

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORTS.

AUCKLAND MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. PRINS reports:—

I have the honour to submit to you my annual report for the year ended 31st December, 1928.

The total number of cases under care has been 1,391, with a weekly average of 1,134. The admissions have numbered 212 (males 106, females 106), a decrease of 15 on last year's total. Of these 162 were admitted for the first time.

The general health of the Hospital has been good, the only unusual feature being an outbreak of scarlet fever on the female side, there being 3 nurses and 10 patients at present in isolation. There was also 1 case of enteric fever.

The deaths have numbered 77 (45 males and 32 females), 40 being over sixty years of age. Senile decay and heart-disease were the principal causes.

Probation has been again largely made use of, there being at present 77 patients on leave in the care of their people.

There has been a gratifying increase in the number of voluntary boarders—59 males and 68 females being under care during the year. Of these 52 were new cases and 24 were readmitted. The discharges numbered no less than 47 (25 males and 22 females), which shows the great help it is when people realize they are ill and enter the Hospital voluntarily for treatment. The discharges apart from these have numbered 100, 57 of which left the Hospital "recovered."

The most important improvement during the year has been the alterations to Park House. The large day-room has been divided into two, one part being used as a dining-room. The new quarters for the Matrons have been completed. A new coal-bunker has been built, which allows greatly increased space by the store and engine-room. The veranda at the Nervous Unit has been partly enclosed, and a new lawn laid out. The grounds at the Nurses' Home have been finished, and the lawn at the Wolf Home relaid.

There has been a large increase in the number of doors left open, further removal of shutters and stops from the windows, allowing the patients much increased liberty, and a great improvement in ventilation generally.

The Male Hospital Ward continues to be used as much as possible for the new cases, and there has been very little abuse of the freedom allowed. The Wolf Home receives every possible female and suitable male case. The kitchen has been reorganized, and the meals are now wholly cooked and prepared in the Home, an innovation that is much appreciated. The veranda added to the Female Infirmary Ward is a great improvement. The main kitchen has had a number of repairs carried out—new boilers, a steamer, canopies, &c., being installed—and a further rearrangement will be effected shortly. The laundry has a new electric motor in lieu of the old steam-engine, and electric irons have been installed. A new ironing-machine will, it is hoped, arrive shortly. The painting gang has been busily employed.

Lectures have been given to the nurses and attendants by the medical staff for the first and final examinations, six nurses and thirteen attendants sitting for the certificate.

The general recreation of the hospital has been looked after. The annual picnic to Henderson was held in February, a total of over 450 being conveyed by train and bus, the latter taking some of the crippled and infirm, who would otherwise have been unable to go. During the winter the usual fortnightly dances and entertainments were held. The Salvation Army and Avondale bands have given concerts on Sunday mornings. The usual picnics have been held, and parties have gone to the pictures and football matches, seats being kindly provided by the managements. The bowlers have played their usual tournaments, and home and away matches. Tennis, croquet, and golf have all been largely played. The annual Christmas tree was a great success, the concert being provided by members of the Optimists Club. We are once more indebted to many friends for suitable gifts and donations.

The Auckland Clinical Society again held one of their meetings at the Hospital, and had cases demonstrated to them by the medical staff.

Visits have been paid by Mr. Blomfield (District Inspector), Mr. Alexander, Mrs. Von Sturmer, Mrs. Armitage, Official Visitors, and by Sister Hanna and Miss Jackson.

Services have been held every Sunday. The Archbishop, as usual, came at Christmas-time. The Rev. Mr. Budd and Father Holbrook visited frequently.

The Hospital has received as gifts a wireless set and six loud-speakers from Mrs. Wilson, Mr. Alexander donating the wire necessary to connect up the various day-rooms and parks; also a set and loud-speaker for the Male Hospital from Mrs. Hardie Neil. Crystal sets have been given and installed by Mr. Hayden in the Wolf Home, Nervous Unit, and in some wards of the main building. Mr. Hayden has also obtained for us pictures and books. A gramophone was donated by the Rotary Club.

Mr. Lang, Head Attendant, retired after forty years' service, being the first in the Department to do so. He will be much missed, and carries the good wishes of everybody in his well-earned retirement. He has been succeeded by Mr. McKenzie.

Mr. White has been appointed Resident Engineer, and has been instrumental in carrying out a large number of improvements in the hot-water service, and in minor things, which have contributed largely to the comfort of the patients and staff.

Drs. Hart and Tothill have joined the staff. Dr. Jary resigned, and has the good wishes of all on her approaching marriage.

During my absence on sick-leave Dr. J. Russell was in charge of the Hospital.

In conclusion, I have to thank all my officers, nurses, and attendants for their help and co-operation at all times in the work of the Hospital.