

The Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF MENTAL HOSPITALS to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.
 MY LORD,—

Wellington, 30th July, 1910.

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Inspector-General of Mental Hospitals on the mental hospitals of the Dominion for the year 1909.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

GEO. FOWLDS,

Minister in Charge of Mental Hospitals.

The INSPECTOR-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF MENTAL HOSPITALS.

SIR,—

Wellington, 1st July, 1910.

I have the honour to present the statutory report on the mental hospitals of the Dominion for the year ended 31st December, 1909.

The number of patients on the register at the beginning of the year was 3,414 (males, 1,997; females, 1,417), and at the end 3,549 (m., 2,083; f., 1,466), an increase of 135 (m., 86; f., 49). The increase in 1908, the highest on record, exceeded that of the year under review by 39 (m., 2; f., 37). It is not the number only but the quality of the admissions which determines these annual increments; therefore, when dealing with comparatively small figures one has not to contrast too strongly one year with another, but rest content with observing any general tendency which may be disclosed by larger figures—at least the averages of quinquennial periods. Taking the last three of these, one finds that in the period 1894–98 the average yearly admission-rate was 450, and the average yearly increment, the excess of admissions over discharges and deaths, was 88; the corresponding figures for 1899–1903 were 526 and 96, and for 1904–8 were 639 and 91.

Distribution.—Counting 108 (m., 77; f., 31) absent on leave as still resident in the mental hospital whence they left, the 3,549 patients on the register at the end of the year were distributed as follows:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Auckland	458	289	747
Christchurch	337	290	627
Dunedin (Seacliff)	500	329	829
Hokitika	140	55	195
Nelson	97	105	202
Porirua	371	324	695
Wellington	155	55	210
Ashburn Hall (private mental hospital)	25	19	44
	2,083	1,466	3,549

Of those technically on leave, 33 men were resident at the Camp, near Dunedin, and 18 boys at the Home for Feeble-minded at Richmond.

Ratio to Population.—The following calculations show the ratio of patients on the register at the end of the year to the estimated general population, both exclusive and inclusive of the Native race. The number of Maoris on the register was 38 only (m., 24; f., 14).

The proportion of the total insane to the total population was,—

Exclusive of Maoris	35·72 per 10,000, or 1 in 280
Inclusive of Maoris	34·43 " 1 in 290

The proportion of the male insane to the male population,—

Exclusive of Maoris	39·57 " 1 in 253
Inclusive of Maoris	38·15 " 1 in 261

The proportion of the female insane to the female population,—

Exclusive of Maoris	31·40 " 1 in 318
Inclusive of Maoris	30·24 " 1 in 331

Compare these figures with those of last year, and it will be seen that the ratio per 10,000 has advanced 0·99 for males and 0·18 for females. As I have stated before, such ratios would find their parallel in general hospitals if those patients only were discharged who were apparently restored to the state of bodily health and integrity which preceded the disorder or accident for which they were admitted.

Of interest in this connection is the following comparison, quoted from an article by Dr. Urquhart in the *Journal of Mental Science* of April, 1909:—

	Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.		Perth Royal Asylum.
	General Diseases.	Nervous Diseases.	Certified Insane.
Total cases	4,082	873	982
Of whom percentage of—			
Recovered	33·7	23·0	31·8
Unrecovered	55·5	69·3	51·3
Died	10·7	7·5	16·7