

The maintenance staff has had a somewhat more busy time, and a good many residences and hospital buildings have been painted and renovated generally. It might be remarked here that for some time now practically all inside painting has been done by a working party of patients under supervision and directions of an attendant-painter. The work has been done very well on the whole, and in addition to the saving effected, and the greater amount of painting possible, the men concerned have been put in the position of gaining in some degree an acquirement which might readily be of much use to them later in outside life.

We are again experiencing great difficulty in accommodation for patients; also accommodation for office staff and for stores. On the female side particularly the position has become acute, and every ward is crowded. Not unnaturally the hot weather has aggravated matters.

The accommodations for medical and office staff is also insufficient, largely owing to the building of filing cabinets in every available space. These are now full, and further provision for a filing-room, clerk's office, and visitors' room is very necessary. The storage space for victuals and other goods is taxed to more than its capacity, and the instability and deteriorated condition of the walls of the store do not tend to better matters. Indeed, it might be said with regard to the whole block of buildings, comprising store, bakery, kitchen, and engine-room adjoining, that it is antiquated and inadequate. The store has been referred to already; the bakery is in frequent need of expensive repair; and the boilers in the engine-room are at a stage where replacement will shortly be a necessity. As it is, the inspectors will allow a pressure of only 70 lb. per square inch as compared with a requisite 100 lb., and suggested further that they considered 60 lb. gave the reasonable margin of safety. It would seem imperative, then, that some consideration be shortly given to the erection of the kitchen and stores block. The completion of this would remedy matters greatly, and, in addition to giving greater general efficiency and comfort, would in the long-run, I am sure, be an economical measure.

The summer has been a particularly dry one, with consequent detrimental effect to farm and garden. It is pleasing to note, however, that the water-supply has kept up splendidly, and has shown no sign of failing. As a precautionary measure, however, and to protect the native bush of the catchment area from damage by cattle, the fencing-in of the whole area has been authorized, and was begun late in the year. The work is being done by contract.

Staff changes have not been many, being most noticeable among the nurses, and no difficulty has been experienced in keeping the nursing staff up to the full strength. We have been less fortunate in obtaining and keeping a full medical staff, and after Drs. Norris and Blair left us early in the year, two A.M.O.'s only were left to carry on until the arrival of Dr. Hunter from Seacliff in September. I am not complaining of this, of course, for we have not, on the whole, perhaps been so badly off as some other hospitals, and, in addition, I know of the difficulty you have experienced in getting adequate and suitable staff, and the efforts you have made to obtain these.

There is little to note concerning the Psychiatric Clinic, which continues to function successfully, and undoubtedly much good is done, and much serious mental illness prevented. During the year 172 new cases were seen, a slight diminution, and there was a total of 931 consultations. Patients were referred from many sources, the largest single groups being 65 hospital in-patients, and 33 from various relief depots. Regarding disposal of those seen, it was necessary to send only 36 to Mental Hospital for further treatment. Of these, 20 went as voluntary boarders, and 16 were admitted under one or other sections of the Act. Practically all the latter 16 suffered advanced psychoses, principally due to senility and other organic disorders. Three who suffered acute confusional delirium did very well, and were subsequently discharged recovered. I have to thank the Hospital Board for their continued interest in the Clinic and for the extra facilities given me for the better care and treatment of those appearing, and particularly for those in indigent circumstances.

Amusements and recreation have been provided in abundance for all, and sincere thanks are due to the many who have helped so much. Particularly must I mention Rev. Mr. Harding for his personal efforts, and also the members of the numerous concert and other parties he has brought. Mr. Hooker's generosity has continued, and thanks are due also to the Commercial Traveller's Association, to the Women's National Reserve, to the Victoria University Social Service Club, and to many others.

Our Official Visitors have done much, and to these and to all others who have helped with service, and with advice, I am very grateful.

In conclusion, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to my colleagues, and to the staff generally, for their loyal and efficient co-operation throughout the year.

NELSON MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. HART reports:—

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ended 31st December, 1934.

The number of cases under care during the year was 774, as against 631 during 1933. At the commencement of the year there were 567 patients on the register. During the twelve months 207 (including 129 transfers and 9 voluntary boarders) were admitted, 33 (including 5 voluntary boarders) were discharged, 22 died, and 9 were transferred to other hospitals, leaving 710 on the register at the end of the year.

On the whole, the health of the patients was satisfactory, but during the winter and early spring there was, as was general throughout the district, more than the average amount of minor sickness amongst the children.