

notwithstanding its importance, is frequently tardy in and sometimes devoid of tangible result, and the acquirement of knowledge in other branches of nursing by actual experience is useful not only in itself, but because of the greater interest it often gives to the whole course of mental nursing; and, after all, mental nursing and general nursing are complementary, and that this is your view also is evidenced by the appointment of tutor sisters. This latter is a move that will be appreciated by every one, and it cannot but be a success. We have, for a variety of reasons, and in common with other hospitals, I understand, been greatly hampered for some time now by shortage of suitable staff, but I have found definitely that the introduction into the syllabus of lectures from the subject direct on the physical as well as on the mental side has created genuine interest, and it has resulted, too, in many probationers remaining more eager to go on with their course of training than to accept one of the apparently more tempting positions which are so freely offering nowadays.

The tutor sisters will be of great aid in providing this wider knowledge.

I would like to refer to the necessity that must soon arise for rebuilding at Nelson; expenditure on renovation or repair alone would not be justified. Transfer of the residents to Ngawhatu is neither desirable nor feasible, but it has sometimes been suggested that it would be better to shift this centre for mental defectives nearer to one of the main cities because of difficulty of access to Nelson itself. Points against this, however, if I may mention them, are: We have an excellent site: air services have greatly improved access, and the climate is, I should think, without equal for children and adults alike.

Reverting to the activities for the past year, sufficient discussion has been made, no doubt, to the subject of shorter hours. One aspect that might be mentioned, however, is that the greater opportunity for recreation so offered has resulted in the formation at our hospital of new sports and athletic clubs. In addition to the cricket club, we now have rugby, football, badminton, basketball, and tennis. Much success has been achieved in each, and with a minimum of interference with routine duties, but probably the most gratifying part has been the active and successful participation in these clubs by many of the patients.

A canteen was started in a small way during the early part of the year, available to patients and staff alike: it has been very popular, and at the end of the year a profit of over £37 had resulted, this to go to the patients' Recreation Fund. A library has been run in conjunction with the canteen.

The swimming-bath has been generally popular and well patronized, and regular fortnightly dances lately instituted have also been successful. Nevertheless, we are, possibly because of our situation, still perhaps not quite so well provided with entertainment as some of the metropolitan hospitals, though this disparity will be lessened greatly when the erection of a talking-machine at Ngawhatu becomes possible.

Many individuals, business firms, and societies in Nelson have been very good to us in the matter of donations of cash and goods, and their kindness and continued support have been much appreciated; my thanks are due also to Miss Cooksey and her party in providing outings for the children; to Mrs Scantlebury and to the visiting ministers of religion, particularly the Reverend Hay and Father Cullen.

To the staff generally, for their loyal assistance and co-operation, I wish also to express my sincere thanks.

#### HOKITIKA MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. CHILDS reports:—

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 1937.

At the commencement of the year the patients on the register numbered 458. The admissions proper were 19, while 6 male and 23 female patients were received on transfer.

The discharges numbered 15, transfers to other institutions 17, and deaths 12.

The total number under treatment was 506, and the number remaining on the register at the end of the year 462.

There were two voluntary boarders on the register at the beginning of the year, 5 were admitted, and 4 discharged.

The general health of the patients has been very satisfactory, most of the deaths occurring among the older patients.

A fire occurred in "Kiwi" male admission ward on the night of 20th July, 1937, and half the ward was extensively damaged. The patients were all removed safely and accommodated in other wards. The staff did excellent work during and after the fire, and I would also like to thank the Hokitika Fire Brigade for their prompt and timely assistance. The renovating and repairing of the damaged portion is now almost completed, and the ward will soon be fully occupied.

A modern residence for the Chief Clerk has now been completed.

The remodelling of "Sefton" and "Aorangi" wards was completed on 17th May, 1937, and the improvement effected is considerable. They are now used as open wards for elderly patients.

A new tennis-court has been completed, necessary repairs effected to "Moana" and "Taupo" wards, and the inside of "Egmont" ward has been painted and papered.

A modern piggery is in the course of erection.

The usual routine of farming and gardening operations has been carried out: 5 acres of swamp land have been cleared, drained, and left fallow, while 9 acres left fallow last year have been sown in grass.