

The staff of attendants gave me a good impression, and I have reason to believe that their duties are discharged with firmness and much kindness.

Very great improvements have recently been carried out in the asylum buildings. The kitchen, with its scullery, pantry, larder, and dairy, has been entirely re-modelled and much enlarged. All the needed accommodation and conveniences are now to be found in this department. Two gas roasting-ovens have been provided, which, when completed, will prove a success, and will enable the old monotony of the dietary to be entirely removed. The old kitchen-range is also in course of entire renovation.

The new laundry is in daily use. The steam-drying closet works successfully, but requires some unimportant additions to complete it. These will be carried out before the next winter season.

The new boilerhouse has been some time in use, and, with its adjoining workshop, is found very convenient and economical in working.

The old back wards have been converted by the asylum staff, with the aid of a carpenter, into very good store-rooms. These are occupied respectively as follows: Drapery, boots, &c.; groceries and crockery; soap, potatoes, &c.; strawhouse. The remaining portion of this building forms a suitable laundry, or rather washhouse, for foul linen; and the necessary alterations in it are being carried out by one of the patients in a very creditable manner.

Six of the old single rooms on the male side have had large windows with shutters inserted in them, and have been painted and distempered by home labour. They are now very good and cheerful sleeping apartments.

The dining-hall, used also for amusements, has been improved by the removal of the stage and the erection of a small gallery for musicians. This room has a heavy and gloomy appearance, which would be remedied by painting the walls in some light and cheerful tint. I recommend that this be done.

The front rooms of the asylum have lately been repaired and decorated. In place of the old torn paper and scrim, a wooden super-dado has been fixed. This will obviate future destruction by patients, and lessen risk by fire. A good deal of staining and varnishing has also been done where much needed. The general effect is very good, though some of the work is decidedly bad and very unserviceable.

Outside the buildings a great improvement has been carried out in the conversion of the two spaces near the wings into airing-courts, or rather enclosed gardens, for the use of the patients. These are found so valuable that it is a wonder how they could have been done without hitherto. They are very neatly kept, and practically no destruction of flowers or plants has yet occurred.

Considerable additions, amounting to about two acres, have been made to the land under cultivation. There are large crops of vegetables and farm-produce. Pigs and cows are very successfully kept, and it will probably be unnecessary in the future to purchase any milk for use in the asylum.

I find that 82 of the male patients and 56 of the females are usefully employed, total 138. This is a very large and satisfactory proportion of the whole number.

Divine service is attended by 77 men and 47 women; while as many as 91 are permitted to go for walks beyond the asylum boundaries.

Amusements generally continue to receive a large share of attention.

I have examined the whole of the registers and account-books, which I find very well and neatly kept. The orders and medical certificates relating to the admission of patients I find to be in legal form.

In addition to what is mentioned above, a vast number of minor improvements have recently been made. The welfare of the patients and the economical working of the establishment are constantly held in view by Dr. Levinge, who has proved himself a very able and efficient Medical Superintendent. That he is supported by a good staff, the admirable order in which I found the whole asylum will suffice to show. Scrupulous cleanliness and freedom from any bad odour everywhere prevail. The wards and dormitories present an appearance of homeliness and comfort, being well provided with objects of amusement and of decoration.

10th June, 1885.—I have this day made a complete inspection of the Wellington Asylum, with its surroundings.

Every portion of the buildings has been examined, and the grounds also visited.

The patients number this day 185, viz., 103 males and 82 females; all of whom I have seen, giving all who desired it an opportunity for conversation.

Four patients were in bed; one suffering from mental excitement, the others from illness or general debility. With these exceptions, general good health appeared to be the rule. No person was in seclusion, and no form of restraint was in use except in one instance, and here it was self-imposed. The patient has uncontrollable impulses, and injures his face by severe blows. His hands are therefore secured, by his own wish (as he has repeatedly told me); and I noticed that he could release himself with ease if he so desired.

Perfect order and quiet prevailed, although a man, recently brought down from Napier, was as usual very excited under the influence of religious delusions.

I was present during the dinner-hour; the tables were neatly laid, everything being very clean. Almost every one used a knife and fork, Maoris included. A well-known patient (often alluded to in former reports as exceedingly violent and dangerous, and requiring to be strapped in a heavy chair) has, by most praiseworthy perseverance, been got out of his old groove, and is now usefully employed at times in window-cleaning. I must own that I was surprised to come upon him unexpectedly, neatly dressed, and using knife and fork without any restraint whatever. A long term of restraint and frequent seclusion had brought him almost to the condition of a wild beast, and it appeared very unlikely that he would ever become more tractable.