

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORTS.

AUCKLAND MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. PRINS reports :—

I have the honour to present to you my annual report for the year ending 31st December, 1926.

During the year there have been 1,296 patients under care, with an average of 1,075 resident. The new cases numbered 202, of whom 139 were admitted for the first time. The discharges numbered 68. The admissions were fewer than last year, which can probably be accounted for by Tokanui taking part of our district, and the fewer number of discharges is largely accounted for by a much larger number than last year leaving the Hospital on probation. The deaths numbered 80, senile decay and heart-disease being the principal causes. Sixty-four voluntary boarders were treated, 35 being new admissions, while 22 were discharged and one died, leaving 41 in residence. In no case was it found necessary to resort to certification for further detention.

The ventilation of the wards has been completed throughout with very marked benefit.

The new male hospital ward has been opened, and is meeting a great want. It is bright and airy, and the almost total absence of restraint has caused the patients—mostly new admissions—to react, so that the amount of trouble and anxiety due to a patient breaking his parole has been most gratifyingly small.

The airing-court in Male 3 Ward has been enlarged and asphalted. This has greatly improved the general appearance, and has added to the comfort of the patients. The airing-courts and parks have been provided with bubble fountains.

The Wolfe Home continues to be used as an admission ward for every possible female case. The croquet-lawn and tennis-courts are much used in the summer, and the evening concert parties are much appreciated.

A new departure has been made in allowing suitable cases to go out in small parties unattended, thus avoiding the morbid curiosity of the general public. This has been most successful, and has made a real pleasure of what was formerly an unpleasant duty. The same principle has also been extended successfully to the other parts of the building.

Another change has been made in dividing Park House into two wards. The improvement is noticeable, and the new day-room, in furniture and appearance, compares more than favourably with any there is in the Hospital.

A new washing-machine and extractor will shortly be installed in the laundry, and electrically-driven machinery has been introduced.

A painting gang has been formed, and has done remarkably well both inside the building and out.

The new unit for nervous disease is nearly completed, except for the main sewerage connections.

It was a great disappointment that the Entertainment Hall was found to be unsuitable for the installation of a cinematograph.

During the winter lectures were given to the nurses and attendants, and there were the usual dances, entertainments, visits by bands, &c.

Parties of patients also attended various picture-theatres and entertainments in the city, seats being kindly provided by the various managers concerned.

The bowlers have been as enthusiastic as ever, home and away matches being played.

The Rotary Club has given many gifts of all kinds, and also was responsible for the annual Christmas tree, a memorable evening resulting.

Mesdames Arthur D., R. M., F. W., Joseph, and John M. Wilson, and Mrs. John Alexander each generously donated the sum of £25 to a fund from which six gramophones were purchased, and the balance is being held to help necessitous cases on discharge, a most useful and necessary adjunct to our work.

Church services have been held, and regular visits paid by Rev. D. Macpherson, Rev. E. C. Budd, and Father Holbrook, while on the 26th December the Archbishop of New Zealand visited, and preached at the afternoon service.

A weekly clinic at the Public Hospital has been started, and an increasing number of patients and their friends are attending. Cases are also seen in the Hospital wards, and I have to thank the Hospital Board and Dr. Maguire for their interest and co-operation.

During the year the Auckland Clinical Society held one of their regular meetings at the Hospital. Cases were demonstrated by our medical staff, and the exhibition of patients' work arranged by the Matron created much interest.

During the coming year it is intended to repaint the whole building, an internal telephone system will be installed, and a very necessary Nurses' Home will be built.

I am indebted to Messrs. Blomfield and Alexander for their help and advice on numerous occasions, and to Mrs. Armitage, Mrs. Von Sturmer, Miss Jackson, and Sister Hannah, who have also visited regularly.

In conclusion, I have to thank all my staff for their help and co-operation.