

1920.
NEW ZEALAND.

MENTAL HOSPITALS OF THE DOMINION

(REPORT ON) FOR 1919.

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 ADMINISTRATOR OF THE GOVERNMENT.

SIR,—

Wellington, 1st August, 1920.

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Inspector-General of Mental Defectives for the year 1919.

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

SIR,—

Wellington, 1st July, 1920.

I herewith present the report for the year ended 31st December, 1919.

An analysis of the statistical tables in the appendix shows that the number of patients on the register at the beginning of the year was 4,546 (m., 2,603; f., 1,943); at the end 4,647 (m., 2,667; f., 1,980)—an increase of 64 males and 37 females. The total number under care during the year was 5,509 (m., 3,178; f., 2,331), being 101 (m., 85; f., 16) more than in 1918, while the average number resident, 4,527 (m., 2,620; f., 1,907), was 26 (m., 18; f., 8) in excess.

The ratio of patients on the register to population, exclusive of Maoris, was 39·39 per 10,000 (m., 44·66; f., 34·01), or 1 patient in 254 (m., 224; f., 294); including Maoris— their number on the register is 60 only—the figures are 38·27 per 10,000 (m., 43·34; f., 33·06), or 1 in 261 (m., 231; f., 302).

The admissions (excluding transfers—m., 63; f., 17) numbered 883 (m., 512; f., 371); the male admissions were 75 higher and the female 31 lower than in the previous year. Among these admissions are included 13 immigrants who had been here for less than a year, and 59 New-Zealanders were admitted after return from abroad, 58 being returned soldiers.

Of the 883 cases admitted, 15·75 per cent. were of patients who had previously been treated to recovery in our institutions, leaving the number of first admissions 744 (m., 448; f., 296), an increase of 67 males and a decrease of 27 females compared with 1918.

The ratio of admissions to population (excluding Maoris) was 7·66 per 10,000, and for first admissions 6·47, or, in other words, every 1,305 persons in the general population contributed an admission, and every 1,546 a first admission. The previous decennial average was 7·53 and 6·31.

The total number of patients discharged (excluding transfers) was 437 (m., 233; f., 204), of which 337 (m., 190; f., 147) were discharged as recovered. The remaining 100 (m., 43; f., 57), though not recovered, were sufficiently well to be placed under the care of relatives or friends.

The percentage proportion of recoveries on admissions was 38·17 (m., 37·11; f., 39·62), as against 33·73 (m., 32·49; f., 35·07) in the previous year, and 39·22 (m., 36·78; f., 42·79) in the average for all years since 1876.

The deaths numbered 342 (m., 212; f., 130), giving a percentage of deaths on the average number resident of 7·55 (m., 8·09; f., 6·82), and on the total number (general register) under care during the year of 6·21 (m., 6·67; f., 5·58). The corresponding percentages for the previous year were 9·95 (m., 10·53; f., 9·16) and 8·28 (m., 8·86; f., 7·51) respectively.

As usual, some persons whose condition was doubtful as regards certification as mentally defective have been received for observation at the instance of the Magistrate. At the beginning of the year there were 7 (m., 6; f., 1) such, and 98 (m., 73; f., 25) were received during the year. Of this number, 57 (m., 46; f., 11) were discharged, 42 (m., 28; f., 14) had to be placed under ordinary reception orders, 2 men died, and 4 (m., 3; f., 1) were under observation at the end of the year. These cases do not figure in the statistics, nor do the voluntary boarders, of whom there was a daily average of 54 in the State institutions. At the beginning of the year there were 51 (m., 20; f., 31), and 95 (m., 36; f., 59) were admitted during the year. Six (m., 3; f., 3) had ultimately to be placed on the register of patients, 5 (m., 3; f., 2) died, and 66 (m., 24; f., 42) were discharged, leaving 69 (m., 26; f., 43) resident at the end of the year. The results in the case of persons remanded for observation and in the treatment of voluntary boarders, whereby many are saved from being committed as patients, are distinctly encouraging. Altogether 123 such inmates recovered or left much improved without formal admission as patients.