

successful, for not only have the trustees shown a great personal and practical interest in the individual boys, but the Headmaster of the school attended by them is sympathetic, and is materially assisting in furthering their interests. One of the main advantages attached to the hostel is that the boys are linked up with the activities of the Y.M.C.A., and are given all the privileges of membership free of cost. When the time comes for a boy to leave school the Y.M.C.A. authorities assist in placing him in a suitable avenue of employment, and the boy still retains his association with that organization.

#### VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND EMPLOYMENT OF YOUNG PERSONS UNDER GUARDIANSHIP.

##### *Employment of Boys.*

The selection of suitable employment for all those children who have completed their education in primary and secondary schools is carried out by the field officers, but every case is carefully reviewed by responsible officers in the Head Office.

Experience has shown that for the lad whose early years have been spent in one of the crowded areas of a city it is advisable, wherever possible, to direct his inclinations towards a rural life. For those boys who are handicapped mentally and socially it is of great importance that they should be placed in decent homes with people who will be sympathetic and treat them more as members of the family than as hired helps. With the influx of boy immigrants into this country it is becoming increasingly difficult to find just the right type of employers for our boys. Another noticeable feature is the fact that with an overstocked boy-labour market there has been an all-round reduction in the rates of wages offering for work on farms. At the 31st March there were 758 lads in employment, of whom 570 were working on farms, and 56 apprenticed to trades.

For the boys who prefer to learn a trade every endeavour is made to place them suitably, but here again difficulties are met with. In practically all such cases the Department assists during the early years of apprenticeship with board and clothing. Quite a number of both boys and girls who have been given the advantage of higher education are placed in offices, shops, and warehouses, and a few of exceptional ability are found openings in the Public Service and in professions such as teaching, accountancy, &c.

##### *Employment of Girls.*

The position in regard to girls in employment is somewhat different. Generally no girl is placed in employment until she is in her fifteenth year. As a rule the majority are best placed in domestic service in homes where mistresses will undertake to train them in all the domestic arts, treat them as members of the family, and be responsible for them during their spare time. Where possible, these girls are placed in situations within easy reach of a receiving-home, which they visit on their half-days and alternate Sundays. On these occasions the matron of the home is responsible for their well-being. She assists them in the purchase of clothing and any other necessary articles, and arranges for their recreation. In addition, the girls are visited frequently in their places of employment by one or other of the welfare officers.

##### *Establishment of Hostel for Girls.*

To meet the needs of those girls desirous of learning trades and for those who are not fitted for domestic work the Department recently established a hostel in Wellington, under the control of an experienced matron, aided by the services of a vocational guidance officer. Suitable girls are drafted from all parts of the Dominion into the hostel, and suitable employment is found for them by the vocational guidance officer, who serves as a link between the employer and the hostel, and also takes a responsible part in planning and supervising the recreation of the girls. As soon as a girl is earning sufficient to keep herself, and the matron feels that she is competent to manage her own affairs, arrangements are made for the girl to be placed in private board. In such cases it is usual to relax considerably in the matter of supervision, but as a measure of protection legal control is not as a rule terminated in normal cases until a girl reaches her twentieth year. In all cases these girls are linked up wherever possible with some club or Church organization.

There is need for similar hostels in each of the other three centres of population.

#### RESIDENTIAL TRAINING INSTITUTIONS.

For the few boys and girls who fail to do well after repeated attempts to place them in the community, and for those whose anti-social acts have caused them to be placed under control at the commencement of what is usually regarded as the wage-earning age, the residential institution is an essential part of the Child Welfare system. There is, however, no definite period fixed for residence in such institutions: everything depends upon the conduct and aptitude of the individual inmates, who are given a further trial in suitable employment as soon as it is considered that they can be placed with due regard to their own safety and the well-being of the community. There are two such institutions—the Girls' Home at Burwood, near Christchurch, and the Boys' Training-farm, Werarua, near Levin.

##### *Girls' Home, Burwood.*

During the year the Caversham School, which for the past ten years has been utilized for receiving-home purposes as well as an institution for the detention of older girls requiring discipline and training, has been closed as such, and the older inmates have been removed to the property formerly known as Te Oranga Home, Christchurch, where the buildings now in use have been remodelled and modernized. Briefly, the purpose of the home is to provide for older girls who, on account of certain anti-social tendencies, frequently due to previous undesirable environments or associations, require a period of guidance in an institution. No very young girls will be admitted, though there will be special provision for the very limited number of school age who are unfitted for a receiving-home or to attend a public school.