

1928.

NEW ZEALAND.

MENTAL HOSPITALS OF THE DOMINION

(REPORT ON) FOR 1927.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF DEPARTMENT FOR THE CARE OF MENTAL DEFECTIVES to
His Excellency the GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Wellington, 1st July, 1928.

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report for the year 1927 of the Inspector-General of Mental Defectives.

I have, &c.,

J. A. YOUNG,

Minister in Charge of Department for the Care of
Mental Defectives.The INSPECTOR-GENERAL to the Hon. J. A. YOUNG, the Minister in Charge of the Department for
the Care of Mental Defectives.

SIR,—

Wellington, 1st July, 1928.

I have the honour to present my report for the year ending 31st December, 1927.

During the first five months of the period under review I was absent from the Dominion on a visit to Great Britain, America, and the Continent of Europe, where I acquainted myself with recent developments in connection with the problems of mental deficiency and the treatment of mental unbalance. My observations and recommendations on these matters have been the subject of a separate report.

In October last I assumed control of this Department upon the retirement of Sir Truby King, whose connection with the Government had extended over a period of nearly forty years. It is not necessary that I should refer here to the very valuable work which Sir Truby has rendered to the community during his long term of public service, but it is fitting that I should pay tribute to the breadth of vision, untiring energy, and conspicuously unselfish devotion to duty which he brought to bear upon his direction of the Department, and which are reflected in the provisions made during the past triennium for the reception, classification, and treatment of the mentally afflicted.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY TREATMENT.

The importance of getting into touch with cases of mental disorder long before they are "certifiable," and the assumption of treatment at a stage when there is every chance of a successful issue, is being more generally recognized, and this has resulted in an extension of out-patient clinics, whose functions are preventive as well as curative. These clinics are doing excellent work in the main centres of New Zealand, and there has been a rapid and progressive increase in the number of consultations since their inception.

Many cases, however, even in the pre-certifiable stage require observation and treatment of a kind which involves residence in an institution, and in order to ensure success and overcome ingrained popular prejudice the accommodation provided for this purpose must be such as will not entail any association with patients of a degraded type.

These requirements are being met in many countries by the erection of entirely detached clinics or psychopathic hospitals, associated, as a rule, with general hospitals, and I visited many of these on my recent trip, such as the Phipps clinic at Baltimore, the Maudsley in London, and that at