

The idea behind the course of instruction and training in this institution is to fit the girls to take their place in the community as clean, honest, hardworking, and self-respecting women. To attain this end not only manual and industrial courses will be given, but also in varying degree academic subjects as in the primary schools. For the few girls of school age the instruction in the schoolroom will be practically the same as in a primary school. With the purely scholastic work will be correlated dramatic work, singing, drill, and folk-dancing, which it is considered will be beneficial to their well-being and tend to make them more cultured and refined.

In the workroom, training in needlework, from plain sewing to the making of their own clothing, will be given. They will also be taught laundry-work and the theoretical side in the domestic-science course. A certain part of the time of the girls will also be spent in the gardens and grounds. Agriculture, or that part of it which deals with the flower and vegetable garden, will be taken as part of the natural-science course.

Housekeeping.—All the work of the institution will be done by the girls under working attendants, and each girl will pass through the respective duties of the housekeeper, laundry, house, and parlour maid. Plain cooking will be a feature of this course. An endeavour will be made to teach the girls to observe the fluctuations in the price of foodstuffs and household articles, the study of prices and market reports to form part of their training, stress being laid upon economy. The food-values will also be taught.

Recreation.—Reading and needlework, raffia, leather-work, and other such handicrafts will form part of the recreational work. The girls during the recreation period will be allowed to have such suitable games as they desire. Walks at least twice weekly and swimming will also be part of their recreation. Concerts, organized by themselves, and such pastimes as have their place in private homes, will be organized. It is hoped that lectures on subjects of general interest, educational films and concerts will be attended in the city as opportunity offers.

Religious and Moral Training.—The girls will attend Church outside the home, and the services of local clergymen will, of course, be utilized to meet the needs of the institution. Moral training is to be achieved more by example than by precept. By the inculcation of clean good habits and healthy pleasant surroundings it is hoped to overcome earlier bad habits resulting from unsuitable environments. Responsibility will be placed on the girls, who will be trained to help largely in the control of themselves. As far as possible the inclinations of the girls will be considered in their choice of work on leaving the institution. As soon as a girl shows that she may be trusted out in the community she will be placed in suitable employment under the supervision of the field officers of the branch.

BOYS' TRAINING-FARM, WERAROA (NEAR WELLINGTON).

This institution provides for the training and detention of boys over school age who, being normal or nearly normal mentally, have proved by their anti-social behaviour somewhat of a problem to manage, either in their own homes or in situations. Associated with the main institution, but situated at a distance of about six miles, there is a home at Hokio Beach for schoolboys ranging in age from about eleven years to fourteen or fifteen years. Here the boys receive scholastic instruction similar to that of the primary school. The average number of schoolboys in residence is thirty.

Attached to the main institution there is a farm of 250 acres where dairying, agricultural work, market-gardening, fruitgrowing, and the raising of poultry, pigs, and sheep are carried out on approved modern methods. Here a lad has the opportunity of learning the rudiments of work on the land in all its branches.

The object of the institution is to train the boys in character and habits of industry, to teach them obedience and self-reliance, so that when they are allowed out in the community again they may take their place as decent, honest, law-abiding citizens.

In the work of reformation and character-building in such institutions the Department has studiously avoided the use of bolts and bars, and in fact any outward semblance of anything that would savour of compulsory detention. Long experience has shown the futility of associating such methods with the processes that lead to reformation of character and the elimination of bad habits.

As a rule no boy is detained for a longer period than twelve months—in fact, many are ready for placing out after six months in residence. At this stage the Child Welfare Officer for the district is called upon to find suitable employment for such lads and to supervise them in their situations.

The success of the work at Weraroa can best be judged by the fact that very few boys placed out have to be returned to the institution for a further period of training.

INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION.

Part V of the Infants Act, 1908, provides for the supervision of all infants under the age of six years, who are maintained, whether for payment or not, apart from their parents or guardians for more than seven consecutive days, and for the licensing of the homes in which these infants are placed. The Act provides for exemption from the need for licenses being granted by the Minister in certain cases. This provision has been applied generally to all institutions where children under six years of age are maintained. Since the passing of the Child Welfare Amendment Act last year all institutions providing for children of any age are required to be registered.

The duty connected with the registration of foster-homes and the supervision of the infants in these homes is carried out by the lady Child Welfare Officers, who are not only specially qualified nurses, but experienced social workers as well. These officers also carry out the work connected with the unmarried mother and her child, the investigation of applications for the adoption of children and the preliminary inquiry regarding applications for widows' pensions. In cases where children are adopted with premiums the amounts are handed over to the Department and paid out to the adopted parents by these officers, usually at the rate of 15s. per week for each child.