

A feature of the admissions has been the number of old people who have been received both from their own homes and from other institutions. This is a matter I commented on in my first report, and again I have to make use of the term "dumping-ground" as the only suitable description of what appears the function of the mental hospitals. These cases might be looked after in some less expensive fashion, and leave room with us for cases which have some chance of recovery.

The addition of twenty-one single rooms to the female wards has been a great assistance, but we are still cramped for room there and on the male side as well.

Recreation enters largely into the scheme of treatment of the insane, and anything which tends to take the patients out of themselves is of service. Great interest is taken in the result of the competitions in the different games, and matches with outside teams gives a feeling of unity with the outside public which is helpful both to the patients and the staff. In cricket, billiards, and bowling we have managed to take good places. This season we have started a football club, which is showing fair promise, and the matches are enlivening the winter months. Concerts, dances, and visits to the theatres and other places of entertainment in town have helped to brighten the lives of the patients, and my thanks are due to all those who helped to make these things possible.

The farm has been well looked after by the new farm-manager, and the returns sent you previously prove that it is a valuable asset. The farm must be considered principally as an integral part of treatment, and it is very gratifying to find that this part of the treatment of the patients is actually returning such a handsome profit.

An extra boiler is an absolute necessity. Owing to the increase in work, the boilers at present are worked to their full capacity, and do not get a fair chance of being cleaned out as often as they should. The new water-supply requires completion: the pump is labouring with the water from the old well.

It is with deep regret that I have to record the loss of our esteemed and respected head attendant, Mr. Newport. After twenty-six years in the service, he died suddenly from heart-disease, actually in the uniform he so adorned. Both staff and patients alike mourn his loss, more as a friend than as a colleague and guardian. I am very pleased that the Hon. the Minister saw fit to promote Charge Attendant Harris to the position of head attendant, and feel confident that, after his long association with Mr. Newport, he will prove a worthy successor.

I lost the valuable services of Dr. Gribben as assistant for most part of the year. He had to go to England on private business, but his place was ably taken by Dr. Scannell, to whom and the rest of the staff my thanks are due for their loyal and hearty support.

I have, &c.,

W. BAXTER GOW, M.D.,

The Inspector-General of Mental Hospitals, Wellington.

Medical Superintendent.

#### SEACLIFF MENTAL HOSPITAL.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the Seaclyff Mental Hospital for the year 1910.

Having dealt somewhat exhaustively last year with what appeared to me to be some of the leading considerations bearing on problems affecting the insane under conditions which obtain here, I shall practically confine myself this year to a routine record.

The total number of patients under treatment during the year was 1,021, the average number at one time being 855. At the beginning of the year there were 829, and at the close 880, being an increase of 51 in the twelve months. There were admitted during the year 192 patients, of whom 28 were chronic incurables transferred from other mental hospitals, leaving 164 ordinary admissions. The number of patients discharged, recovered, or relieved during the year was 82—in other words, exactly half the number admitted. It is interesting to note that of the patients admitted during the year only 5 were under twenty years of age, while there were 14 between sixty and seventy years of age, 11 between seventy and eighty, and 7 between eighty and ninety.

The deaths during the year were 53, just over 5 per cent. of the number under care. Of the deaths, 14 were between seventy and eighty years of age, and 2 were between eighty and ninety. The incidence of death from general paralysis was unusually large—viz., 12 in the year. Nine patients died from senile decay and 5 from epilepsy.

There is in the institution at the present time one male aged seventy-six who has lived for an unbroken period of forty-eight years in the Mental Hospitals of Dunedin and Seaclyff—in other words, since the early gold days of Gabriel's Gully. There are still eleven Chinese inmates, but their numbers are gradually diminishing.

The general health of the population has been good throughout the year, and we have had no casualties or serious accidents.

As usual, a very large proportion of patients have been kept employed on the farm or in the garden, and the returns from the estate have been satisfactory. In my last year's report I ventured to estimate that our catch of fish would come up to a quarter of a million pounds in the year. The actual net return has been 270,000 lb. Of this quantity, over 80,000 lb. has been sent gratis to other public institutions, and has therefore involved an apparent increased expenditure per head for our population instead of going in reduction of maintenance. I trust that in future an adjustment will be made whereby this very successful and profitable industry will appear, as it should, in the form of a substantial credit to this institution, instead of working out rather as a handicap in our financial returns.

The inclusion of the small institution at Waitati in the Seaclyff returns makes the expenditure at the main institution appear some £2 per head heavier than is actually the case, the relative cost in connection with a growing embryo hospital being necessarily high.