

The reception-block at Nelson may be in occupation when this report is presented, and we shall then be within sight of a very complete system of classification. The reception-block will be used as a clinique and admission-ward for borderland cases, neurasthenic types, and incipient melancholics, which cases may never require to go to the main hospital at Stoke. We are being consulted with increasing frequency in reference to cases in the pre-certifiable stage, and one hopes that the provision of this clinique, which is quite separate from the mental hospital, will induce patients' friends to bring them under observation and treatment at an earlier stage than has hitherto been the custom. Cases which require to go to Stoke can also be classified, and when we have an observation villa and a closed villa at the institution we shall be quite abreast of modern requirements.

The old Nelson Mental Hospital will be used as a home for imbecile children, whose segregation from the adults is very necessary, but the arrival of the first batch of boys from Porirua has accentuated the need for despatch in the erection of the closed villa at Stoke.

I am glad to report that, while these changes have involved some extra strain upon the staff, they have also brought out the utmost loyalty and enthusiasm for the betterment of the patients—I am very fortunate in my officers.

Thanks are also due to the Nelson Ministers' Association for regular Sunday services, and to the cinema-proprietors for free passes to patients.

HOKITIKA MENTAL HOSPITAL.

DR. BUCHANAN reports:—

On the first day of the year we had on our register 264 patients, made up of 191 males and 73 females. Admissions during the year were 23—18 males and 5 females. Discharges during the year were 16—10 males and 6 females. The deaths during the year amounted to 18—15 males and 3 females. The total number of patients on the register on the 31st December, 1921, was 253—males 184 and females 69. Speaking generally, the patients' physical health has been good.

I would take this opportunity to thank the local people for their kindness in getting up concerts for the patients' benefit, and for their contributions, which so materially helped to make the patients' summer picnic such a success. My thanks are also due to the Official Visitors, who have taken an interest in the patients' welfare. To the whole staff I owe much for the loyal manner in which they have co-operated with me.

During the year there have been several constructions completed—namely, workshop, cow-byres, henhouse, new roads, garage, and scullery for the female cottage—so that they are now supplied with hot water. The artisans' time has been fully occupied. The calls for repairs and other requirements have been infinite. But in spite of all this the main fact remains that there is no alteration or betterment in the patients' bad living-conditions. A new block—kitchen, bakehouse, store, staff quarters unit—has been mooted since April, 1921. At the actual date of writing this report—i.e., May, 1922—the foundations of this block are not completed, nor are the detailed plans to hand. It will be realized that this most necessary construction only affects the patient indirectly. The patients' quarters remain as they are. This block will take at least eighteen months to construct: if we have to wait till its completion before we are able to start on the building of a proper reception-house, then it follows that there can be no amelioration of the patients' present conditions till another two or three years have elapsed. There can be no proper treatment for the mentally unsound until such a building is completed.

There has been nothing done anent the drainage except that a survey has been taken of the ground. The existing system of bucket closets for a community of this size and nature is both dangerous and disgusting. This matter is one of the greatest urgency. Laundry-work is now done at the Westland Hospital's steam laundry. This is a very great improvement on the old system, but I think that it is proving an expensive one. As far as I can estimate it is going to cost us about £1,000 per annum. The attendants' accommodation is bad. In many instances attendants have to sleep in a room shared by three others. There is no bath for male attendants distinct from the patients' baths. The farm buildings are literally rotten. There are no facilities whatsoever for recreation for either patients or staff. The most urgent needs for this institution are a reception-house and an adequate drainage-system.

SUNNYSIDE MENTAL HOSPITAL.

DR. CROSBY reports:—

The year opened with 788 patients in the institution, and closed with the names of 823 on our books—viz., 378 men and 445 women. The work of the year included the admission and treatment of 159 patients, of whom 64 men and 64 women had not been under treatment previously, whilst 25 were readmissions and 6 were transferred here from other mental hospitals. Of the 69 patients discharged during the year, 46 were regarded as recovered, 15 as relieved, 6 unrecoverable patients were transferred to other institutions, and 2, also unrecoverable, were discharged to the care of their relatives. In addition to the above-mentioned admissions, the work of the year also included the care and treatment of 29 voluntary boarders and of 36 patients remanded to Sunnyside by the Magistrates for observation. Of these, 10 voluntary boarders and 14 "remand cases"—not included in the above recovery-rate—were discharged. This left 19 voluntary boarders; and, after the necessary certification of 15 "remand cases," 5 remained on our books at the end of 1921.