

About fifty of the men are usefully employed, principally out of doors; and upwards of thirty of the women are usefully employed in various active duties.

Restraint by means of strong canvas dresses without sleeves is being used in the case of four exceptionally dangerous or suicidal patients. No one was found in seclusion; but owing to the present circumstances of the Asylum it is found absolutely necessary to resort to seclusion very frequently, chiefly for short periods, in the treatment of several exceedingly violent and dangerous patients in the male department.

On Christmas Day an uncommonly good dinner was served out to the patients, and it was quite a pleasure to see how much they enjoyed it. Their usual diet is abundant, and great attention is paid to the cooking of it in a tempting manner, and to varying it as much as possible.

The garden is in a high state of cultivation, and contributes largely to the comfort of the inmates by the variety and large quantity of vegetables it is made to supply.

The general amusements consist of a regular weekly dance, frequent concerts and theatrical performances, and occasional lectures. Divine service is performed every Sunday.

A comfortable little building has now been erected at the Blueskin Reserve to accommodate a party of fourteen patients and two attendants who are busily engaged in clearing bush, and have already got nearly two acres of ground in crop. Adjoining this a site is being prepared by contractors for a building designed to afford temporary accommodation for sixty patients and afterwards be converted into farm offices. It is very desirable that this building should be completed as soon as possible. It will greatly relieve the overcrowded Asylum.

The registers are very carefully and neatly kept, but the entries in the Medical Journal are greatly in arrear. The medical case-books, which are written fully up to date, contain much valuable information, but it is impossible to keep them in such a manner as to render the journal unnecessary. It supplies a concise tabulated record of the general state of the establishment; and it is required by the statute. It would be better if the entries in it were made daily instead of weekly.

The condition of this Asylum is, so far as circumstances will permit, very satisfactory, and such as to reflect great credit on the officers. Two additional male attendants are required to supply the place of those now in charge of the working party at the reserve."

This Asylum was next visited on the 25th January, and again on the 30th May, and 2nd and 5th June. At this last inspection the attention of the Superintendent was directed to the fact that the clothing of the patients was not warm enough for the time of the year, as they were not supplied with flannels. It is obvious that, if strong healthy attendants, engaged in active occupations, find it necessary for their comfort to wear these, lunatics, whose circulation is enfeebled by their disease, and who lounge about in airing-courts, must require them still more. It is unreasonable to suppose that the absence of complaints on the part of the patients, and of any manifest indications of injury, such as colds, &c., is proof that they are suffering no harm from insufficient clothing. The mortality was unusually great last year, and one can hardly doubt that it was affected by the severity of the winter weather, even though none of the deaths could be directly ascribed to it.

The temporary accommodation for 60 patients at Seacliff is now nearly ready, and this, along with the cottage already in occupation there by fourteen, will greatly relieve the excessively-crowded condition of the Asylum.

The remarkable ability which has always characterized the management of this Asylum by Mr. Hume, amidst unusual difficulties, and the fact that the medical officer, though not actually resident, lived close at hand, and, not being engaged in general practice, had ample time to attend to his duties at the Asylum, for the performance of which he has undoubtedly the highest qualifications, have hitherto prevented me from pressing for the appointment of a Resident Medical Superintendent. The time has now, however, come when such an appointment cannot properly be longer delayed. The management of an Asylum of 250 patients, many of whom are exceptionally violent and dangerous, and a very large proportion of whom are at all times recent and acute cases requiring great skill in their treatment, is a task which in no other country would be trusted to any one but a Resident Medical Superintendent. But, in addition to this, the present non-medical Superintendent is about to have the supervision of a branch establishment at Seacliff, containing 74 patients, who are to be employed in clearing the bush, and gradually bringing the splendid reserve which has there been made for the permanent Asylum about to be erected into a state fit for cultivation. This of itself is work sufficient to occupy the undivided attention of an able, experienced, and thoroughly reliable officer, and will increase the duties and responsibilities of Mr. Hume much beyond what he should be asked to undertake.

*Hokitika Asylum.*—On the 1st January there were in this Asylum 67 patients. During the year 25 were admitted; 16 were discharged recovered; and 6 died; leaving, on 31st December, 70, of whom 51 were males and 19 were females. The Asylum was inspected on the 7th and 8th January, and found, as usual, in excellent order. The management continues to be very satisfactory, though unavoidably expensive.

A detached house, to accommodate 12 male patients, is now being built on the five-acre section adjoining the Asylum grounds, which was procured for this purpose last year. This building will readily admit of being afterwards added to and enlarged by the patients to the extent necessary to relieve the crowded state of the male wards.

*Auckland Asylum.*—There were 181 patients in this Asylum on the 1st of January. During the year 73 were admitted, 41 were discharged as recovered or relieved, and 17 died; leaving 196 on the 31st December, of whom 132 were males and 64 were females. The following is the entry which was made in the Inspector's book on the 11th April last:—

"Since inspection in September, when Dr. Aickin resigned, this Asylum has, in the absence of a Resident Medical Superintendent, been under the charge of Dr. Philson, as Visiting Medical Officer, Mr. George Hardy, as Acting Superintendent, and of Mrs. Martin, who was at that time appointed Matron. In several important respects, the condition and management of the Asylum are strikingly improved, and are such as to reflect great credit on these officers. On the 1st of this month