

1875.

NEW ZEALAND.

## LUNATIC ASYLUMS IN NEW ZEALAND,

(REPORTS ON THE).

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

## No. 1.

Mr. MORPETH to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Auckland.

REPORT by the INSPECTOR on the STATE of the PROVINCIAL LUNATIC ASYLUM, AUCKLAND, up to the 31st December, 1874.

MY first visit of inspection to the Provincial Lunatic Asylum was on 2nd April, 1874. Accompanied by the Superintendent-Surgeon, Dr. Aicken, and the Keeper, Mr. Lowrey, I was shown every patient and every part of the building. I was more favourably impressed with the appearance of the patients than I anticipated I should be, both in regard to cleanliness and to orderly behaviour. Their dress, however, was that of felons; but of this more hereafter. I examined all the apartments throughout the building; the bedrooms occupied by the patients, both male and female; and their refectories. I felt pleased that such cleanliness and order prevailed, and that the patients generally brightened up when the Surgeon-Superintendent came amongst them. My subsequent visits have convinced me that he merits their regard. The attendants were introduced to me, of whom there are eight for the male patients, besides the Keeper and the Night Watchman, and five for the female patients, exclusive of the Matron, besides a Night Nurse, not long since added. Since that period I have had ample opportunity of observing their treatment of the patients committed to their care, and in justice to them I must say, so far as it has come within my own observation, it has been unexceptionally good. I notice their conduct, but I do not interfere with their duties. Everything throughout the establishment is conducted with the greatest propriety.

The Superintendent-Surgeon pointed out to me the overcrowded state of the bedrooms, and the evil results therefrom, both as regards the comfort and the health of the inmates. My subsequent visits and experience all tend to convince me more strongly that unless ample accommodation be speedily provided the consequence will be dreadful. The Superintendent-Surgeon, when called upon at night, as he frequently is, to attend to some suffering or dying patient, has to step over the bodies of patients who, from want of room in the dormitory, are obliged to sleep on the floors of the day-rooms and the passages leading thereto. I may as well remark here that in this Asylum it is utterly impossible to have a proper classification of the patients, from the want of requisite space. In order to the recovery of the patients, I believe it is a *sine qua non* there should be a classification, and I am assured that in every properly-supported and well-conducted Asylum there is, but I regret to state there can be none in this Asylum.

I observe from documents I have seen that both the Superintendent-Surgeon and my predecessor have urged the Government to build an additional wing; I would also very respectfully recommend it. I am aware that in lieu thereof it has been suggested that the erection of a few cottages would meet the requirements of the case in the meantime. I do not concur in that opinion; it would only be adding to the expense, for an additional wing will yet have to be built—it is only a question of time. The conversion of the present chapel into a dormitory for females, which at one time was talked of, would not in the slightest degree benefit the male patients, for the chapel is in the upper story, altogether set apart for the female patients; whereas the male patients occupy the lower part of the building, where it is so fearfully overcrowded. In giving my opinion in regard to this matter, I feel that I have not exceeded my line of duty, but acted in accordance with the directions to Inspectors contained in "The Lunatics Act, 1868." Where the means are to come from is a matter with which I have no concern, nor would it become me to suggest.

The extent of the land attached to the building is about twenty acres—four included in the garden, the remainder surrounding the building. The garden is in a hollow; the soil deep and exceedingly rich. Vegetables of almost every sort can be and are grown in it amply sufficient for the wants of the patients, by whom alone it is worked. A number of fruit trees have been planted, and it is surrounded by a live fence, which in three years' time will be a sufficient protection. A field of about four acres to the south-east of the building and close to it is planted with potatoes. It is the best field of potatoes I have seen this year in the province. This is the voluntary labour of the patients; there is no hired labour in or about the Asylum. Some like to work, and others object. The greater

number are totally unfit, physically, to do any kind of labour. No coercive measures are tolerated; the system adopted and strictly carried out in this institution is one of kindness and gentle treatment.

The want of water has long been a "crying want," but I am now happy to report that a force-pump has been procured from Britain, through His Honor the Superintendent of the province, who all along has taken an active interest in the welfare of the institution. A well has recently been sunk, 76 feet deep; the water, I am happy to say, is excellent in quality, and the supply will be at all times sufficiently abundant. The depth of the water in it at present is 50 feet. The Superintendent-Surgeon and my predecessor, from documents I have seen, were unceasing in their application for a supply of water, both for domestic purposes and for the protection of the building in case of fire.

