

"We are running this field cooking course as though the power supply had been cut off through some disaster", the North Canterbury President, Mrs. R.I. Brake, explained. "In such a case we would be cooking for evacuees and field workers."

Representatives from most Red Cross sub-centres which come under Christchurch's civil defence scheme attended the course. They came from as far as Lyttelton and Belfast.

Under the watchful eye of the District Catering Officer Lieutenant F.E. Swift of the Army Service Corps, and Corporal J. McIntyre, a catering instructor, they made delicious scones and pastry, from tried and tested Army recipes. As is so often the case, all declared that the food tasted far better cooked in the open, even if one did come across a stray splinter of wood in the soup, or the odd "foreign body" in the apple pie.

The ovens made from sods of turf and mortar and covered with wet mud, were constructed by the Army, as time prevented the Red Cross members from building their own. But in the future field days they will probably start from scratch ; from building the ovens, to washing the last dish.

Pakistan

On June 19, 1964 the inauguration ceremony was held for the opening of the Murree Centre, a Nurses Rest Home, Maternity and Child Welfare Centre and Family Planning Clinic. It was established by the Provincial Branch of the Pakistan Red Cross Society in attractive surroundings, nearly 7,000 feet above sea level.

The event was honoured by the presence of the President of Pakistan and was attended by many other prominent officials. The President of the West Pakistan Branch of the Red Cross, Begum Viqar-un-Nisa Noon, gave a welcome address in which she recalled the projects now being undertaken by the institution over which she presides with such enthusiasm and skill. She mentioned the work carried out in recent years by the National Society under

the chairmanship of H. E. Ali Shah and we give below quotations from her speech :

“ It is with pride and pleasure that I have the honour of welcoming you Mr. President and all our guests and to request you to open the Nurses Rest Home and Maternity and Child Welfare Centre and Family Planning Clinic today. This is one of the two major projects which have been undertaken entirely by the Provincial Branch of the Pakistan Red Cross Society. The other project of the Provincial Branch which is now under construction is the Community Health Centre in Shahalam Market, Lahore. But besides these a number of other programmes have been completed or are in the making by various District Branches towards which the Provincial Branch gives as much aid as possible. Recently the Red Cross House of Hyderabad was opened and the first phase of the Zanana hospital has been completed.

In all, the West Pakistan Provincial Branch and its District Branches up to the close of 1963 were maintaining 127 institutions including 5 Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Centres, 8 T.B. Hospitals and Clinics, 5 Maternity Hospitals, 44 Dispensaries, 64 Child Welfare Centres, Maternity Homes and Sub-Centres and one Blood Donor Centre.

Now we have 135 Institutions.

This Nurses Rest Home and Maternity and Child Welfare Centre is one more milestone towards the progress the Society is making.

It is the aim of the West Pakistan Red Cross to have Red Cross Houses in each District Headquarters to accommodate the offices, stores, lecture and meeting rooms for first aid training and allied subjects. We feel that now the Society has become a really effective auxiliary to the Health Department, proper offices everywhere are a necessity.”

Lady Noon then described some of the achievements in various districts, in particular at Rawalpindi, where there are 8 dispensaries and child welfare centres, 5 of them in rural areas. She laid stress on the fact that in the course of the last few years the majority of the dispensaries have been situated in rural areas. She then added :

“ I am happy to tell you, Mr. President, that under the banner of the Red Cross the co-operation of the public with the administration and the health, education and other departments has borne fruit which has resulted in real and basic service to the community.”

Broaching the subject of the health education programme planned by the Junior Red Cross, Lady Noon explained that a lady instructor would be arriving from the Canadian Red Cross under the Technical Aid Programme of the League of Red Cross Societies. She would remain in Pakistan for one year and would train six Pakistani senior counsellors who would then in turn train teacher-counsellors of the Junior Red Cross in educational institutions in West Pakistan.

Lady Noon then went on to outline the administrative organization of the institutions being inaugurated that day and she thanked all those who, through their financial support, demonstrated confidence in the National Society of the Red Cross. Finally, she concluded by expressing her gratitude to the authorities with the request that they continue, as protector and guide, so that, she said, “ we may improve and expand our activities to reach more and more people and to enlist their services in the cause of those who need to be helped.”