

GIRLS' HOME, BURWOOD.

The Government in 1900 purchased at Burwood, near Christchurch, 9 acres of land with a residence thereon, and a further area of 42 acres of swamp land.

With additions to the building this property, under the name of the "Te Oranga Home," was opened in 1901 as an industrial school for girls, and the girls from the Burnham Industrial School were transferred there.

With the reorganization of the system the property was closed in 1918, but reopened at the beginning of 1928 under the name of the Girls' Home, Burwood, and a number of the older girls from the Caversham Industrial School were transferred to the institution.

Briefly, the purpose of the Home is to provide for older girls who, on account of certain anti-social tendencies, frequently due to undesirable environments or associations, require a period of guidance and institutional training.

At the 31st March, 1938, there were 62 girls in residence.

The annual report of the Principal is appended:—

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRINCIPAL, GIRLS' HOME, BURWOOD.

During the year the girls have received the usual training in housework, laundry-work, cooking, and dress-making, while many have been taught gardening and poultry-farming. Our aim is to make each girl capable of managing a home. Most of them will eventually marry, and of those who do not, many will earn their living at housework. The girls leave Burwood thoroughly trained in all branches of domestic work.

As well as the laundry for our own Home, we do the Boys' Home and Receiving-home laundry. The poultry-farm provides eggs for the School for the Deaf and the Receiving-home, as well as for our own use.

There is a well-balanced and varied dietary scale, fruit and cereals for breakfast, as well as brown and white bread, butter, jam, &c. The girls have meat once a day, and there is fish once a week, and an ample supply of fresh vegetables. In summer salads are provided regularly for tea, and there is always some extra dish besides bread, butter, and jam or honey. The girls have opportunities of choosing what they would like for their meals. Eggs and milk are included in the dietary scale.

Every girl attends school for one and a half hours each day, where they are taught embroidery, marquetry, painting, drawing, and other subjects of cultural value, according to their ability. There are three large radios in the institution, and the girls listen regularly to the educational broadcasts as part of their school-work, as well as to the music. One night a week they have a visiting singing teacher.

There is a good library. The St. Johns Ambulance Brigade have very kindly sent instructors throughout the year, and classes have been held in first aid and home nursing. Of the 32 pupils who sat for their examination in first aid, 31 gained their certificates; and of 17 pupils in the home-nursing class, all passed their examination. A mothercraft class also was formed under Mrs. Garland, a Plunket Nurse, in which the girls showed great interest. Further classes in all these subjects are to be held. There is a Red Cross circle, and portfolios are exchanged with circles in other countries. Parcels of clothing are made up as gifts to poor families, the materials being purchased with money which the girls raise for the purpose. During the year they held a concert to help their funds, and on another occasion Mr. F. A. Bullock kindly brought out a concert party, and admission was charged to help the Red Cross Society.

Girls attend their own Churches, and visiting teachers of different denominations hold Bible classes for the girls on Sunday afternoons.

The girls' recreation is well catered for, so that when they leave here they can enter into the normal activities of girls of their own age. There are two basketball-courts, a tennis-court, swimming-bath, and a croquet-green. They have dancing and games for one hour and a half every evening in the Recreation Hall under the supervision of the teacher. In the winter evenings they also play cards. Everything possible is done to keep the girls happy and give them normal healthy interests.

The annual garden party was held on the 30th October, and £94 14s. 3d. was made for the Recreation Fund. This fund provides outings and amusements for the girls throughout the year. Mrs. Morrow also brought out a concert party to assist the fund.

All the girls have been taken for a number of whole-day outings to the beach, and have gone regularly to the pictures. As well as this, small parties of about eight girls have gone out with one of the staff nearly every Saturday, in summer-time to the beach and in winter to the gardens and for whole-day walks on the hills. They have also attended socials and other Church gatherings.

On 12th May the staff and girls of one building invited everybody from the other building to a Coronation party. Four one-act plays were staged, and the evening was taken up with dancing, games, competitions, and supper.

At Christmas every girl receives a parcel of presents.

There are a number of day-service girls in residence: these are girls who are not yet ready to be placed at service away from the Home but who deserve a chance to prove themselves, and who, we think, will benefit by a gradual change from institution life to outside life. They have special privileges; they stay up later in the evening, and have supper. They join in the activities of the other girls who are placed in situations and who come to the Home on their afternoons off, and when free on Sundays. Picture parties are arranged for all the service girls once a fortnight, and they do their own shopping, with assistance from the staff in charge of them. Beach parties and walks on the hills are also regularly arranged. The "living-out" service girls are encouraged to join clubs such as the Y.W.C.A., Toc H., &c., and form friendships away from the Home. As they become more self-reliant and capable they are given more freedom, manage their own money, and find their own positions, so that they gradually adjust themselves to outside conditions before being discharged.

There were 38 new admissions during the year, 1st April, 1937, to 31st March, 1938. Of the 45 who left during the year 7 were found to be unsuitable for training in this institution, and 3 were accordingly transferred to Templeton Farm, 2 to Mount Magdala, and 2 to custodial institutions; 16 were returned to the care of the parents or relatives, either in this district or elsewhere; 11 were discharged from the control of the Department; 10 were transferred to other districts (4 of these going to the Girls' Hostel, Wellington); and 1 was married.

C. N. FINDLAY, Principal.