

Miss Ingram Begins Ninth Year On Kindergarten Council

NELSON BY MAIL

Miss L. M. C. Ingram, president of the Motueka Kindergarten Association, has been re-elected for the ninth year to the Kindergarten Association Dominion executive. Only one other member of the executive has served it for a longer period. 23 OCT 1953

Miss Ingram was accompanied to the Dominion Kindergarten Association conference, which was held at Rotorua this month, by the Motueka Kindergarten Association delegate, Mrs K. Baker, and an observer, Mrs E. Rowell.

"The growth of Kindergarten membership in New Zealand has been tremendous in the past 10 years," Miss Ingram commented, "and only three of the total of 237 Kindergartens in the country do not have their own permanent buildings.

"The rise in salary for Kindergarten teachers, making it nearer the level of that of school teachers, also makes the Kindergarten profession more attractive for school leavers," she added.

Miss Ingram said that the New Zealand Kindergarten Association had now been established on a more national basis.

ADVANTAGES FOR MAORIS

Mrs Baker reported at the local association's meeting this week that she had made particular note of the words of the secretary of the Maori Education Foundation, who spoke at the conference.

He had said, Mrs Baker reported, that the Foundation wished to see more Maori parents become interested in Kindergartens. For this reason, the Foundation was doing all that it could to make Maori parents aware of the advantages that existed for them in pre-school education. He had said that, if more Maori girls were encouraged to enter the Kindergarten teaching profession, it would be a step towards the increased enrolments of Maori children.

It was reported that there had been a tremendous growth in pre-school organisations in the past 20 years. After very difficult periods, Kindergartens now had their own permanent buildings of excellent standards—the envy of overseas countries.

It was also stated that there was a definite increase of Maori children on Kindergarten rolls.

IMPROVED STANDARDS

Kindergarten staffing difficulties were gradually being overcome, while the salary increase and the recruitment of more highly educated students would improve standard and the teaching position, it was reported. The hope that more older women would return to the

profession was also expressed.

Mrs Baker said the Kindergarten Union had decided to write to the Director of Broadcasting, requesting that the "Listen with Mother" session be changed back to "Kindergarten of the Air".

It was stated at the conference, Mrs Baker said, that all parents should be made aware of their role in Kindergarten, and given an understanding of the purpose of pre-school education. The necessity for parents to appreciate their importance in the lives of pre-school children, and the need for the parents to participate in the Kindergarten programme, was a problem of which the Kindergarten Union was very conscious.

OPPOSITION FROM PARENTS

Mrs Rowell noted that the local Kindergarten had very few problems compared with some other New Zealand Kindergartens, which faced parental apathy. She also noted the remark that parents should not be guilty of the "age of the shrug"; no one should shrug her shoulder when the Kindergarten require help and co-operation. Every two or three years there was a new set of parents to reap the benefit of Kindergarten. This was not to be taken for granted.

The Dominion conference will be held at Dunedin next year, when the city will be celebrating its Kindergarten Association's diamond jubilee. The first New Zealand Kindergarten was opened at Dunedin 75 years ago.