

The Examination for the Registration of Mental Nurses was divided into three parts—written answers to a paper, a *viva voce*, largely practical, conducted at each of the mental hospitals by the Medical Superintendent (in the case of Nelson the Medical Officer) and myself, and a practical examination in nursing, conducted by Miss Maclean. Commenting on the examination paper, the *Journal of Mental Science* says, "It is evident that the examination is at once searching and suitable in scope. The questions are justly fitted to the end in view—viz., the test of adequate knowledge in nursing."

There were 79 candidates, of whom 57 passed, having obtained at least 60 per cent. of the total marks, the average being nearly 74 per cent. I consider the results show a highly satisfactory standard, which may be appreciated by the following return: 19 candidates obtained 60 per cent. of the total marks; 11, 65 per cent.; 5, 70 per cent.; 8, 75 per cent.; 4, 80 per cent.; 7, 85 per cent.; and 3, 90 per cent.

The following, arranged in alphabetical order, are the successful candidates at the various hospitals:—

Auckland: Nurses—Fanny E. Britton, Agnes A. Earl, Emma Jane Harris, Gertrude Hosking, Helena Scandrett, Minnie Wood; attendants—William Beatt, Patrick Campion, Samuel Duncan, Walter Hichens, Charles C. Kavanagh, Frank Parkes.

Christchurch: Nurses—Christina Grant, Lily Williams; attendants—Thomas Bloor, Albert George Brailey, William T. Burbury, Edward B. Harris, Leonard Hebbard, Robert Newell, John Peters, Andrew J. Porter, Benjamin G. Salway, Charles Henry Sykes, Richard Truman, James Wicks.

Dunedin (Seacliff): Nurses—Alice Hilliard, Kathleen Keiler, Jessie Macgregor, Johan McLeod, Margaret Ann Whiting, Alice Wymer; attendants—William Aitcheson, William Cummock, John A. Fraser, John Pettigrew, Thomas Sneeston.

Nelson: Attendants—Frederick William Jones, James Satherley.

Porirua: Nurses—Jessie Adamson, Julia Kelly, Mimie Long, Annie McGrath; attendants—James Brown, William Brown, James Burgher, Thomas Cocker, William Dale, Henry Glanvill, Charles Edwin Matthews, Alexander A. Mitchell, Albert E. Mould, Leslie Tatnell, Mark D. Vickers.

Wellington: Nurse—Julia F. Shelton.

Ashburn Hall: Nurses—Isabel Ronald Guffie, Margaret Lyall.

Superannuation.—Another and a very good reason for the year being a memorable one for the service is the scheme of retiring-allowances under the Public Service Superannuation Act.

The English Lunacy Commissioners, in their sixty-first report, quote the following passage from their forty-fifth: "Fair salaries or wages, with the prospect of liberal pensions after disablement or reasonable length of service, offer, we think, the most influential inducements to really suitable persons to enter asylum service, and to remain in it as a permanent occupation." This is the opinion of all who have studied the question, and therefore the gratitude I express for the benefit conferred on the service is no empty compliment.

The Act applies to the public service without distinction, presuming all services to be sufficiently alike for practical purposes, and for this very reason effect is not given to its obvious intention of distributing benefits impartially. I bring the following facts under your notice, not from any desire that the service I represent should fare better than its deserts, but simply in the hope that its deserts may be appreciated and receive recognition.

The age on entering our service is higher than in other public services, and it will be necessary to fix a lower retiring-age, therefore service measured by years will not provide the adequate pensions which it is possible for persons in other services to obtain. I trust that the nature of the employment, and the fact that it leads to nothing great within itself and incapacitates for other occupations, will be considered sufficient ground to raise the one-sixtieth fraction, or every few years to presume an extra year's service.

The work of ministering to the insane entails subjection to discipline; it is anxious, responsible, often distasteful work; and, though not hard in the usual sense, is, to quote once more from the report of the English Commissioners, "wearing and not free from danger; while it calls for the exercise of qualities of intelligence, tact, and patience. . . . No one who has spent the best years of his life in an asylum is likely after retirement to succeed in any other occupation."

I stated above that it will be necessary to fix a lower retiring-age than that fixed for other workers, and this is so, unless it is intended that action under the proviso to section 18 of the Act is to be the rule rather than the exception. As a matter of fact, it would be a positive disadvantage to have a staff remaining on till retiring-age, because in time a large proportion would be unfit for prompt and vigilant execution of duties, and useless upon occasions requiring the exercise of special activity. I think, in consideration of the nature of the day's work, the option should be given of retiring not later than the age in the proviso, while yet the evening of life may be peacefully enjoyed. But this enjoyment is dependent upon an adequate pension; otherwise the option will seldom be taken, and action under the proviso may be forced. In some Departments persons entering as cadets are able to retire at fifty-five, after forty years' service, and may do other work should they be so minded. The objection, therefore, to optional retirement at sixty is not one of age, but of length of service. If, therefore, it be agreed that the nature of the work, as above detailed, may more than counterbalance its duration, the option of retiring at an earlier age, or after a shorter service, is a reasonable corollary.

As to "the prospect of liberal pensions," I would point out first, that the retiring-allowance in this service is not calculated on the whole salary as in other Departments. Board, lodging, washing, and uniforms are provided for the vast majority employed by us, and the cash part of the