

FINANCIAL RESULTS OF THE YEAR.

The maintenance payments for the past year are set forth in the following:—

Payments for Patients on Register, 31st December, 1906.

Payments for Patients on Registry, 31st December, 1900.							£	s.	d.
54	at	54	12	0	per annum (maximum)	...	2,948	8	0
128	„	52	0	0	„	...	6,656	0	0
1	„	46	16	0	„	...	46	16	0
2	„	45	10	0	„	...	91	0	0
2	„	41	12	0	„	...	83	4	0
31	„	39	0	0	„	...	1,209	0	0
2	„	37	14	0	„	...	75	8	0
2	„	36	8	0	„	...	72	16	0
1	„	34	10	0	„	...	34	10	0
12	„	32	10	0	„	...	390	0	0
12	„	31	4	0	„	...	374	8	0
2	„	30	0	0	„	...	60	0	0
10	„	27	6	0	„	...	273	0	0
149	„	26	0	0	„	...	3,874	0	0
1	„	25	0	0	„	...	25	0	0
5	„	23	8	0	„	...	117	0	0
19	„	20	16	0	„	...	395	4	0
4	„	20	0	0	„	...	80	0	0
53	„	19	10	0	„	...	1,033	10	0
17	„	18	4	0	„	...	309	8	0
2	„	16	18	0	„	...	33	16	0
1	„	16	0	0	„	...	16	0	0
12	„	15	12	0	„	...	187	4	0
162	„	13	0	0	„	...	2,106	0	0
9	„	12	0	0	„	...	108	0	0
1	„	11	8	0	„	...	11	8	0
19	„	10	8	0	„	...	197	12	0
4	„	10	0	0	„	...	40	0	0
14	„	9	2	0	„	...	127	8	0
4	„	8	0	0	„	...	32	0	0
18	„	7	16	0	„	...	140	8	0
3	„	7	4	0	„	...	21	12	0
81	„	6	10	0	„	...	526	10	0
9	„	6	0	0	„	...	54	0	0
6	„	5	4	0	„	...	31	4	0
2	„	5	0	0	„	...	10	0	0
1	„	4	10	0	„	...	4	10	0
1	„	4	0	0	„	...	4	0	0
15	„	3	0	0	„	...	45	0	0
1	„	2	12	0	„	...	2	12	0
1	„	2	0	0	„	...	2	0	0
873 patients paying in the aggregate							21,849	16	0
2,291 „ nothing.									
3,164									

(The actual amount received and paid into bank for year ended the 31st December, 1906, was £21,480 5s. 5d.)

This makes an average payment, for those who pay anything, of £25 0s. 6d. per year, or 9s. 8d. per week; and over all the patients of £6 18s. 1d. per year, or 2s. 8d. per week.

The majority of patients have no relatives in the colony able to contribute to their maintenance, or within the kinship liable under the Destitute Persons Act, and the whole burden falls on the taxpayer. There are some who take no shame in shifting their burden on the State. They do not seem to appreciate that in so doing they are accepting charitable aid, and did we not soften our nomenclature the patient would be classified as “pauper.” Careful inquiries are made in each case in which an apparently reasonable amount is not offered, and when we suspect a desire to evade payment of what is deemed an equitable assessment the case is taken to Court. Last year there were twenty-nine prosecutions, of which twenty-one were successful. Except the Magistrate, by receiving information on oath, fix the payment to be made when the patient is first sent to the mental hospital, I do not think we can greatly better our present plan. Certainly, I do not think that a special official to inquire into and adjust maintenance matters would add to the total receipts the amount of his salary, not to mention his travelling-expenses. All things considered, the money now received is satisfactory, and a word of commendation is due to the hospital clerks, who act as receivers, for their zeal, and the police, who supply us with information.

At the first convenient opportunity an amendment of the Old-age Pensions Act is needed. At present the pension is suspended on the pensioner becoming insane, and the whole cost of such cases is defrayed by this Department. Considering that the causes for which the pension is cancelled are criminal, or quasi-criminal, the inclusion of insanity is objectionable. The pension