

During the previous year the remands numbered 137. The diminution is no doubt in some measure due to the issue of a circular on the subject by the Department of Justice to the Magistrates, but which has since been withdrawn. I have not altered my opinion that the practice of remanding without medical examination is wrong in principle, and rarely, if ever, necessary.

The following table will show that the practice is almost wholly confined to the Cities of Wellington and Napier; and it cannot but be inferred that, in these towns, many persons have been incarcerated with lunatics who would have escaped such treatment had they had the good fortune to reside in Auckland, Christchurch, or Dunedin:—

								Remands.
Auckland	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Christchurch	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Dunedin	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Hokitika	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Napier	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
Nelson	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Wellington	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
Ashburn Hall	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
								<u>63</u>

It should be noted that, in calculating the average cost per patient per annum, neither remand cases nor habitual drunkards are included as patients, although they largely contribute to the asylum expenditure.

A large number of persons continue to occupy accommodation in asylums who would be fit inmates of workhouses or refuges. At present there are no establishments whither they might be transferred, but provision might be made for them under an improved scheme of charitable aid, with some relief to the overcrowding of the asylums.

The insane under treatment at the close of the year 1884 were thus placed:—

Asylums.		Males.	Females.	Totals.
Auckland...	...	215	105	320
Ashburn Hall (licensed house)	...	9	6	15
Christchurch	...	221	127	348
Hokitika ...	...	69	31	100
Napier ...	...	13	3	16
Nelson ...	...	55	40	95
Seacliff ...	...	233	129	362
Wellington	...	123	73	196
		<u>938</u>	<u>514</u>	<u>1,452</u>

Arrangements have, however, recently been made to use the Napier Asylum as a receiving-ward only; for the future all patients requiring more than temporary treatment will be transferred thence to Wellington.

The Seacliff Asylum has lately had a large accession to the number of lunatics there under care. Some 75 patients have been removed thither from the Wellington and Christchurch institutions, with a view of remedying, in some measure, the overcrowding which existed at these two latter places. To enable this removal to be carried out the wooden buildings at Seacliff, intended originally for temporary use only, have been refurnished and put into substantial repair. The relief given will, however, serve for a short time only. Seacliff is likely to be quite full of patients by the end of the present year, while the whole of the other Government asylums already contain quite as many as they can properly accommodate. At Auckland the overcrowding becomes daily more urgent.

Although plans have been prepared and approved for additional space here and elsewhere, and the necessary sums for carrying out such enlargements voted year by year by the Legislature, yet no commencement of the work has yet been made. Three hundred and twenty patients occupied, at the close of the year, buildings intended for 217 only.

I consider that immediate action in the matter at Auckland is imperatively necessary. A portion, at least, of the central block, so long promised at Christchurch, should also at once be put in hand; some temporary buildings erected on the Porirua site, near Wellington; and some trifling additions carried out at Nelson. The prospective annual increase of from 80 to 100 lunatics must in some way be provided for.

It will hereafter be found economical to devote a special asylum to harmless patients; but I have no hope of any success in this colony in the direction of boarding out lunatics.