

A recent amendment to the Nurses and Midwives Registration Act enables our trainees, after following the prescribed course of study, to sit for the State Preliminary Examination for general trained nurses. This year eight of our trainees entered, and all were successful.

With a view to accelerating the promotion of our most promising younger male staff an examination to qualify for promotion to Head Attendant has been instituted, and the successful candidates have all been of a good type.

THE WAR AND MENTAL DISORDERS.

Contrary to widely expressed popular belief, there is no reason to anticipate anything but a very small incidence of mental disorders amongst our soldiers on active service. Apart from the fact that our soldiers are a specially selected group between certain age-limits, past experience has clearly demonstrated that stable, fit, and disciplined men sharing a common interest with their fellows, and actuated and exalted in a cause they believe to be a just one, can face the extremes of danger and privation without losing their mental balance.

It is of interest to note that out of approximately 6,000,000 troops who served between 1914 and 1918, the cases of insanity regarded as caused or aggravated by war numbered only 13,030.

In New Zealand during approximately the same period only 264 soldiers who had served overseas were admitted to mental hospitals.

Similar considerations would seem to apply to the civilian population of Great Britain to-day, as reports all seem to indicate that, in spite of the front-line positions of civilians, there has been no appreciable increase in the incidence of mental disorders.

Experience of the last war indicated that the less stable and those who are mentally less well equipped than what we regard as "normal" would not be able to make a successful readjustment from civilian to military life. It was therefore arranged that the rolls of recruits should be submitted to this Department with a view to the removal of the names of all ex-patients from the Active Service list. This measure combined, with the disclosure under the stress of camp life of mental instability and deficiency not obvious upon first examination, has undoubtedly, prevented much wastage in training and transport.

At the time of writing—that is, after fifteen months of war—only two soldiers and two sailors who have been on active service overseas have been admitted to our hospitals, whereas in the same period twenty-one soldiers have been admitted from training camps in New Zealand.

APPRECIATION.

I desire to express my keen appreciation of the work done throughout the year by the staffs of the Department and by other helpers, many of whom act in an honorary capacity. Owing to the wartime need for abbreviation of reports it has not been possible to make individual reference to services rendered but I am none the less grateful.

T. G. GRAY, Director-General.

AUCKLAND MENTAL HOSPITAL.

DR. BUCHANAN reports:—

The total number of cases under care during the year was 1,851, with a weekly average of 1,285. The total admissions numbered 405—under certification 131 males, 151 females; by transfer 13 males, 5 females; on remand 6 males, 2 females; and as voluntary boarders 54 males and 43 females.

During the year 180 patients (87 males and 93 females) and 98 voluntary boarders (51 males, 47 females) were discharged. Transfers to other hospitals numbered 48 (22 males, 26 females).

At the end of the year 153 patients were on probation and 69 on full parole and 151 on limited parole.

I append figures relative to the Psychiatric Clinic held at the Auckland Public Hospital by Dr. Hunter and myself:

	Tuesdays.	Thursdays (Dr. Hunter.)	Total.
(1) Number of separate persons seen	M. 264 F. 14	132 ..	396 14
(2) Number of	278	132	410
(a) First visits	165	132	297
(b) Subsequent consultations	675	445	1,120
	840	577	1,417
(3) Sources of reference—			
Pensions Department	175	93	268
Prisons Department	23	..	23
Police Department	5	..	5
Medical practitioners	34	22	56
Voluntary calls	16	3	19
Public hospital	13	10	23
Social Welfare League	1	..	2
Officer Commanding Northern Military Com- mand	2	3	5
Christchurch Mental Hospital	2	1	3
Royal New Zealand Air Force	2	..	2
Auckland Mental Hospital	3	..	3
Public Service Commissioner	1	..	1
	278	132	410