

patients who were transferred in the emergency period following the earthquake, meeting as it would the wishes of the relatives, who are constantly asking, and as is only natural, desiring that their relatives be brought within visiting distance of their homes.

The staff shortage remains acute and, as far as nurses are concerned, is now as bad as at any time during the war period. The shortage of psychiatric nurses, or of women wishing to train as psychiatric nurses, would appear to be chronic and associated with the Dominion-wide shortage of female labour. Despite progressively liberal improvements in relation to pay and conditions, no improvement has occurred. The standard of treatment and care, in harmony with modern psychiatric methods, cannot be maintained unless some means are found to provide adequate female staff. Perhaps an immigration policy would attract from the British Isles a suitable type of prospective psychiatric nurse as it has done in the past.

The progress in relation to the rebuilding is as follows : Villas 1, 2, 3 completed and occupied ; Villas 4 and 5 nearing completion, and should be occupied within two months. These five villas represent accommodation for over 250 patients. A new laundry block is at present under construction, and the contractors have made a start with Villas 7 and 8.

Owing to the lack of labour and materials during the war years, the permanent hospital buildings have not been maintained at the required standard, and as soon as possible the accumulated work will be overcome. The obsolete telephone system requires renewing, and it is hoped that the Post and Telegraph Department's recommendation concerning this will receive attention. Certain permanent hospital roads not involved in the new lay-out require repairs and sealing.

Numerous minor works have been carried out during the year, such as the erection of a kitchen for F. Ward, a temporary fire-station, T.B. shelter at Montrose, &c. These and numerous other minor constructions and alterations were necessary following the demolition of the main building.

Occupational work has been extended during the year, and a better organization of the work has followed the appointment of two qualified occupational therapists to the hospital staff, but the work is hampered and made difficult for patients and staff by the lack of accommodation.

Additions to the medical staff during the year have placed this hospital in this respect in a better position that it has been in for many years.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the staff for their good work during the most difficult period in the history of this hospital.

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### NELSON MENTAL HOSPITAL

DR. WILLIAMS reports :—

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1945.

The number of patients under care during this period was 1,203 of whom 1,162 had been admitted under a reception order and 41 were voluntary boarders.

The admissions totalled 126, including 2 transferred from other hospitals and 22 voluntary boarders.

We were able to discharge 42 patients, including 14 voluntary boarders, and 47 were transferred to other mental hospitals.

There were 75 deaths, including 1 voluntary boarder.

War and post-war conditions have inevitably been reflected in a postponement of many very desirable additions and improvements, and little more than maintenance work has been possible.

The majority of our male staff who left us for active service have returned, but there is a marked shortage of nurses, which has prevented the development of occupational therapy as we would have liked, and we hope that the prospective appointment of a trained occupational therapist will enable us to make greater progress in this direction.