The number of patients when I first visited them was as follows, viz.,—Males, 98; females, 51; total, 149. Admitted since 1st April, 1874, 57; discharged, died, and removed from 1st April to 31st December, 1874, 58. In the Asylum on 31st December, 1874—Males, 92; females, 53; total, 145.

I make a visit of inspection to the Asylum at least once a week, sometimes oftener. My work at and connected with the business of the Asylum occupies me about two days a week on an average. From reports I have seen, I observe that in the generality of Lunatic Asylums the inspections are once a month. During the last nine months I have travelled to and in connection with the business of the Asylum 356 miles. My salary is £50 per annum.

Although, as already stated, I have no cause to complain of the conduct of the male attendants, who are superintended by Mr. Lowrey, a faithful, attentive, and humane old officer of this institution, yet I regret to say I have witnessed very unseemly disputes and altercations between the Matron and some of the female attendants. I observe from my predecessor's reports that he too had to complain occasionally of conduct so unbecoming. I observe also from the reports of other lunatic establishments, and have likewise been told by Dr. Aicken, that the Superintendent Surgeons, as a rule, have the power of dismissing disobedient or refractory attendants or servants, but that he is vested with no such power. As Inspector, I feel it my duty to say that it would be greatly for the benefit of the Asylum that he had such power of dismissal, subject, however, to an appeal on the part of the dismissed servant to His Honor the Superintendent of the province, if made within the month in which he has received notice to quit, the attendant to be paid up to the end of the month.

The Superintendent-Surgeon, I have no doubt, points out in his report the dietary scale. I must say the patients are supplied with good and excellent food, and great abundance of it too, better than the generality of the settlers in the colony have, and their fine sleek skins and well-developed physical proportions fully bear out my assertions. Their conduct while at their meals is excellent. It may be the presence of three attendants contributes to this. Be that as it may, they evidently eat their food with a gusto a dyspeptic might envy, and they do not waste their time, I can vouch, in any unnecessary talk—a quarter of an hour sufficing for this, to them, labour of love. The contractors, generally speaking, in their supplies have been up to the mark, and the cooks are attentive and punctual to time.

I now revert to the dress I have already alluded to. The dress, then, besides being hideously ugly, is that of felons; of this many of the patients are quite conscious, and they feel degraded by being made to wear it. Many of them, too, it should be borne in mind, have been highly educated and well brought up. The mind may become clouded and obscured, but feelings of decency and delicacy early implanted are still retained, and ought not to be rudely assaulted, nor can they be without serious injury to the health. The Superintendent-Surgeon has informed me that he long ago recommended a tweed dress, far more comfortable and becoming than the one now used; in fact, the dress, to some of them, is a source of constant irritation; as is also the high prison-looking dead wall for ever meeting their gaze, and shutting out from them the pleasant fields they would like so much to look on.

In winter, from the ground being saturated with rain, exercise cannot be taken in the yards respectively set apart for the male and the female patients. In the summer the ground, being of scoria, soon becomes pulverized, and so blown about by the wind that patients speedily assume the appearance of chimney sweeps, and in the winter they are ankle deep in mud. Thus for eight months in the year they are debarred from taking exercise, so indispensably necessary to the restoration of health. I may here however remark, that in fine weather the Matron sends out the female patients, at least such of them as are able to go out, to take exercise in the fields, of course under the charge of attendants, and, at proper times, to bathe in the river too, when ordered to do so. But to return to the state of the yards. The difficulties and drawbacks that now render them to a certain extent useless, could easily be obviated by having them either flagged or asphalted. I may also remark that there are no sheds in these yards, to protect the patients from the winter's rain or the summer's scorching sun. A long wooden shed run up in the middle of these yards could be utilized in a variety of ways. It would protect the patients from the violence of the weather. Their night bed-clothes could be aired there in rainy weather, and also their foul linen could be washed. It will scarcely be credited, but it is a fact, that there is positively no place in or about the premises where washing can be done. This is done at the stockade, and at a considerable expense, which might be avoided in the way I have suggested.

