

The weekly entertainments have been given as usual, and have been much appreciated. I have to thank the Red Cross Society and the Victoria College Social Service Club for their continued practical interest in the patients' amusements. I wish also to thank Mr. Prosser for affording free passes to the patients for the village cinema.

My thanks are due to the ministers of religion for their services. I wish to tender my thanks to the Official Visitors (Mrs. Fraser, Mrs. McVicar, Messrs. Bothamley and Bradey) for their regular visits and helpful interest in the patients' welfare.

I have to thank my colleagues, Drs. Blair, Macky, and McNickle, for their loyal support and assistance. I also wish to thank the Matrons and Head Attendants and the staff generally for their assistance.

NELSON MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. JEFFREYS reports :—

I have the honour to forward my report for the year 1927.

At the beginning of the year there were 389 patients on the register, and on the 31st December there were 418 (males 283, females 135). The total number under care during the year was 446 (males 306, females 140), and the average number resident was 398. Including three transfers from other institutions, there were 57 admissions, and of these 49 (33 males and 16 females) were admitted for the first time. Fifteen voluntary boarders were under treatment during the year, and of these 7 were discharged and 1 died, leaving 7 remaining at the end of the year. Four male and 3 female patients were discharged as "recovered," and 5 males as "relieved" or "not improved." Of the 15 patients who died, no fewer than 9 were defective children of low vitality, who readily succumbed to slight infection.

The general health of the patients has been remarkably good. Our numbers have been steadily increasing, and we are urgently in need of more accommodation both at Nelson and Stoke. A new sleeping-porch has been erected at "El Nido," the boys' ward, and is a great boon, for not only has it helped to relieve the congestion but it also enables us to give continuous open-air treatment to a number of the very frail children committed to our care. As I pointed out in my last report, imbecile boys from all parts of the Dominion are committed to this institution, and at the present time "El Nido" is far too overcrowded, and unless further accommodation is provided in the near future it will be impossible to make room for any more; for although the bigger boys are sent to Stoke Farm, even there the conditions are not much better, for there is not nearly sufficient day-room space, and it is consequently impossible to make a satisfactory classification, as the boys and men are crowded together in the day-rooms on wet days. It is fervently to be hoped that new villas will be erected with as little delay as possible. Conditions at the new villa which was occupied last year are in pleasing contrast to those at the old building. It is in charge of female nurses, and is greatly appreciated by the patients and their relatives.

The majority of the Stoke patients are usefully employed on the farm and in the gardens; a large number are on full parole, and it is a most exceptional occurrence to find any one abusing this privilege.

Every week a number of the Nelson patients and every fortnight a number from Stoke are taken to the pictures, and they look to this more than to any of the entertainments provided for them; and it is to be hoped that before long we will have our own picture plant at Stoke.

My thanks are due to Dr. Hay and the other officers and staff for their loyal assistance throughout the year.

HOKITIKA MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. BUCHANAN reports :—

I beg to submit my report for the year ended 31st December, 1927.

At the beginning of the year there were 226 patients on the register; at the end of the year there remained 152 males and 64 females, making a total of 217; also 1 male voluntary boarder. Admissions numbered 14 ordinary patients and 1 transfer. Three voluntary boarders were admitted during the year. Discharges were 13, and deaths 12. Voluntary boarders discharged numbered 2.

The general health of the patients continued to be good.

The only structural alteration made since my last report is the turning of the old wash and bath rooms of "Aorangi" into a dining-room for the more unmanageable patients, and the turning of the boilerhouse into two much-needed single rooms.

Our energies have been directed mainly towards the opening-up of new farm lands. Altogether 8 acres of swamp land have been cleared, drained, and sown down. The stumping of this land has enabled us to put by a large store of firewood for the winter months. The formation of all this new pasturage is most valuable work. At present we carry insufficient cows for our need, necessitating our making use of large quantities of condensed milk. Next year we should show a considerable reduction in this expensive commodity.

To give access to the new paddocks 32 chains 8 yards of road have been constructed.

We have the construction of a bowling-green well on the way, and expect to have it finished by this time next year. Our wants, as you know, are many, and cannot all be gratified owing to the present financial stringency, but I would beg to stress the great need of (1) a new building to take the place of the unsightly ten single rooms attached to "Taupo"; (2) a water-supply of our own, independent of the borough supply; (3) an intercommunicating telephone system, to be used for fire-alarm purposes.