

Our thanks are due to the *Herald* proprietors for a gratuitous supply of daily papers; to Mr. Macpherson for controlling the religious services; and the many ladies and gentlemen who have contributed towards the patients' amusements.

The Inspector-General, Mental Hospitals, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

R. M. BEATTIE.

SUNNYSIDE MENTAL HOSPITAL.

SIR,—

I have the honour to furnish my annual report for the year 1909.

In the first place, I have to record my thanks to the Government for my leave of absence, and am pleased to say that I feel greatly benefited by the relief from duty and the holiday in the Old Country. On my return I found the institution in the good order in which I anticipated it would be under Dr. Gribben's management, and take this opportunity of thanking Dr. Jeffreys and the staff for their loyal support of Dr. Gribben in the arduous duty of acting as *locum tenens*.

No new building was carried on in my absence—only repairs and finishing of work which had been begun. The new dairy and cowsheds were brought into commission, and are now working satisfactorily, and are a pleasure to see. The Shorthorn cows are giving good records, and after a year or two's culling I feel confident that we shall have a herd worthy of the traditions of Sunnyside. The mothers' records have been so good that I have experienced no difficulty in disposing of the young bulls from them and our imported dairy bull. The time has now come for a further importation, and, from the prices received for our stock, I am in a position to recommend a further outlay with confidence.

The deep well has been sunk, and I should like to see the cistern erected without delay, as there is a supply of splendid water now running to waste.

The new bathrooms are in use, and, as both the Minister in Charge and you yourself have seen, are giving satisfaction to the staff and pleasure to the patients. The whole bathing arrangements—showering, soaping and washing, reshowering, and then the tepid swimming-bath—insure perfect cleansing and healthy exercise, and I am assured by the attendants that bathing the patients has become a pleasure, as far as the behaviour of the patients is concerned, as compared to former conditions. The patients like it, and, in fact, have to be watched to see that they do not slip in for a second turn. The bathing is got through on two mornings weekly before breakfast, and 100 patients are bathed per hour, at an estimated cost in coal-consumption of 5s. for each bathing-morning.

Owing to the extension of the hot-water system, extra machinery in shop, &c., and an extra boiler become an urgent necessity.

At the end of the year we had 627 patients, being an increase of 24 over the previous year.

There were 129 admissions during the year, and 66 recoveries, giving a percentage of slightly over 50.

There were 31 deaths, which gives a percentage of 5·4 on the average number resident.

The usual religious services and the patients' entertainments have been carried out throughout the year.

I have, &c.,

W. BAXTER GOW, M.D.,

Medical Superintendent.

The Inspector-General of Mental Hospitals, Wellington.

SEACLIFF MENTAL HOSPITAL.

SIR,—

Mental Hospital, Seacliff, 18th June, 1910.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the Seacliff Mental Hospital for the year 1909.

The total number under treatment during the year was 944, and the average number 773. At the beginning of the year there were 763 patients, and at the close 829, being an increase of 66 in the twelve months.

This increase is due to an unusually large number of admissions (181) during 1909, and an unusually small proportion of discharges (72) and deaths (43), or 115 deductions under these two headings.

Without some fuller comment, the citation of these bare figures, showing the coincidence of a low death-rate and a low mental-recovery rate, would be very misleading. Further, the impression would be formed of a very great increase in the incidence of insanity—an entirely wrong assumption. In dealing with such fundamental considerations, nothing short of five years or even a decade is of any value. However, a few words may be said regarding the factors admission-rate, death-rate, and discharge-rate.

(1.) The *Admission-rate* is really increasing, but this is attributable mainly to the fact that our institutions are year by year being made more use of for the care of persons who would formerly have been kept by their friends and relations. This is sometimes commented on as a reflection on the natural guardians; but this insinuation is not a just one. In my experience there is comparatively little attempt on the part of families to shunt the care of troublesome relations on to the State; more often, indeed, they keep them in their homes longer than is advisable