

1922.
NEW ZEALAND.

MENTAL HOSPITALS OF THE DOMINION

(REPORT ON) FOR 1921.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF DEPARTMENT FOR THE CARE OF MENTAL DEFECTIVES to
His Excellency the GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

MY LORD, —

Wellington, 1st August, 1922.

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Inspector-General of
Mental Defectives for the year 1921.

I have, &c.,

C. J. PARR,
Minister in Charge of Department for the Care of
Mental Defectives.

The INSPECTOR-GENERAL to the Hon. C. J. PARR, C.M.G., the Minister in Charge of the
Department for the Care of Mental Defectives.

SIR, —

Wellington, 1st July, 1922.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ended 31st December, 1921.

The number of patients on the register at the end of the year, 4,871 (m., 2,772; f., 2,099), was 117 (m., 55; f., 62) higher than at the beginning, and the daily average under treatment during the year, 4,754 (m., 2,723; f., 2,031), was 100 (m., 49; f., 51) in excess of the previous year, while the total under care was 5,677. The number of Maoris at the end of the year was 65 (m., 34; f., 31).

The admissions numbered 881 (m., 479; f., 402), or 24 men more and 16 women fewer than in the previous year. The proportion per cent. of readmissions (16·23) was approximately the same as in the previous year, and 738 patients were admitted for the first time. To these admissions the Maoris contributed 21 and 7 respectively.

The ratio of all admissions (exclusive of Maoris) to population was 7·05 (m., 7·47; f., 6·61) to 10,000; and of first admissions, 5·94 (m., 6·53; f., 5·32); so that 1,417 persons in the general population contributed one patient, and 1,684 contributed a patient admitted for the first time.

The discharges (excluding transfers) numbered 446, or 41 fewer than in 1920; a smaller number of harmless unrecovered persons were returned to the care of friends, but the recoveries, 371 (m., 178; f., 193), exceeded last year's figures by 16 men and 45 women, and represented a percentage of 42·11 (m., 37·23; f., 47·88) on the total admitted.

The deaths, 58 fewer than in the previous year, numbered 318 (m., 201; f., 117), and represented a percentage of 5·60 on the total number resident.

There is a growing opinion in England favourable to treatment in rate-supported institutions of less pronounced and unconfirmed cases of mental disorder as voluntary boarders. Our experience is not unfavourable. Since the introduction of the principle in the 1911 Act, each year has shown an advance in the number of persons so placing themselves under treatment. Carried over from 1920 were 86 (m., 32; f., 54), and, during 1921, 104 (m., 50; f., 54) were admitted, making a total under care during the year of 190. That number has included examples of mental disorder, ranging from many incipient to a few fairly advanced, yet capable of comprehending what the procedure entailed, a *conditio sine qua non*. There have been also persons labouring under neurasthenia, senility, and organic brain-disease needing nursing, care, and medical treatment. It is noteworthy that 5 boarders only, representing 2·63 per cent. of the total under care, showed mental disease in degree sufficiently pronounced and sustained to render it improper for them to continue as voluntary boarders, and they had to be transferred to the register of patients. The discharges numbered 80 (m., 39; f., 41), and 6 died, leaving at the end of the year 99 (m., 36; f., 63). The daily average of voluntary boarders was 91 (m., 38; f., 53).