

Handicapped Children

The existing services for the education of children suffering from physical or mental abnormality have been maintained. In addition, approval has been given for the establishment of classes to cater for the education of children suffering from cerebral palsy.

Medical advice showed that in two centres the need for sight-saving classes was great, and these classes also have been established.

Child Welfare

The decline in the number of children appearing before the Children's Courts still continues, and is a source of much gratification. Recent legislation has provided that the Superintendent of Child Welfare may assume the care and guardianship of immigrant children coming to New Zealand under official schemes. These schemes concern British children from the United Kingdom, and refugee children from Europe whose transfer to this country with adult displaced persons has been arranged between the Government of New Zealand and the International Refugee Association. Arrangements have been completed in the United Kingdom for the despatch of the first group of British immigrant children. All were nominated by relatives in New Zealand.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

The permanent New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO has now been established, and its first meeting was held on 1st November, 1948. The Secretariat has been established in the Education Department. The Commission consists of fifteen members, representing the various interests of UNESCO, and thirty co-operating bodies have been approved for consultative status. New Zealand was represented at the third General Conference of UNESCO held at Beirut.

Five New Zealand/UNESCO Fellowships in New Zealand were offered for 1949. These were two to China and one each to Burma, Philippines, and Malaya. Students from Malaya and the Philippines have arrived and commenced studies, the former on infant-welfare and the latter on social service.

Vocational Guidance

The Vocational Guidance service has continued to do useful work. A training scheme for Vocational Guidance Officers has been put into operation. This provides for an initial eighteen months of practical "in-service" training for new appointees. Towards the end of 1948 a booklet entitled "Next Year" was distributed to Form II pupils, giving condensed information about post-primary courses, bursaries, and conditions of entry to various occupations. Both parents and teachers have found this booklet useful. Despite shortages of staff, the Vocational Guidance Centres have offered an extended service to young people. Careers advisers who have been appointed in the larger post-primary schools form a useful link between the Centres and the schools, and are regularly supplied with information from the Centres.

Appeals of Teachers Against Non-appointment

Following discussions with the New Zealand Educational Institute, a satisfactory basis was arrived at for the necessary legislation to provide an appeal procedure for teachers applying for positions in schools for which the highest-graded applicant is appointed. The Education Amendment Act, 1948, provided for an Appeal Board to be appointed in each education district consisting of three persons—a chairman, a representative appointed on the recommendation of the Education Board of the district, and a representative appointed on the recommendation of the New Zealand Educational Institute. The Act also sets out the procedure to be followed in the hearing of the appeals and details the particular teachers who have the right of appeal.