

Our religious services and entertainments have been carried on as usual.

The farm continues to be capably managed. Our thanks are due to the farm-manager and the other senior officers for the work accomplished in the face of innumerable difficulties.

We have to gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the District Inspectors and the Official Visitors, and to express our thanks to the *Herald* for gratuitous daily papers, to Mr. McPherson for weekly religious services, and to various city bands for music, which was specially appreciated.

PORIRUA MENTAL HOSPITAL.

DR. HASSELL reports :—

The total number under care during the year was 1,283 (723 males and 560 females); the average number resident was 1,029. 258 were admitted, of whom 39 were readmissions and 7 transfers from other mental hospitals. 79 died (46 males and 33 females). The total number under care was 43 more, and those admitted for the first time 7 more, than in the previous year.

The official recovery-rate was only 29·8 per cent. of the number admitted. This low rate is partly accounted for by a number of patients sent out on probation failing to present themselves for examination at the end of the period, and so, in accordance with the Act, they had to be recorded as "discharged unrecovered." There is little doubt that a fair proportion of these had recovered.

The percentage of deaths on the average number resident was 7·67. Of the 79 patients who died, 33 suffered from disease associated with old age and 12 from general paralysis. On the whole the physical health of the patients has been good, and no epidemic sickness visited the institution. Unfortunately, two cases of suicide occurred—one a liberty patient and the other a voluntary boarder. Details of these cases have already been supplied to you.

There has been a serious shortage in the nursing staff on the female side. Although our need was well advertised in the Wellington and provincial papers, the substantial increase of salaries offered has not induced sufficient candidates to come forward to fill vacancies. The care and treatment of the female patients was also handicapped by overcrowding in the wards.

During one of your visits of inspection I laid stress on the unsuitable mess-room accommodation for both the attendants and the nurses. These rooms are dull, cheerless, and altogether too small. This part of the institution certainly wants remodelling and fitting accommodation provided.

At his own request, and for family reasons, Mr. Barnes, who has for a number of years been head attendant, was transferred to the staff of the Christchurch Mental Hospital in August. I regretted very much losing the services of so trustworthy and capable an officer. The vacancy at this Mental Hospital was filled by the promotion of Mr. Quill from the Seacliff 'Mental' Hospital staff, and he has proved himself well qualified for the post.

I have to acknowledge the able assistance afforded me by my colleagues Drs. Prins and Macpherson and by senior officers of the staff. I much regret that the Chief Clerk, Mr. Holder, has been in poor health for a great part of the year. He certainly needs a rest and change from his present duties, which he has performed with singular ability and conscientiousness for many years.

CHRISTCHURCH MENTAL HOSPITAL.

DR. GRIBBEN reports :—

At the beginning of the year 1919 there were 744 patients on the register, of whom 339 were males and 405 females. During the year there were admitted 94 males and 64 females, and at the end of the year there were remaining 780 patients, an increase of 36 for the year. There were 38 deaths (22 males and 16 females), giving a death-rate of 5·3 per cent. on the average number resident. There were 60 recoveries (25 males and 35 females), giving a rate of 37·9 per cent. on the admissions.

The general health of the patients has been satisfactory. Unfortunately, amongst admissions there was, as usual, a considerable proportion of patients suffering from physiological senile degeneration, for whom some provision other than that available in mental hospitals should be provided. One male patient attempted suicide. There were no serious casualties.

The need for the proposed extensions on the female side has now become urgent; the work has started, and its completion will considerably relieve the difficulties at present being experienced. A large amount of renovation and repair work called for in the wards, which it was impossible to cope with during the war, will have to be undertaken. In many places the old plaster is perished and falling off the walls.

The patients' entertainments are being carried on with as much variety as possible, and in this connection the possession on the place of a plant for the running of pictures has proved a great boon, for not only are regular entertainments of this class much appreciated, but it has been possible to provide extra odd hours during the winter evenings, which have been a distinct success and are eagerly looked forward to.

The buying of stock at the market and having it killed for our use at the public abattoir has again proved a very pronounced success. During the past year mutton has cost 5·55d. per pound and beef 5·08d. per pound. Apart from the question of economy, it must be borne in mind that the quality of the meat is of the best, and this again results in a smaller consumption. Furthermore, this system admits of a much greater variety in the meals than is possible under contract, an important item in institution dietary.

It is with sincere regret that I record the death of Mr. T. I. Smail. Possessed of a deep, practical sympathy for those afflicted, combined with a character absolutely fearless and a whole-souled devotion to duty that was a shining example to any one associated with him, Mr. Smail made of the