

The cost of collection (salaries, stationery, stamps) was 1·72 per cent., which speaks well for the assiduity of the Receiver, Mr. Wells, and his small staff of an assistant clerk and a cadet.

In stating the cost per patient above the first five items in Table XX are omitted, and no allowance is made for interest on capital expenditure and for repairs charged to the Public Works Consolidated Fund. Adding these items, the approximate full cost per annum was—

	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Average gross cost in mental hospitals ... ..	...	...	38	4	11
Proportion of Head Office salaries and expenses ...	16	10½			
Proportion of fees for medical certificates, &c. ...	6	10½			
			1	3	8½
Proportion of interest (averaged at 4 per cent.) on Public Works expenditure from July, 1877, to 31st March, 1914 ... ..	...	...	7	2	7½
Proportion of interest (averaged at 4½ per cent.) for capital cost previous to above period ... ..	...	...	0	13	0¾
Gross cost ... ..	...	...	47	4	3½
Less receipts for maintenance and sale of produce ...	...	...	12	8	1½
Net cost ... ..	...	...	£34	16	2

In 1912 the full cost so reckoned was £45 19s. 0½d., and the net £34 7s. 11½d.

The Staff.

Last year the very special nature of the duties of those who minister to the irresponsible was enlarged upon to demonstrate the necessity for greater local control and differential treatment with respect to the Public Service Act. Nothing that has happened since alters that view, which has the unqualified support of all the Medical Superintendents as expressed at the recent conference. It is a matter which should not need argument, and though apparently not self-evident, as it appears to us it should be, it becomes almost immediately evident to those brought into contact with the administration of the Department.

The idea that a Department such as this is can be managed on the lines of a more or less clerical or industrial Department must be abandoned. The more the fact that the staff is not dealing with the general public is lost sight of the greater is the tendency to undermine discipline. Happily nothing makes a difference to the majority—the loyal, tried, and capable officers; but want of immediate control is, to say the least of it, disturbing in its effects upon a proportion of the younger and, under better conditions, more hopeful, and is positively harmful to those, fortunately only a few, who under such local control as existed some years ago would be gradually eliminated as they were found to be careless or wanting in alertness, or temperamentally unfitted for the service. The effect of past agitations in favour of persons of this last class has made it increasingly difficult to dispense with their services on general grounds, and this has, of necessity, lowered the standard by disaffecting a proportion of the impressionable having better potentialities. I say advisedly that the agitation was on behalf of the less competent, because any one having a rudimentary knowledge of the working of institutions for the mentally defective knows that the interest of the competent staff and of the Superintendent is identical in ensuring the well-being of the patients. If the bracing of discipline is slackened let it be distinctly understood that it is done at the expense of the well-being of the patients; and, curiously enough, when that well-being is in any way disturbed the advocates of taking control from those having the responsibility do not associate the happening in its relation of cause and effect.

The new classification has improved the position of the staff, and I should add that the Public Service Commissioners realize some of our responsibilities, and that we therefore look to them with some confidence to assist in weeding out the incompetent, which, let me emphasize, are very few. I believe it is their policy to have the best possible staff, and that was the impression conveyed when they met the Medical Superintendents in conference.

With respect to the inclusion of allowances in the nature of salary for purposes of superannuation, a move has been made where the income of officers in the General and Clerical Divisions is £300 and under, and one is pleased to accept this as an earnest of a complete and logical solution of the problem.

The following nurses and attendants, having served the necessary period and had the necessary training, had their names placed on the Register of Mental Nurses on passing the Senior Examination: Lucy Anstey, Jane Bryan, Eva Castles, Ann Genge, Esther Hodgson, Jeannie Johnston, Mary Kelly, Charlotte McInnes, Rachel Shepherd, Edith Williams, Robert Short Anderson, Eli Brighton, James Coakley, Alwyn Cocker, William Hayes, Arthur Litchfield, Neil McCormack, John McLeod, George Oulds, Frederick Stevenson, Andrew Taylor, George Ward.

Visits of Inspection.

Auckland.—Visited June and December, 1913, and January, February, April, and June of this year. The impression made was that work was no longer being done under a sense of oppression—that, in fact, the sight of two large buildings visibly progressing had relieved the tension. In September the quarantine building on Motuihi Island had to be returned to the Public Health Department, owing to the outbreak of smallpox, and our patients were transferred to a temporary building put up in the Mental Hospital grounds. Once the new annexes are com-