

In the Reformatory Section we commenced the year with 5 women in custody; a further 35 were admitted and 32 discharged, leaving 8 in custody on 31st December.

The health of the girls has been exceptionally good. Two girls were admitted as in-patients at Wellington Hospital for surgical treatment for venereal disease, being absent for seven and ten days respectively. Four other inmates attended the out-patients department for treatment for this disease also. There were no other cases of illness for more than one day. Three girls with optical weaknesses were tested and supplied with spectacles, and regular dental supervision was available for all inmates.

The conduct of the institution for the year constitutes a record, in that there were no run-aways and no "offences and punishments" in 1938. This is significant, in that the policy of steadily increasing liberty wherever possible has been sustained during the year.

The modernly equipped laundry continues to furnish our chief industry, the revenue for the year being £1,664 13s. 11d., representing a trading profit of £475 13s. 11d. This work is economically sound, and equips the girls to undertake journeywomen laundress positions on release if they so desire. The work done includes New Zealand Railways and Government office towels, &c., and Defence Department puttees.

We aim also at giving each girl training in domestic work and cooking, and the institution kitchen has this year been equipped with electric stoves, which are a great improvement on the old coal-range they replaced. A large vegetable and flower garden gives interesting employment to another working-party and ensures a good supply of green and fresh vegetables daily.

School-work has this year been conducted three nights weekly by a visiting teacher, the girls working in two groups, the larger one being mostly retardate work and the other more advanced. The work has included some dramatic work and topical-discussion groups on current events, thus keeping the girls in touch with the community life of the world. For the most part the girls have evinced much interest and made good progress with their general school-work. Singing-classes and sports have been encouraged and supervised by the staff, and three tennis matches and six basketball matches against visiting Bible-class teams have been enjoyed. Swimming is very popular with all, and most of the inmates are now swimmers. Tennis is played for half an hour each morning when weather permits, it having been found that this is more popular than the daily drill it superseded.

On several occasions parties of girls have been taken into the city for shopping before release, visits to the National Art Gallery and Dominion Museum, or church services. On 9th December the generosity of a friend made possible a picnic per Railways bus to Titahi Bay, when staff members and all inmates of more than three months' sentence enjoyed a happy day. The girls enjoyed the change of environment and the complete freedom of the day, and there was not the slightest breach of the trust so reposed in them. It is very evident that the breaking-down of any sense of environmental deprivation or repression materially assists in the rehabilitation to good citizenship, towards which all our work is directed.

During the year the institution has enjoyed many fine concerts, &c., and we are deeply indebted to the many people who vary our weekly routine in this way. These have included an annual party on New Year's Day given by Mrs. Sprott and members of the Anglican Mothers' Union; a tea and concert given by Mrs. Glover and members of the Salvation Army; two evenings with the Drama Circle of the Victoria League, with some most interesting plays; an entertainment arranged by the J.P. Association with members of the Wellington Operatic Society; two talkie entertainments, one "The Song of the Plough" and the other topical gazettes; regular first-aid lectures by Mrs. Gaby; several parties by Bible-class girls, and at Christmas-time a beautiful nativity play and a choir evening of carols, &c. On another occasion the institution was visited by the Dominion Executive of the National Council of Women, the president, Miss M. Trent, speaking most interestingly to the girls of the activities for women which that organization fosters. Indoor games such as Badminton and table tennis have been taught, so that the year's programme has been exceptionally varied.

In October the institution's second annual concert was held, when the girls entertained with a varied programme the many friends who usually are their entertainers. Arrangements were organized by the girls themselves, the Fergusson House girls (seniors) acting as hostesses on that occasion.

The Women's Borstal Association continues to make itself responsible for the welfare and after-care of the girls when they leave on probationary license, and their sympathetic services at this most critical time are invaluable, and I wish to record our most sincere thanks and appreciation. This work is all the more effective because of the regular visiting and interest shown before the girl leaves the institution, so that her temperament is understood and her confidence already won.

We are indebted also to the many ministers who conduct regular church services, to Mrs. Sprott and Mrs. Glover, the Seatoun Convent Sisters, and Father Uhlenberg. All these have brought a hopeful note for the future and encouraged the girls to believe in themselves and build more surely in the future. The Visiting Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. G. C. Edwards, J.P., has met on eight occasions, interviewing and advising helpfully each girl on admission and discharge.

In conclusion, I wish to record my appreciation of the loyal co-operation and interest at all times shown by the staff in their work.