop-work, office-work, laundry-work, tailoring, and dressmaking.

The leisure-time activities this year have increased in scope and variety. They include drama, poetry-reading, first-aid and home nursing, singing and music, impromptu speaking and debating, painting, attendance at pictures, full use of the library, inter-house competitions, concerts and parties, as well as all branches of handwork such as embroidery, weaving, tatting, crocheting, the making of toys, dolls, and baby and children's clothes.

Each Sunday morning the girls attend their own local Church and each Sunday afternoon Bible classes are held in the Centre by visiting teachers.

We are glad to be able to report that the girls have joined with the Bible classes in their own Churches in rallies, socials, dances, &c., and a fine spirit has been built up between the local girls and the girls from the Centre.

A small group of older girls acted as staff at a holiday school for younger primary-school children in the term holidays. During a Community Project Week, our girls helped to look after the crèche each day.

Swimming sports, tennis tournaments, and athletic sports were held alternately. During last winter our "A" basketball team played in the second-grade basketball competition in town and took third place. Four of our girls were picked for the representative trials (the most chosen from any team), and the captain from our team was chosen as a Canterbury representative player and travelled to Wellington and Timaru with the team. The "B" team played a town team at the Centre each Saturday, and entertained them afterwards to afternoon tea.

An instructor from the Physical Welfare Branch has come weekly to the Centre during the winter and spring to take "keep fit" classes.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Schools for Backward Children.—At the Special School for Boys, Otekaieke, which provides for mentally retarded children who cannot for one reason or another be taught at an ordinary school or in a special class, there were 107 boys in residence at 31st March, 1948. Of these, 78 were in the day-school section and 29 in the industrial section. In addition, 5 boys were on holiday. During the year 36 new pupils were admitted and 39 left. Of those who left, 33 returned to active life in the community and 6 were found to be unsuitable for special-school training. Five of the 6 were transferred to a custodial home and one to the Boys' Training Centre, Levin.

At the Special School for Girls, Richmond, which is similar in function to Otekaieke, there were 44 girls in residence at 31st March, 1948. Because of the epidemic restrictions, 7 girls were on extended holiday, and for the same reason several entrants from the Auckland Province could not be admitted. During the year there were 19 new admissions, 11 girls were placed out in the community in other districts, 5 were returned to relatives or friends, 3 were transferred to the Girls' Hostel, Wellington, and 6 to other appropriate institutions.

Schools for the Deaf.—At Sumner there were 154 pupils (88 boys and 66 girls) on the roll at 31st March, 1948. There were 27 new admissions during the year and 21 children left. Of the 27 admissions, 5 had previous training in a school for the deaf, 21 were congenitally deaf or became deaf before reaching school age, and 1 was hard of hearing and failed to make progress in a public school.

Substantial progress has been made to improve facilities and to provide additional amenities for the pupils and staff. Further, a comprehensive programme of works to be undertaken in the near future has been drawn up. When these are completed, the School will be well equipped in all branches.