There is divine service every Sunday. In the absence of clergymen, the Superintendent-Surgeon sometimes officiates, and John Bible, that excellent and model bedroom-keeper, acts as clerk. Bible was twenty-four years in Her Majesty's service as a soldier, and is a particularly cleanly man. Since he has become an inmate of this institution he constantly complains that the half of his pension has been detained for his keep in this Asylum, his wife and family getting the other half. He indignantly protests against this, and it irritates him much. Whether any power save that which conferred it can divert or appropriate an old soldier's pension, is a question I will not presume to determine, nor have I perhaps any right to inquire, but at Bible's most urgent request I have made known his case. I have fulfilled my promise to him; nothing further can be required of me than to add that he threatens, unless compensated for his very efficient services, to discontinue them.

Five entertainments have been given during the last five months. The patients like them much, and look forward to them with great interest. Some of them even take parts in the plays performed.

I may mention also that some of these plays have been composed by the Superintendent-Surgeon, who does all in his power, not only to assuage their bodily sufferings, but to cheer and comfort them in every way he can. Perhaps it may not be out of place for me to state that for the five years he has been connected with the institution, he has only once been a whole day absent from it; the mere mention of it speaks volumes in his favour.

Whatever pleasantly occupies the minds of the patients must, I think, be beneficial to them. This I know, that entertainments, plays, concerts, picnics, and amusements are strongly recommended by the highest medical authorities in Great Britain and in the colonies, as having sedative and curative effects, and I believe they are practised and given, if not in all, in most of the best-conducted lunatic establishments. It were wrong were I to omit mentioning that His Honor the Superintendent of the province has been indefatigable in supplying the inmates of this establishment, as much as lay in his power, with entertainments and suitable amusements.

In the neighbouring colonies it seems that the "well to do" class are in the habit of contributing liberally towards the amusements of the insane, by money donations, by sending them books, illustrated papers, musical instruments, and things of that sort. I wish I could truthfully state that such was also the practice here, even if it were only in the sending of books and illustrated papers, which the insane seem to crave for so much. For the sake of the poor sufferers in our institute, I earnestly hope the hint I have thrown out, of what is done elsewhere, may be followed here by such as have it in their power to contribute towards so beneficent a purpose.

Complaints have frequently been made that the apartments and appliances in this institution are not at all suitable for the respectable portion of the community. I admit it: it is a pauper Lunatic Asylum, and with pauper appliances. There is no use blinking the fact; and not until the additional wing is built, that I have ventured to recommend, can that want be supplied. An hospital too a long felt necessity, will then have to be laid out also. I need scarcely observe that there is always an hospital in every well-supported and properly laid out Lunatic Asylum. I notice these matters in no fault-finding spirit, but in the hope they may not be lost sight of, but duly provided for at some future, but, I hope, not remote date.

There have been eighteen deaths since the beginning of the last year, viz. from 1st January to December, 1874; that is to say, a percentage of 8.65.

Many people seem to be altogether unaware, at all events they certainly do not sufficiently consider, that a very great portion of the cases sent to the Asylum consists of the aged, the paralytic, and people subject to diseases likely to terminate fatally; many of them, in fact, in the very last stage of bodily illness. The truth is, so far from being struck with the number of deaths, I am rather surprised that so many have recovered. I have seen many snatched, as it were, from the jaws of death, and of whose recovery I had not the slightest hope when they were brought in. Dr. Aicken is unquestionably entitled to great credit for his judicious treatment of his patients, and his unwearied attention to them, night and day. Those who know him will unhesitatingly acknowledge that the institute that has him at its head is indeed highly favoured.

Before I close, perhaps I may be pardoned for remarking that the great error the relatives of lunatics commit consists in their keeping them till it is too late to effect a recovery. It is a well known fact, and it requires no medical skill to understand it, that a lunatic stands a ten times better chance of recovery in an asylum than in his own house, however comfortable it may be, and will recover sooner when placed with strangers than among his own friends.

I apologise for the excessive length of this report. I have now "said my say," *Liberavi animam meam*. My next report, if I should ever have to make another, will necessarily be a very great deal shorter.

H. D. MORPETH,

Inspector of Lunatic Asylum in the Province of Auckland.

Ponsonby, near Auckland, 22nd January, 1875.

HALF-YEARLY STATEMENT, under Section 60 of "The Lunatics Act, 1868."

From 1st July to 31st December, 1874.

