

Recreational activities hold an important place in our training. They consist of scouting, mouth-organ band, organized games, sports, and picnics. During the football season matches were played with neighbouring public schools. One was played against the Kurow District High School, when the Kurow School kindly entertained our team and staff at afternoon tea. In the second term the scouts accepted an invitation to attend the Oamaru St. Paul's Scout Group birthday party; and in the third term the Special School Scouts entertained the District Scout Commissioner, Girl Guide District Commissioner, and representatives of the Oamaru Scout Groups and their committees. At the beginning of the year a cub pack was formed.

To Oamaru Toc H we are indebted for their liberal entertainment of the boys. During the winter months the members of Toc H gave them a concert, and in December gave them a picnic, providing toys, refreshments, and entertainment. This proved the gala day of the year to the children.

On Labour Day the Salvation Army Band from Oamaru visited, and rendered a programme of band music which was much appreciated.

In October, when the mouth-organ band went to the Kurow Anglican Church to provide music for the service, and later, when a number of children gave a concert at Dunroon for the Salvation Army, they were able to repay a little of the kindness and interest shown by our Vicar, Rev. W. Edgar, and the Salvation Army officers.

At the end of last year Mr. A. P. Roydhouse organized a visit of thirty-five Dunedin Training College students and teachers. This visit proved a source of interest and pleasure to staff and inmates.

The visits of both Otago and Canterbury Inspectors, of Mr. Roydhouse, Physical Instructor, and Mr. Green, Supervisor of Manual Training, have been helpful and stimulating.

Talkie-picture programmes were screened weekly in the Social Hall, and these, with the radio, are proving of educational and recreational value, not only giving pleasure to the children but serving to keep them in touch with outside events. We are much indebted to the Films Exchange Association for supplying the films gratis.

A good scale of dietary, with adequate variety, including a plentiful supply of fresh milk, eggs, and vegetables, was maintained during the year, and was favourably commented on by the School Medical Officer, Dr. Stevenson, on the occasion of her recent visit of inspection.

The health of the institution during the year was very good, and visitors have frequently remarked upon the healthy, well-nourished appearance of the boys.

W. MEIKLEHAM, Manager.

SPECIAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, RICHMOND.

In 1904 a property consisting of about 28 acres of land with the homestead and out-buildings was purchased by the Department at Richmond for the purposes of establishing a school for mentally backward girls. On account of difficulties in connection with the whole policy of dealing with the feeble-minded the matter of erecting buildings was not undertaken until some eleven years later—in 1915—and in the meantime the property was utilized by the Mental Hospitals Department for the purpose of housing a number of low-grade imbecile boys. In 1915 a start was made with the erection of two cottage homes, each to accommodate about 35 girls, and the institution was opened for the reception of girls in 1916. Later on a school-house was provided and a large administrative block comprising a kitchen, dining-room, recreation room, and various offices.

The original homestead building, known as Top-house, was vacated about 1933 on account of its unserviceable condition.

The number of girls on the roll at the 31st March, 1938, was 72. For the inmates under fifteen years a simplified system of primary-school education is provided. For the younger inmates the methods of the kindergarten are largely employed, and special attention is given to hand-work, singing, folk dancing, eurythmics, and organized games. All the inmates participate in the latter, but when a girl passes through the day school she receives an all-round training in housewifery, with the object of placement when fully competent. The system usually followed by the Department is to transfer these girls when their training at Richmond has been completed to one of the receiving-homes in the four centres, with the object of additional training under conditions that approximate as near as possible to those obtaining in the ordinary family home. At Richmond every effort is made to keep the inmates in touch with the outside world. The inmates are frequently taken to entertainments in Nelson and Richmond, and usually attend at any of the children's and young peoples sports meetings.

REPORT OF THE PRINCIPAL, SPECIAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, RICHMOND.

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year ended 31st March, 1938:—

On the 1st April there were 72 pupils on the roll: of these, 3 girls were day pupils, 1 going out by day to work, 1 in hospital, 1 on holiday, 6 in custodial institutions, and 60 resident boarders. During the year 26 girls were admitted, the youngest being seven years of age.

Of the 29 who have left the institution, 4 were boarded out in foster-homes, 7 went into the care of relatives, 7 were placed in situations, 8 went to receiving-homes with a view to their placement in the community, 1 went to Templeton Farm, and 2 were transferred to the Girls' Home, Burwood.

Thirteen girls spent their Christmas holidays in their own homes or with former foster-parents; the remainder camped at Tahuna Beach for seventeen days with much resultant benefit from the change.

Both school and house girls played basketball in the winter, including matches against Tahuna, Stoke, and Richmond Schools, and the Catholic Orphanage team. The house girls have been taught to play tennis and clock golf, and each girl has her own garden plot to care for. They have handwork and drill for an hour in the afternoons daily.

The school gained prizes at the Nelson and Richmond Shows for handwork.

The health of the girls has been uniformly good and there has not been any epidemic of any kind during the course of the year.

G. G. MEDDINS, Principal.

SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, SUMNER.

The School for the Deaf at Sumner, Christchurch, was opened on the 10th March, 1880. It is the only residential institution for deaf children in New Zealand. Day pupils whose parents or relatives live in the neighbourhood of the institution also attend the classes.

Children of both sexes of normal mentality are admitted, usually between the ages of six and seven years, and leave the School as soon as they have completed their education or when they have reached a standard equivalent to a primary school.