

REGISTERED CHILDREN'S HOMES

At 31st March, 1950, there were seventy-four children's homes conducted by private organizations and registered under the provisions of the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1927. In these homes, which are subject to inspection by officers of the Division, the number of children in residence, according to returns received, was 2,409, as compared with 2,520 the previous year; the returns showed that included in this total were 64 children both of whose parents are deceased, 188 whose fathers are deceased, and 356 whose mothers are deceased. In many other cases the parents are separated or missing.

PLACEMENT IN FOSTER-HOMES

On account of the essential part played by foster-parents, the field officers of the Division give considerable attention to securing foster-homes of adequate standard for the boarding-out of State wards in their district. The difficulty experienced in recent years in finding sufficient suitable homes has continued, and during this year the number available has only just met requirements. The extent of this part of the work of the Division is indicated by the fact that at 31st March, 1950, there were 1,750 children placed in foster-homes.

EDUCATION

In order that children under the guardianship of the Child Welfare Superintendent will have care and training which approximates as nearly as possible to that of children living in their own homes with good parents, State wards attend the ordinary schools, except in the few cases who need care or teaching which is available only in a special school.

They are encouraged to continue attendance at a post-primary school wherever, having regard to their abilities and vocational interests, this course is likely to be in their best interests. At 31st March, 1950, 247 children placed in foster-homes were attending post-primary schools and 15 Maori children were in residence at Maori colleges. When further education still—*e.g.*, at the University—appears warranted, the Department facilitates this and continues to assist financially towards the cost of the child's education.

PLACEMENT IN EMPLOYMENT

When the time comes to make plans for State wards to leave school and enter employment, the field officers of the Division have the co-operation of the Department's Vocational Guidance Officers and others in helping the wards to secure satisfactory positions. The various kinds of work in which the 685 State wards in employment at 31st March, 1950 (excluding those living with relatives or friends, who, in those circumstances, take the main responsibility in this matter), are indicated by the following grouping—

<i>Boys</i>				<i>Girls</i>			
Farm hands	..	..	214	Domestics	..	..	81
Factory hands	..	..	29	Factory hands	..	..	58
Shop-assistants	..	..	15	Shop-assistants	..	..	15
Labourers	..	..	47	Clerical workers	..	..	20
Other	..	..	140	Nurses	..	..	19
				Other	..	..	17