1. Official visits made to the Asylum from 1st July, 1874, to 31st December, 1874	...	...	...	...	25
2. Official visits elsewhere in connection with the Asylum	...	...	...	...	30
3. Number of patients seen in the Asylum	...	...	...	...	181
4. Number of miles travelled, during the above period, to and from the Asylum and elsewhere on the business thereof	...	...	...	...	224
5. Letters sent and received	...	...	...	...	95

H. D. MORPETH, J.P.,

Inspector of Asylums for the Province of Auckland.

Ponsonby, 31st December, 1874.

No. 2.

MR. CROMPTON to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Taranaki.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 4th January, 1875.

I have the honor to state, for the information of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, that since my last report, dated the 30th June last, I have visited the Lunatic Asylum weekly. I regret to state that there has been a sudden increase in the number of lunatics committed to the Asylum, and nearly all of them of a hopeless character.

From information which has reached me, it is to be feared that the number will be still further increased. The consequence is that the Asylum is too small for the inmates, and there are no means

of classifying the patients, nor, from want of space and sufficient staff, can any restorative occupation or recreation be provided them.

It has become imperative that an Asylum on another site, and with a sufficient staff, be provided with as little delay as possible.

The inmates confined in the Asylum at present are,—\* Eleazor Naylor, Michael Flannagan, Thomas Coad, Stephen Coad, Charles Hursthouse, William Jordan, and Charles Clifford.

Since my last report, one warder has been appointed, who has been of great use, and every attention to the health, comfort, and cleanliness of the patients has been paid in a most satisfactory manner, so far as the limited area of the Asylum will permit.

I have, &c.,

W. M. CROMPTON,  
Inspector of Lunacy.

His Honor the Superintendent, Taranaki.

\* Eleazor Naylor left for Wellington in charge of Richard Henry Naylor, per steamer "Wellington," 6th January, 1875, with official letters to the authorities.

FRED. A. CARRINGTON,  
Superintendent.

### No. 3.

Mr. SEALY to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Napier, 20th May, 1875.

I have the honor to forward a report on the Napier Lunatic Asylum for the year 1874, as required by section 60 of "The Lunatics Act, 1868."

During the year 1874 eight lunatics were admitted, of whom seven were males and one female. There were nine other patients—six males and three females. Of the eight cases admitted within the year, four were discharged. Three of them were cases of temporary insanity induced by drink, or, I should say, mental weakness aggravated by drink. The fourth case admitted and discharged within the year was a young woman, who, after a sojourn of three months in the Asylum, was so far improved as to be allowed to join her friends in another province. One man was sent here from Poverty Bay. He arrived on the 6th June, and died on the 9th of the same month. The three female patients who were in the Asylum at the commencement of the year, and remained there at its close, appear to me to be hopeless cases of insanity. Of the remaining male patients, three are young men, who have occasional fits of violence, but at other times are comparatively healthy. The other three are hopeless imbeciles.

Hitherto, and indeed to the present time, the Asylum has been connected with the Gaol, being a wing of that building. Latterly this deduction from the accommodation in the gaol has been a serious inconvenience, as from the increase of population there has been a corresponding increase of prisoners, and from the number of passenger ships arriving at the port here there have been numerous cases of desertion and other offences amongst the sailors, usually expiated by terms of imprisonment of from one to three months.

I mentioned in my last report that the Provincial Council had voted funds for the erection of an Asylum. This building is now in a forward state. To obtain a suitable site on the Gaol Reserve it was necessary to excavate from the hill and fill in a gully. This was a heavy piece of work, but was a convenient mode of employing those prisoners sentenced to hard labour whom it was not desirable to send to a distance from the Gaol. The Asylum is now in a forward state; it has been built to a considerable extent by prison labour, assisted however by a few skilled mechanics. The building is of wood, with an iron roof. The body of the edifice is 66 feet long by 24 wide, and there are two wings, each 63 feet long by 22 wide, with the same height as the main building, viz. 12 feet to the eaves. The space between the wings and the main building is an enclosed court for the use of some of the patients, whilst there are larger enclosures beyond for other patients. These latter will fall within the view of the Gaol sentinels, who will thus act to some extent as warders to the Asylum, although their beat is beyond the Asylum premises, which however, from the nature of the ground, it completely overlooks. The necessary out-offices are now in course of construction, as also concrete tanks underground, in which an ample supply of water for the establishment will be stored up; the supply being obtained from the iron roofs of the entire building.

The new Asylum will be under the general management and supervision of Mr. William Miller, the master of the Gaol, but there will be a resident warder with his wife, who will have the immediate superintendence of the Asylum. I trust that early in July next the transfer of the patients from the present temporary Asylum to the new building will take place.

