

HOKITIKA MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. CHILDS reports :—

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 1938.

At the commencement of the year the patients on the register numbered 462. The admissions proper were 20, while 5 males and 6 females were received on transfer.

The discharges numbered 13, transfers to other institutions 4, and deaths 24.

The total number under treatment was 493, and the number remaining on the register at the end of the year 452.

There were 3 voluntary boarders on the register at the beginning of the year ; 9 were admitted and 4 discharged.

The general health of the patients has been satisfactory.

A new model piggery and a cycle-shed have been erected during the course of the year. Arrangements are almost completed for the building of a new Nurses' Home and for the erection of two closed villas, one on the male and one on the female side.

With the Nurses' Home completed it will then be possible to enlarge the existing store accommodation, which, owing to the continued growth of the institution, has become inadequate, while the additional two closed villas will allow of a better classification of the patients than is possible at present.

The usual routine of farming and gardening operations have been carried out during the year, 8 acres of swamp land have been cleared, drained, and left fallow, and 5 acres of fallow land sown down in grass.

The painting gang has been active during the year, and the usual maintenance-work carried out.

The Hokitika Band has, as usual, visited the hospital frequently and supplied most of the music for the patients' dances.

A monthly clinic has been held at Greymouth Hospital, and the Westland Hospital visited when required.

The playing-field has been enlarged and improved, and games and recreation are playing an important part in the life of the institution, but the want of a recreation hall is becoming increasingly urgent. Picnic, swimming, theatre, and shopping parties are arranged when possible, and suitable patients are given the opportunity of attending outside entertainments, such as the local race meetings, sports gatherings, &c.

Thanks are due to those who have provided entertainment during the year and to those who have been responsible for Christmas gifts and cheer.

The clergy have made frequent visits, and regular services have been held.

Mrs. Fane, who has a considerable knowledge of social work, has been appointed Official Visitor on the female side, and the Official Visitor for the male side has shown his usual interest in the welfare of the patients.

I wish to thank the staff for the generous support they have given me during the year.

CHRISTCHURCH MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. McKILLOP reports :—

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ending 31st December, 1938.

On 1st January, 1938, there were 1,394 patients (773 males, 621 females) on the register. During the year 227 persons (107 males, 120 females) were admitted and 20 patients were transferred from other institutions. Discharges totalled 141 (61 males, 80 females), and there were 1,641 persons under care during the year.

Out of 11 cases sent for observation, 6 were committed and 5 were discharged.

Voluntary boarders numbered 66 (males 34, females 32), and of this number, 22 males and 17 females improved sufficiently to return to their former duties.

There were 95 deaths during the year, the cause in most cases being senile decay.

Much has been done during the past few years to make the conditions of the patients more comfortable, and overcrowding is not now in evidence. Personally, I should like to see separate institutions for the senile cases. At the present time many aged persons are sent to a mental hospital on the appearance of slight aberration ; such cases seldom give us any trouble. The provision of two new villas, one for female patients and one for males to accommodate senile patients, and of a hospital block would make this mental hospital quite up to date.

The pumping machinery has been installed, and the water-supply is now of excellent quality and quite adequate. The old system has been retained and connected up for fire purposes.

The laundry at Templeton, although completed at the time of my last report, is not yet functioning, and the delay is causing very great inconvenience. Present indications are that it is unlikely to be in use for some months, though I understand tenders have been called for the erection of the machinery.

The new bakehouse at Sunnyside is in use, and extensive alterations are now being carried out in the kitchen.