

The general health of the patients has been good, though there was a moderately severe epidemic of gastro-enteritis among the children. All the latter were immunized against diphtheria and whooping-cough. Eighty per cent. bread was introduced during the year, but has had no noticeable beneficial effect therapeutically.

Post-war disorganization of trained labour and material continue to delay needed additions and improvements, and little more than maintenance work has been possible. Roads have been tar-sealed; the painting party has been kept busy, as, indeed, has the artisan staff generally in attempting to keep abreast of necessary repairs. The building of two cottages for Assistant Medical Officers was begun some months ago; but shortage of materials still delays their completion. A new staff kitchen is being installed in Dunoon, but it, too, perforce, proceeds slowly.

Authority was obtained for the installation of a cinema plant at Ngawhatu, but the Building Controller, although sympathetic, ruled that this could not proceed meanwhile because of its low priority in the matter of urgency. This is a great pity, as facilities for patients' recreation are not good in Nelson, and particularly at Ngawhatu.

Thanks in this respect are due to the Young People's Choir for concerts; to the Church of Christ for arranging picnics; and particularly to Mr. Croucher for his ever-generous provision of buses for outings and pictures, though even with his help only a small proportion can benefit regularly. Many firms and societies have been generous, too, with donations in cash and kind for patients' benefit.

Staff shortages have continued, though only on the female nursing and domestic side, so that difficulties have been buffered somewhat by extending the duties of the men, who have done very well indeed, I think, in much work to which they are normally unaccustomed. The addition of one, or preferably two trained occupational therapists would assist very much, and I understand this is being arranged as soon as possible.

A new lecture-room with annexes has been installed in the old nurses' home, and it is pleasing to record that the staff are very keen on their training, and most have done very well in their examinations, intra and extramural. Sister McEwan has contributed much towards this by her capability and her infectious enthusiasm.

There are exceptions, of course, as always, but, generally speaking, the spirit of the staff has been excellent, and their co-operation and assistance has been of inestimable value. For the sake of interest, I ascertained the causes of leaving among the nurses since the war ended. Of a total of 102, 44 left to be married; 16 were recalled home to look after sick parents, or to assist otherwise in the house or on farm because of shortage of help there. Some of these have been able to return. A number were not suited temperamentally and otherwise, but very few indeed—only 6 I could ascertain—left because they could not cope with conditions. Sixteen went to other mental hospitals on promotion or transfer.

The number of men leaving because of conditions extant were negligible.

A telephone has been installed in the nurses' home, where, too, there has been established by keen members a very good circulating library, augmented by assistance from the Country Library Service.

Farm activities have continued reasonably satisfactorily with buoyant revenue. Vegetable production has not been of the best, but measures in train should improve this. Water has been laid on to further paddocks, which will give better grazing and increased milk-supply. Mr. Devine, the Farm-manager, retired after almost thirty-five years' service, and best wishes are extended to him and Mrs. Devine for their future.

The power-house has been handicapped by further deterioration in the boilers, and replacement of these is urgently required.

The Committee of Inquiry visited us, in common with other mental hospitals, during the year, and made a number of helpful recommendations.

To the staff generally for their assistance and co-operation I have to offer my sincere thanks.