The Asylum, as I have stated in former reports, is within half a mile from my office; I am therefore enabled to visit it as often as occasion may require without entailing any expense for travelling; I have also frequent communication with the Master at my own office. He is a zealous officer, very well adapted for the responsible duties he has to perform. In my opinion, the lunatics are as well provided for as the circumstances will admit of; but no doubt the opening of the new Asylum will be in every respect advantageous, and will materially add to the comfort of the unfortunate inmates.

The medical department is under the charge of Dr. Hitchings, the Provincial Surgeon, there being no resident medical officer. Dr. Hitchings visits the Gaol and Asylum about twice a week, and would do so more frequently if any case of sickness occurred requiring his attention, which, fortunately, has not been the case for some time past.

As a provision for the reception of lunatics and the treatment of temporary cases, the new Asylum will, in my opinion, be adequate to the requirements of this division of the colony; but I would again express my hope that at no distant period the more severe and permanent cases of insanity will be dealt with at a large central institution, where the patients will have the benefit of comforts, amuse-

ments, and occupation, as well as of constant medical supervision by officers skilled in that particular branch of their profession; advantages which can be very imperfectly supplied in small local institutions.

I should state, in conclusion, that the Napier Asylum is the only one in the Province of Hawke's Bay.

I have, &c.,

H. B. SEALY,

Inspector of Lunatic Asylums for the Province of Hawke's Bay.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

#### No. 4.

Mr. HAMILTON to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Canterbury.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 20th February, 1875.

I have the honor to report that I inspected Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum this day, in accordance with the provisions of "The Lunatics Act, 1868."

1. Having been lately absent from the province for two months on account of my health, I have been unable until now to send you the general statement required by clause 60 of the Act.

2. I beg now to state, for the information of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, that, during the six months ended this day, I made five official visits to the Asylum. I saw each time from 159 to 168 patients, whose number has increased steadily month by month from the lower to the higher total. The number of miles I have travelled is nominal, the Asylum being not very far beyond the South Town Belt.

3. The number of patients on the books to-day was 168; of these were present in the wards, males 107, females 57, and absent on trial with their relations or friends, males 1, females 3. Two patients, males, who are habitually violent, were secluded; and one female was under mechanical restraint, but not secluded.

4. During the twelve months past I inspected the Asylum on ten occasions, generally about one month apart, and when my visits were not likely to be expected. I have found mostly everything in the same satisfactory condition at one time as at another. Whatever improvements or alterations I have suggested have always been willingly taken into consideration, and, for the greater part, carried out by the officers of the Asylum, or by the Provincial authorities, as the case might require.

5. In January, 1874, there were 144 patients—94 males, 46 females. The increase of admissions over discharges has been steady, averaging two monthly. In January, 1873, the number on the books was 117; males 80, females, 37. In June, 1872, the total was 109; males 75, females 34. I observe that the proportion of females to males has stood pretty regularly at very nearly one-half. It would appear from this steady increase, and in spite of numerous discharges, that Government will, so long as population increases, remain under the constant obligation of having to incur a large annual outlay in providing fresh accommodation for lunatics.

6. During the past year, portions of the western wing of a spacious and admirably designed new Asylum have been completed. The quieter female patients have been drafted over to it from time to time as additional room was ready for them. More space has become available in the old building for the male patients, who were greatly overcrowded, and at night unhealthily so. I have since noticed a very considerable improvement in the appearance of all the patients of both sexes, nor have I found two or three of the females now in the new wards nearly so noisy as they had always been formerly on my visits at their old wards. Additional attendants have been engaged. It has thus been possible to allow the patients much more room and freedom than formerly, and with very beneficial results. The whole of the new western wing is so far advanced that in a fortnight or three weeks the internal fittings will be finished, and the remainder of the female patients, the most refractory ones, will all be moved over to it. There will then be a complete separation, in different buildings, of male and female patients. The whole of the old building will be available exclusively for males. I anticipate that considerable improvement will soon be observed in their health, bodily, if not mentally, for they will not require to be kept so much under restraint. And there ought to be enough attendants power released from constant watching indoors to take charge of patients at more frequent outdoor exercise, or walks in and beyond the Asylum grounds.

