

In the following table the general population and the mental-hospital population, with its admissions and recoveries, are arranged in proportions per cent. of age-groups.

Age-groups.	Proportions at each Age-group of 100 Persons.											
	In the General Population (Approximate).			In Mental Hospitals on 31st December, 1919.			Admitted to Mental Hospitals in 1919.			Discharged as Recovered in 1919.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 15 ..	30.17	32.58	31.31	1.72	1.59	1.67	4.99	3.04	4.17	0.54	0.69	0.61
15 and under 20 ..	8.44	9.17	8.78	2.10	2.52	2.27	5.59	4.97	5.33	3.78	4.83	4.24
20 .. 30	19.66	19.67	19.66	10.14	8.88	9.60	20.16	16.57	18.66	21.62	21.38	21.52
30 .. 40	16.73	15.99	16.39	22.15	20.17	21.31	22.56	24.04	23.18	28.11	28.96	28.48
40 .. 50	10.44	10.08	10.26	24.09	24.69	24.35	17.97	25.14	20.97	27.57	22.76	25.45
50 .. 60	6.96	6.13	6.57	17.92	21.15	19.29	12.37	11.60	12.05	10.27	12.41	11.21
60 .. 70	4.47	3.98	4.24	13.53	13.14	13.37	6.59	9.39	7.76	5.95	7.59	6.67
70 .. 80	2.62	1.96	2.30	6.41	6.37	6.39	7.18	4.14	5.91	2.16	1.38	1.82
80 and upwards..	0.51	0.44	0.49	1.94	1.49	1.75	2.59	1.11	1.97	..	..	..

Comparing the age-distribution of the general population with ours one immediately learns that insanity is an adult disease, one-third of the general and only one-sixtieth of our special population being contributed by persons under fifteen years of age. This fact disturbs the relative value of the other figures; but if the juveniles in each series were divided proportionately among the other groups the mental hospitals would still have a markedly higher proportion of elderly persons, due mainly to the higher tendency amongst the aged to mental disorder, partly to their small chance of recovery and to institutional care prolonging their lives, and partly to the admission of senile patients who should be treated elsewhere than in a mental hospital. The proportion in the admission table accentuates what has been said about senile cases, and it will be noted that the proportion of juveniles is relatively higher. This has been observed of recent years, and called forth the remarks in my last report for the necessity of a separate institution for their care and training. The largest proportion of admissions and recoveries is contributed by persons between these extremes, and we would be in a much better position to deal with them if we were not hampered by the presence in the same institutions of mentally deficient children and aged mentally infirm, quite apart from the fact that they are occupying accommodation which was designed for the mentally unsound. The following table will make this clear. It is brought up to the 5th June, 1920, and demonstrates a want of accommodation which would be more than adjusted if those in their dotage and the mentally deficient were provided for elsewhere. As things are, there are some adjustments still to be made by transfer of patients to new buildings.

Our discharge-rate is high, our death-rate low, and between these and the total admissions there is always a balance more or less permanently added to our population. I illustrated this some years ago by picturing the structural proportions which general hospitals would attain if the Boards were forced to keep patients till they had practically recovered the use of body and limb they had prior to their illness.

Last year 883 patients were admitted, and 779 were discharged or died; thus 104 were added to the mentally defective population, or 101 to the mental hospitals, for 3 were transferred from mental hospitals to private care as single patients.

We have been endeavouring to keep pace with estimated increments and a little more besides; but the difficulty of getting material and labour has meant slow progress. At the present time buildings so delayed are being proceeded with at Auckland, Tokanui, Nelson, Sunnyside, and Waitati, and more will be needed before these are finished.

Considering the obligation to study economy, the shortness of labour in war years, and the slow rate of progress in building since, we are not so badly off for bare accommodation as we might have been, had we not done a good deal when we were able; nor, for that matter, are we as badly off as many public bodies and private individuals are at present. But we want more than bare accommodation. By reference to the table below it will be seen that the total accommodation is divided into a number of wards, and, I may add, some of these wards are subdivided. If patients labouring under the different classes of mental disorder could at all times be trusted to fill the wards as designed there would be very little trouble; but one is dealing with a very uncertain quantity, and so one ward may be overfilled while another has accommodation to spare. We are countering this by adding new wards instead of additions to existing wards, and so providing for more detailed classification. The reception wards are in this respect a noteworthy addition to our resources. A considerable portion of our expenditure will be directed not to adding to dormitory accommodation, but to enlarging old-time living-rooms and modernizing buildings which have got out of date but are too good to abandon, and also to carrying out renovations and repairs which were largely suspended during the war years.

Mental Hospital.	Mentally Defective Patients on Register as classified on 5th June, 1920.												Patients on Register.				Accommodation on 5th June, 1920.			
	Class I, Unsound Mind.		Class II, Mentally Infirm.		Class III, Idiots.		Class IV, Imbeciles.		Class V, Feeble-minded.		Class VI, Epileptics.		Total.		Absent on Probation.		Number of Wards.		Total.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Auckland ..	313	235	141	48	8	6	91	53	4	31	49	29	606	402	5	13	9	8	645	385
Christchurch ..	231	300	40	29	7	4	33	39	20	11	30	37	361	420	11	18	8	7	380	435
Dunedin (Seacliff and Waitati)	485	325	44	37	11	4	40	31	11	9	48	33	639	439	4	2	11	7	532	403
Hokitika ..	155	40	20	14	2	1	5	2	4	8	12	6	198	71	1	2	4	2	206	64
Nelson ..	24	34	35	39	12	8	10	10	7	7	9	8	97	106	2	4	2	3	92	104
Porirua ..	504	394	22	16	4	4	22	27	16	15	55	30	623	486	5	14	10	8	590	403
Tokanui ..	141	41	..	..	..	1	5	3	2	1	1	3	149	49	..	..	4	2	172	99
Totals ..	1,853	1,369	302	183	44	28	206	165	64	82	204	146	2,673	1,973	28	53	48	37	2,617	1,893