

ing from paranoia who escaped and remained in hiding for three months, thereby being discharged, District Inspector Galloway noted that the law should be amended so as to prevent such automatic discharge. The patient in question was recommitted. The killing of our own beef and mutton has proved highly satisfactory, and the fishing-station has augmented the food-supply as in the past. The necessity for a freezing-chamber at Seacliff to receive the freshly caught fish is recognized as necessary both for that institution and for the supply of others.

*Hokitika.*—Visited in June. Mr. Downey has arrived at retiring-age, but has agreed to carry on a little longer in order that the changes inevitable on his retirement may be postponed till they can be more conveniently carried out. The year's doings have the merit of being uneventful. Further experience has confirmed the advantage of buying stock for our own consumption.

*Nelson.*—Visited in April and August, 1915, and in January, 1916. The addition to the annexe is now in occupation, and a start is to be made with the rebuilding of the institution. Tenders have been authorized for the new kitchen, and it is expected that the reception cottage will be soon commenced. Dr. Jeffreys put in an application to be allowed to go to the front, which he withdrew upon my representations as to the necessity for the medical care of the patients.

At Richmond, where is located the institution for unteachable defective boys, there is not much to report. The boys continue to be well cared for under Mrs. Howard and the medical supervision of Dr. Jeffreys.

*Porirua.*—Visited in February, April, July, September, 1915, and in February and April, 1916. The matter of accommodation has been dealt with under the special heading. Dr. Hodgson was transferred here as Assistant Medical Officer, and quite recently Dr. McKillop has returned invalided from the front, but able to resume work. Apart from the accommodation, the greatest need here is a remodelling of the drainage system. The septic-tank effluent enters a creek which goes through the township, and was certainly objectionable during the hot, dry weather. Preliminary surveys have been made for piping the effluent into the harbour, and these are now being completed. It is to be hoped that the work will be regarded as urgent.

*Tokanui.*—Visited in January, May, October, 1915, and in January and March, 1916. In addition to the buildings completed and projected for the accommodation of patients, some farm buildings will be necessary. Electric light is installed. The temporary water-service will soon give place to the permanent supply, the pipes for which are now being laid. Under arrangement with the Justice Department a supply of road-metal has been obtained for the Te Mawhai Road. When this is in good order and the even-graded road now under construction from Waikeria joins it many of our pioneering difficulties will be overcome. The Justice Department's Waikeria property adjoins ours, and under arrangement with that Department Mr. Drysdale, late Manager of the Weraroa Experimental Farm, has been appointed joint estate-manager. The following is an excerpt from his first report: "From my observation of this farm, after a short residence, I am confident that with good farming the soil will respond profitably and compare very favourably with some of the richer soils in other districts."

*Ashburn Hall.*—Visited in March, June, and November, 1915. Recently the medical control of this licensed hospital has passed to Dr. Will from Dr. Alexander, who administered it for many years with conspicuous ability. I found everything in excellent order.

#### *Conclusion.*

As in the case of other Departments, this has been a strenuous year; but more particularly so with us, who have the care of irresponsible human beings. At each of the larger institutions we have been an Assistant Medical Officer short, and the work of administration has been unusually anxious because of the number of attendants who volunteered for active service. Their names, their deeds, and their losses will be recorded elsewhere, but I may state that the Department is proud of their spontaneous response to the call and of their record.

In conclusion, sir, I would state that you know of my wishes for the betterment of the institutions, and that I know of your desires in the same direction, and of your intention to carry them out as far as present circumstances permit.

FRANK HAY.