7. This new western wing is built entirely of concrete. The floors and internal fittings, and the arrangements for warming the rooms are so contrived that it is all but impossible that the patients should ever be subjected to the terrible danger of a fire breaking out. But, if needed, the building can be flooded from large tanks in the lofts. The large day-rooms and the sleeping-rooms, on both upper and ground floors, are spacious and lofty, and exceedingly well ventilated; they are well lighted and well furnished. The patients are provided with books, and various means of amusement. A large garden and shrubbery is being tastefully laid out. A new airing-yard has been added for refractories. It is shut in all round by corrugated iron, which slopes at the top to give shelter from sun or rain; from a mound in the centre a full view can be had of the grounds, and of the open country beyond. There are convenient bath-rooms on both floors; hot and cold water can be supplied in abundance. Everything is kept singularly neat and clean. Good engravings are hung on the day-room walls. Flowers, ferns, and castings of statuary are placed in the corridors and balcony. Caged birds serve to amuse and occupy the inmates, and canaries enliven the place with their song. A piano is available for those who are fond of music. In fact, the female patients seem to be now provided with nearly all the comforts and surroundings of home. So far as all these means and appliances can conduce to their cure, there seems to be little or nothing more left to be done for them.

8. The new and old buildings are now both in constant communication with the Police Depot and Fire Brigade Office at Christchurch, by means of the electric telegraph. A windmill, with force-pump attached, keeps tanks filled, from which the upper floors can be flooded in case of fire.

9. The books of the Asylum are all kept written up closely to date, as the Act prescribes. The "Case Book," however, does not seem to me to come up fully to the requirements of clause 25, in supplying the history "from time to time" of each case, and an account of the "remedies prescribed." But, perhaps, where there is no Resident Medical Officer, it is hardly fair to expect a visiting officer, even though he might call daily, to give to writing up this book the great amount of time which would be demanded of him were the Act to be strictly followed out.

10. There are now 68 patients more than the maximum number, 100, at which Dr. Paley, the Inspector from Victoria, recommends in his report of 25th November, 1873, that a Resident Medical Officer should be appointed. The Visiting Medical Officer, however, according to recent regulations, goes through all the wards every second day, or oftener if required. Formerly he was only required to visit weekly, and afterwards bi-weekly.

11. A very full set of general rules and regulations for the Asylum were gazetted on the 14th January last by His Honor the Superintendent, apparently under authority of clause 188, "Lunatics Act, 1868." They are calculated to be of great service, especially in the guidance of attendants. I found that they were being very fairly observed, on the whole, considering the short time copies had been supplied.

12. Dr. Paley reports very explicitly against allowing inebriates "ever to come into contact with the other inmates." My experience at Sunnyside leads me to a very decided opinion that their presence there is an evil. The Act seems to confer no power to impose "compulsory employment" on "inebriates," nor does it in any way prescribe, or leave to any authority to prescribe, what their "curative treatment" (clause 21) shall be. The result is that they undergo no "treatment" worthy of being so called, and seem almost all averse to any kind of work or employment, and only to "loaf" about the premises idle and useless. In Victoria inebriates are now treated under a special Act, and quite apart from lunatic asylums. It seems very desirable to amend the New Zealand Lunatics Act in the same direction, or, at all events, to give keepers very clear and distinct compulsory power to employ this class of patient at some useful work about the Asylum.

13. In all respects, except as above noted, the arrangements and management of the Asylum at Sunnyside are the same as I have formerly reported, with the addition that steady progress and improvement is regularly going on in proportion as the Provincial Government supply improved accommodation, a larger staff and greater resources, which they continue to do with a most liberal hand.

14. The Medical Officer's visits are frequent and regular; the sick are duly prescribed for; the Keeper and attendants seem to take a thorough interest in the patients, who are all kept with the utmost cleanliness in person and dress, and are allowed a full quantity of good wholesome food. The male wards are always well ventilated, and as sweet as their size and the number of inmates will allow. I have only to remark that the airing-yards are dreary, and require shelter from the sun and rain, like the one attached to the female refractory ward of the new building.

15. Mr. G. W. Seager, the Keeper, is unremitting in his endeavours to find amusement for his patients; and so far as regards this important aid towards their recovery, there is nothing left to be desired.

I have, &c.,

J. W. HAMILTON,

Inspector, Sunnyside Asylum.

His Honor the Superintendent of Canterbury,  
Christchurch.

## No. 5.

Mr. FITZGERALD to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Westland.

