

*Financial Statement.*

The details of expenditure are given in Tables XX and XXI. Circulars were issued at the beginning of the war drawing attention to the necessity of postponing expenditure which was not regarded as urgent. Even when issuing these one realized that our ordinary expenditure did not go beyond necessities, and that no appreciable economies could be exercised. The reductions were in the items surgery and dispensary (2½d. per head), wines, spirits, &c. (¾d.), and farms (6s. 3½d.). On the other hand, the new scale of salaries raised that item by £1 3s. 6d. per patient, and the remaining items were influenced by the rise of prices from August onwards, the advance per patient being as follows: Provisions, £1 1s. 2d.; bedding and clothing, 3s. 7½d.; fuel, light, &c., 3s. 1¾d.; building and repairs, 2½d.; and miscellaneous, 8s. 5¾d.: the net result being an increase of £2 13s. 7d. per patient. The factors making for increase in the cost of maintenance being those influencing the cost of living, there has been as a natural consequence a drop in the amounts paid for patients, amounting over all the patients to 7s. 11¾d. per head per annum. Deducting receipts of all kinds, the total cost per patient exceeded the cost in 1913 by £3 2s. 7½d. Including the items in Table XX, the net cost per patient was £30 4s. 6¼d., or £3 4s. 0¼d. in excess of that for the previous year.

*The Staff.*

On the whole, the work of the staff has been well done under trying circumstances. A number of good men volunteered for service with the Expeditionary Forces, and their places had to be taken by probationers; and the difficulty of getting suitable single men under present circumstances has merely to be stated to be appreciated. In the past we required single men to remain in the service for two years before marrying, in order to have at night a sufficient number on the premises in case of fire; but the time-restrictions with regard to marriage have been cancelled in the emergency, notwithstanding the regulation that no married man permanently appointed to the Public Service is to receive less than £140 per annum. Of the male staff 11·7 per cent. are at the front or in training. The proportion rises to 15·7 per cent. when those over forty years of age are excluded. Last year I wrote at some length on the paramount necessity for discipline in the interest of the patients, and of the slackness which becomes inevitable when local control is lessened. The Medical Superintendents in conference saw you upon this subject, and also interviewed the Commissioner. It was suggested that the nursing staff should be regarded as probationers until the senior examination was passed, a minimum of three years. In that period nurses or attendants may be deemed to have shown their suitability for the work, temperamentally and otherwise, and would pass into the permanent service after an examination on subjects dealing mainly with the practical side of their duties. The superannuation deductions would be made during the probationary period, which would count as service, as is now done with respect to the first year. This will require legislation, but as the end in view is entirely in the interests of the patients one may safely presume that there will be no opposition.

I would again draw attention to the position of officers in this Department with regard to superannuation. With few exceptions their salary is paid partly in cash and partly by allowances in the nature of salary. It is readily acknowledged that no one would accept the positions at the cash salary alone, as that is considerably lower than the ruling wage; but the probationer before making application does a small sum, in which he adds the cost of living to the salary, and then decides that the salary is good enough. To place him in the same position as an officer in any other Department, all that is required is to add the value of the allowances in the nature of salary (accommodation and food) to the cash salary, and deduct the value of the allowances so assessed when payment is made. The deductions for superannuation would then be made from the total salary, and the retiring-allowance would be proportional to that of officers in other Departments, and not unfairly and illogically lower.

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: Agnes Barr, Ethel Winifred Bellamy, Annie Bennett, Clarice Eagle, Annie Julia Eggeling, Jane Pearson Ellwood, Jeannie C. M. Emerson, Mary Gallie, Johannah Kelly, Maud Morris, Mary McDonald, Esther Jane Potter, Margaret Richardson, James Devine, Robert Henry Gray, William McKenzie, Robert Ryce, Alfred Charles Henry Scott.

*Visits of Inspection.*

The following are in addition to the visits paid by District Inspectors and Official Visitors, whose interest in the work and solicitude for the patients is most helpful. On each visit the patients had full opportunity to converse with me, and, if so requested, in private. All possibly rational complaints were investigated, and these were remarkably few, and were found almost invariably to be due to the mental condition of the patient. The general health and condition of the patients was satisfactory.

*Auckland.*—Visited in January, February, April, June, September, 1914, and January, March, and May, 1915. The removal of the turbulent women patients to a special building, and the near prospect of removing to a separate building a similar class of male patients, will alter the whole character of the main building, and will neutralize to a considerable extent its initial error of being placed too near public roads. These facts, together with the gradual modernizing of the main building, will give it an air of comfort, which must react beneficially on the patients. It must be a source of satisfaction to Dr. Beattie, after years of work carried out under difficulties, to find things running more smoothly. It will not be long before further additions will be needed, owing to the expansion of Auckland; and probably the first instalment will take the shape of a nurses' home, liberating in the wards a number of rooms now occupied by the staff.

*Sunnyside.*—Visited in March, April, July, August, November, 1914, and February, March, and June, 1915. Of late, Dr. Gow's health has been indifferent, and I believe the staff has exercised a special effort to lighten the anxieties of his position. Dr. Lee, who was anxious to offer his services