

was above the average, representing over 70 per cent. of the inmates. The numbers are practically stationary, the admissions more or less balancing the deaths and discharges, and the accommodation is equal to the needs of the district. Some improvements are necessary to the kitchen offices, attendants' mess-room and male bathroom, with consequential alterations to the drainage. The work was not as urgent as the need for extra accommodation elsewhere on which one necessarily concentrated, but should be put in hand soon. The institution was clean and orderly, the grounds and gardens are well kept, and good work is done on the farm.

*Porirua Mental Hospital* I visited in February, April, June, August, September, and October of 1911, and March and June this year. Dr. Hassell's complete and concise report on the year's work at Porirua traverses all matters in my notes of visits, except the special interviews of patients, which have been dealt with in a general note. I would like to add my tribute to his on the skill and devotion of the members of the staff who nursed the sick during the enteric-fever epidemic, and my sense of the loss of Attendant K. Bolton; also my thanks to Dr. Frengley and Mr. Hurley, of the Health Department, for their careful investigations which led to the discovery of the carriers and the stamping-out of the epidemic. Among the patients admitted during the year was an attendant who had been retired on superannuation owing to ill health. It is rarely that a member of the staff becomes a patient: they are selected, and the neurotic does not pass beyond the probation stage. In the particular case the attendant was suffering from an organic disease of the spinal cord—the direct cause of his mental disorder—which was not in any way related to his occupation.

The number of patients under special observation was just about the average, and that the duty was carried out conscientiously there can be no doubt, as among these patients, ever alert to injure themselves or others, nothing untoward happened. The unfortunate tragedies detailed by Dr. Hassell were of the unexpected order that the exercise of reasonable care cannot guard against. The proportion of dangerous patients was below the average. A large proportion of the patients is usefully employed. The patients are well fed and look well cared-for. The works carried out and in progress are mentioned in Dr. Hassell's report. The need for a high-pressure filter, such as he would like to see installed, we discussed at your recent visit, when the matter met with your approval.

The usual provision is made for the recreation of the patients and staff. The Association football team achieved the distinction of being second on the list for the senior championship for the year.

Those who judge the appearance of the institution from a passing train lose the beauty of the plantations and gardens hidden by an intervening ridge to the south. From the windows and exercise-grounds to the north the patients look over the cricket and football field to a fine panoramic view of the harbour.

Dr. Jeffreys who had done good work here was transferred to Seacliff as Senior Assistant, and Dr. McKillop, lately Senior Assistant Medical Officer at the Inverness District Asylum, and Dr. Gray, lately Assistant Medical Officer at the Aberdeen District Asylum, Kingseat, entered upon their duties at Porirua. The Department has been fortunate in securing the services of these gentlemen.

*Ashburn Hall Licensed Mental Hospital* I visited in January, November, and December. On each occasion all the patients were conversed with, no one made any complaint, and many spontaneously expressed themselves as being comfortable and well cared for. All parts of the institution were scrupulously clean, and in the wards where the best-conducted patients reside the bed- and living-rooms are tastefully furnished, and the meals are served as they would be in a good-class boardinghouse. Provision is made for the employment and recreation of the patients. Dr. Alexander lives on the estate, occupying the position of consulting physician, and Dr. Tizard, who was for some years Assistant Medical Officer at Seacliff, and before that for some years at the Colney Hatch Asylum under the London County Council, is now the Medical Superintendent. The proprietors of this institution were fortunate to secure his services. It was with great regret that I learned that Mrs. Milne had, on account of ill health, been obliged to retire. Her successor is Miss Guffie, who, having been one of the first to pass the examination for mental nurses, proceeded to the Wellington Hospital, where she was trained in general nursing, and passed the State examination. She has a very difficult place to fill, following Mrs. Milne, whose exceptional qualifications and tact made her invaluable and beloved by the patients. Miss Guffie assisted Mrs. Milne for some years. The average number of patients at this institution is 43 (m., 24; f., 19), and 8 (f.) voluntary boarders.

*Conclusion.*—The strain of the past year has been very great, but with the continuance of a vigorous building policy there is well in sight the time when our troubles will be over; but building must never cease. Each year will provide its increments to the population, and, experience having shown how irregular these increments are, something will need to be done in advance of estimates. Had the buildings designed for the reef-site in Auckland been carried out, we would not now be considering present, but future requirements. I must express my indebtedness to the head office staff for its loyal and willing co-operation and assistance.

I have, &c.,

FRANK HAY.