

The stone floors of the passage leading to bath-rooms and closets, on the male side of the asylum, are being replaced by concrete, the stone having completely perished.

Gas has recently been laid on from the city, and will be found in every way preferable to the gasoline lights lately in use. A considerable economy is promised under this heading.

At present the whole of the establishment is warmed by wood fires. Inquiries as to the relative cost and efficiency of coal and wood proved to me that the former is by far the cheaper fuel. I recommend that grates for burning coal be provided in some at least of the forty fireplaces. This might be done gradually. A proper coal-store is also requisite.

I am glad to find that the main drain of the asylum is at length being carried to the creek, below high-water mark. The pipes were laid long ago, but as they were carried over a ridge of rock, instead of going through it, the sewage refused to run uphill and discharged itself into the kitchen-garden. It is difficult to conceive how such a piece of work can have been passed by those in authority at the time. Into this drain is discharged the sewage of the auxiliary asylum also.

I noticed that the roads and paths of the estate were much out of repair. A considerable quantity of scoria is necessary for putting them into proper order. It might be well to obtain this by tender as required.

A good meat-safe has been erected in the yard behind the kitchen.

The boilerhouse is under the care of the engineer, who is assisted by a patient. He is much employed in a workshop which is too far off the boiler for supervision.

The fencing, post and rail, which forms the front boundary of the estate, is much dilapidated, and allows cows and horses to pass through in many places. It should be put in repair at once, and another attempt made to secure a good hedge, which would ultimately supersede the necessity for a post-and-rail fence.

The auxiliary asylum is now in complete occupation, and, though a costly addition, is well adapted for its purpose. Some additional ornamental items, such as billiard- or bagatelle-tables, are wanted here.

There are many constructional faults evident. The cemented floor of the scullery has already given way and is in bad condition, and I question the safety of the enclosed lights in the dormitory walls. One of the large day-rooms in this building is used as a chapel in which Divine service is conducted once in each week by a clergyman of the Church of England. This service appears to be much appreciated, and to have a good effect upon those who attend it.

The occupation of the auxiliary asylum has had the effect of relieving, to some extent, the crowded state of the male division of the older buildings; but the relief is not complete, nor does it extend in any way to the female side. It will ere long be necessary again to fill the chapel with beds, and to convert a portion of the day-room space of the auxiliary asylum into single rooms.

The question of the enlargement is one which should not be deferred. The buildings were originally so badly planned and constructed that any large addition to them will involve great expense. The administrative portion is very defective; being, moreover, too small, and not capable of extension without much trouble and expense.

There are to-day 297 patients resident, 195 males and 102 females; in addition to these there are 4 males and 2 females absent on trial; total, 303.

The medical journal shows that seclusion has diminished of late, and, but for two special cases, would be infrequent.

I am glad to notice a slight improvement in the number of patients employed. This is, however, not what it ought to be were there proper workshops and work-rooms provided for each sex. The want of these is a great drawback, particularly in wet weather. Some eight or nine men are constantly employed in sawing and cutting firewood. If coal were substituted their labour would be valuable in the garden or on the farm.

I have inspected the register and other books, which I find properly entered up. The admission-orders and certificates, and certain letters detained from the post, have also been examined.

Although an immense deal requires to be done before this establishment can take rank as a model asylum, yet I am glad to notice that every visit shows some improvement, and I have good reason to believe that Dr. Young gives his best attention to the welfare of his patients under very difficult surroundings.

20th and 27th February, 1885.—I have devoted some hours on each of the above days to my periodical inspection of the Whau Asylum.

There were, on the second day, 320 patients on the register, viz., 215 males and 105 females. All of these I saw, with the exception of three who were absent on probation. Two men were in bed suffering from paralysis and phthisis; one woman also with general debility. A Maori was in seclusion, being excited and destructive. Very little illness prevailed of any kind, and there has been no recurrence of any infectious fever. There was a remarkable absence of noise and excitement. Some few requested to be released, but none were improperly detained.

I found general order to prevail in the wards and in their offices. The bedding and clothing were suitable and very clean. No offensive odours were apparent, excepting in the bath-rooms and closets of No. 2 ward on the female side. These are badly placed and do not give sufficient accommodation. They should be converted into single rooms, and proper closets and lavatories built out from the centre of the ward into the women's airing-court. The same alteration is necessary on the floor above. A wood dado is required in this same No. 2 ward, the walls of which are very unsightly; and No. 1 ward in the same division badly requires painting and whitewashing.

A number of small repairs have recently been carried out with good effect. The dining-hall has been much improved in appearance by painting and fitting with a kauri dado.

The introduction of gas has removed a source of danger and trouble by the disuse of gasoline.

It is not necessary to say much of the female wards and single rooms near the laundry, which have been sufficiently condemned in previous reports. Great delay has taken place in the preparation