Office of the Inspector of the Lunatic Asylum,  
Hokitika, 30th January, 1875.

SIR,—

I have the honor to furnish the following report on the Lunatic Asylum at Hokitika for the year ended 31st December, 1874:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
The number of patients in the Asylum on December 31, 1874,			
was ... ..	40	13	53
The number at the end of the previous year having been ...	37	15	52
There were received during the year 1874 ...	20	4	24
There were discharged cured during the same period ...	12	3	15
Discharged under bond into the custody of friends ...	3	2	5

One of the women discharged under bond was subsequently re-admitted into the Asylum, she having become worse whilst with her friends.

The deaths during the year were—Males 2, 1 of epilepsy and 1 of paralysis; females 2, 1 of epilepsy, and 1 of chronic inflammation of the brain and membranes. Total deaths, 4.

The average daily number for the year was 38.59 males, and 15.06 females.

The average cost of maintenance for each patient per week during the year 1873 was 17s. 9½d.; in 1874 the average cost was 16s. 5¼d.

The Keeper attributes the decrease to the facts that during the latter year a large quantity of vegetables has been grown in the Asylum Reserve, and that milch cows have been kept.

The general health of the patients has been remarkably good. A great many of them appear to be fond of active outdoor employment, of which plenty is provided for those who wish it.

Much of the reserve has been cleared and planted with vegetables by the more robust, others work in the gardens or are employed at various trades.

The billiard-room, reading-room, and an office, have been entirely built by the patients. The

billiard table and a piano were purchased by funds raised by public subscription for the purpose, their cost being £163 14s. 9d.

In my last report I pointed out that the sleeping accommodation was very insufficient. This still continues to be the case, and I trust the Provincial Government will make the necessary provision during the ensuing session of the Council. I also mentioned the want of padded cells. One of these has since been fitted up. The work was done by patients.

The situation of the Asylum is naturally good, and no doubt the small amount of sickness amongst the inmates is partly due to this cause.

A large quantity of ground in the rear of the Asylum has now been broken up, and I think no time should be lost by the Government in having it judiciously planted with trees; the expense need be very small, as the trees could be all raised from seed either at the Asylum, or by the gardener at the Government House. I should recommend for the purpose some of the hardy pines and cypresses, of which there are so many beautiful and free-growing varieties. A wonderful change in the appearance of the reserve might by these means be effected in the course of five or six years. A few trees might also with advantage be planted in the front of the Asylum; but care should be taken not to obstruct the view of the sea. It would, I think, be injudicious to plant any of the deciduous forest trees, for experience on this part of the coast shows that the young shoots cannot face the prevailing winds from the sea. The question of planting seems well worthy of consideration, as it is doubtless of importance to the success of a Lunatic Asylum that its surroundings as well as its internal arrangements should be made attractive. Some draining would in the first place be necessary; but from what I have seen, I believe all the requisite labour might be obtained within the walls of the institution.

I have had occasion in former reports to allude favourably to the manner in which the Keeper, Mr. Gribben, discharges the duties of his post. Further experience has but confirmed my opinion, and I am able to say that the Medical Officer, Dr. Dermott, agrees with me in thinking that the Provincial Government were singularly fortunate in obtaining the services of a person so well qualified in all respects to have charge of a Lunatic Asylum as Mr. Gribben. He has invariably displayed the greatest interest in his work, is well liked by the patients, and his conduct on all occasions has shown that the high testimonials he brought from Victoria were fully deserved.

Much remains to be done to make the institution what the public would like to see it; but notwithstanding the short time that has elapsed since the building was first erected, and the limited means at the disposal of those to whom the custody of the insane is intrusted in Westland, I am justified in saying that the Hokitika Asylum is on a creditable footing, and will certainly compare very favourably with other institutions of the same kind in New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

G. G. FITZGERALD,

Inspector of Lunatic Asylum for the Province of Westland.

RETURN under Part IV., Section 60, of "The Lunatics Act, 1868."

Number of visits to Sea View Lunatic Asylum during half-year ended December 31st, 1874:—Visits, 3; miles travelled, 9. Total number of patients seen during the above visits, 162.

Average number of Lunatics in custody during half-year ended as above:—Males, 38.59; females, 15.06.

G. G. FITZGERALD,

Inspector of Lunatic Asylum, Province of Westland.

NOTE.—No reports received from Wellington, Nelson, or Otago.

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