

SEACLIFF MENTAL HOSPITAL.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the Seacliff Mental Hospital for the year 1911.

The year opened with 880 patients, and at the close there were 890. During the year there were 141 patients admitted, of whom 3 were transfers from other mental hospitals, 26 were recurrent cases who had been previously under treatment in the institution, and 112 were admitted for the first time. There were 67 patients discharged, relieved, or recovered, or approximately half the admission-rate.

The physical health of the patients has been good, and there has been no serious casualty or accident during the year. 59 patients died, being 5·7 of the average number resident.

The main feature of the work of the year has been the provision of extra sitting-room space in connection with the main building and the Simla and farm annexes. These works are approaching completion, and, when finished, will add greatly to the comfort of the institution. When these improvements have been supplemented by a long-contemplated comfortable cottage in the garden for about ten of the more sane and sensitive male patients (on similar lines to our cottage for women) the male side of the Hospital will be satisfactorily equipped. The advantage of the special cottage for women has been very great; no feature of the institution has been more heartily appreciated by patients and their friends. The number of applications for voluntary admission is one among many evidences of this. With regard to increased general accommodation, our special need at the present time is further provision for female patients and nurses.

Work in the garden and on the estate generally has been actively carried out on the usual lines, and has afforded healthy occupation for most of the male patients capable of doing anything. A Maori-head swamp of several acres, which was thoroughly under-drained last year, is turning out so well that there is the fair prospect of this and some similar ground about to be developed affording a sufficient supply of ordinary vegetables for the whole institution. These improvements will result in considerable economy as to space under intensive cultivation, and as to the labour needed for ensuring the very large quantity of vegetables which are required, besides giving us a higher class of product.

The farm results have been highly satisfactory, and the supply of fish from the station at Karitane has much exceeded our needs, though the present season has so far proved relatively unsatisfactory for every one engaged in fishing.

The work of the past twelve months at the Waitati Branch Mental Hospital has been very satisfactory, and one is struck by the general contentment of the patients. The large annexe now under construction will make the institution much more useful, and will considerably lessen the necessarily high rate of maintenance at a small detached establishment.

The Camp Auxiliary at the Peninsula is excellently managed, and the year's work has been highly satisfactory.

Regular religious services have been held by various denominations throughout the year.

The thanks of the authorities are due to the Otago Daily Times and Witness Company and to the Evening Star Company for newspapers and journals supplied free, and also to other donors who have kindly contributed to the amenities of our hospitals.

During the year the service has sustained a very great loss in the leaving of my colleague, Dr. Tizard, and the Matron, Miss Beswick. This is not the place in which to express my appreciation of what the Mental Hospital service owes to either of these officers, but the least I can do is to place on record the fact that I have felt it a great privilege to be associated with them, and that the public service is much poorer by their retirement.

I have to thank my colleagues Dr. Crosby, Dr. Allan, Dr. Jeffreys, and Dr. Ross, and the other officers and members of the staff, for their hearty co-operation.

The Inspector-General, Mental Hospitals, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. TRUBY KING.