

28th November, 1884.—I have been employed during the whole of to-day in my periodical inspection of the Seacliff Asylum.

The number of patients on the books to-day is 360, viz., 231 males and 129 females: of these, one male and two females are absent on probation; with these three exceptions I have seen every patient, and have given opportunities for private conversation. No single complaint upon any subject was made to me; contentment was generally prevalent, and there was an entire absence of noise and excitement. One man was in seclusion; he was suffering from an attack of recurrent mania, and is very powerful and dangerous. I saw no other instance of restraint; and examination of the medical journal shows that this form of treatment is sparingly used.

Four male patients were in bed, two on account of injuries, and the other from illness. Of the former, one had fractured his collar-bone by falling in an epileptic fit, and the other had accidentally cut his leg with an axe.

The rest of the patients had a healthy look. That they are well fed I have no doubt. The dinner which I saw served was good and ample, and I was thoroughly satisfied with the quality of the stores and provisions supplied. The meat appeared to me exceptionally good.

Regarding the clothing I have to remark that I found it appropriate and very clean. The bedding is well attended to, and the number of blankets in use quite sufficient for the present cold nights. I find that the whole of the boots and shoes are made and mended upon the premises; two patients and one attendant being thus occupied.

The whole of the establishment is beautifully clean, and good order and discipline everywhere prevail.

About per 50 cent. of the patients are usefully employed. Some 72 of the men are more or less engaged in outdoor labour, while 30 assist in domestic-work. Of the women, 28 are employed in the laundry, 14 in the kitchen and sculleries, 20 in sewing, and about 20 as ward-helpers.

Various means of amusement are furnished in the different wards, but collective entertainments in the large hall have not yet been found practicable for want of proper means of lighting it and for other reasons. Two excellent billiard-tables are in use and greatly appreciated. A pianoforte and a small American organ are also available for use. Walking-parties are organized on two days in each week.

Divine service is held by a missionary from Dunedin on alternate Sundays, about 50 of the patients attending voluntarily.

As to the results of the labour of the inmates and their attendants I can report very satisfactorily. There are now about 35 acres of good grazing land and 14 acres of clover hay, 10 acres are planted with potatoes and an additional 4 acres of kitchen-garden have been cleared and well stocked with vegetables, flowers, and fruit trees, a number of the latter of large size having been most successfully removed from the old asylum at Dunedin. The condition of this and the other gardens is most creditable. The whole of the above-named acreage has been reclaimed from dense bush, and thoroughly cleared of all stumps and weeds—a work of no small labour. The total clearing is now about 150 acres.

The farm live-stock now comprises 13 milch cows, of which 10 are in milk, 11 heifers in calf, 2 calves, 1 bull, and about 32 pigs. There are also 3 farm-horses, and some 50 head of poultry. A very large amount of well-cured bacon and hams is in stock.

Since my last visit a large number of important improvements have been carried out. A commodious laundry has just been completed, and will no doubt be a success. It is unfortunate, however, that a larger steam-boiler and furnace was not provided, which would have been capable of heating all the coppers, for which four separate fires are now necessary. This arrangement was particularly specified in the plan prepared by myself, and sanctioned by the Colonial Secretary. I am unaware by whose authority the alteration was made. There are bad workmanship and unsuitable timber in the horses of the drying-closets.

A very commodious meat-larder has been built behind the kitchen. The money expended here on architectural details would have been better employed elsewhere.

Three cottages for married attendants have been erected by the Public Works Department; and a fourth and much larger one is now being built by home labour with old materials brought from Dunedin. By the same means a row of useful buildings has been put up in the rear of the asylum. This now includes carpenters' shop, strawhouse, coalhouse, shoemaker's shop, and a paint-shed. There is also an enginehouse, a saw-mill, and a chaffhouse. A very considerable sum of money has been saved to the Government in this way, for all these buildings were necessary and not otherwise provided for. A small airing-court has also been enclosed, with a trellis-fronted fence, in front of the building without any cost to the Government.

Regarding the main block of buildings or asylum proper, I have many defects to point out. Some of these were alluded to in my report of the 15th April last, but are not yet remedied. The dampness or rather wet condition of the two central portions of the ground-floor call for immediate remedy. A portion of the floor taken up for my inspection in an attendant's room revealed a body of water some four inches in depth, and reaching above the bottom of the joists. A general odour of mouldiness pervades these two blocks of the building. The effect of the wet upon the woodwork will be prejudicial enough, but the danger to the health of the inhabitants is far more serious. Indeed the medical journal furnishes an unusual list of cases of chest-affection and rheumatism which may fairly be traced to this cause. Surely this is a matter worthy of consideration and not beyond remedy.

In the large entertainment-hall a leakage through the roof, previously pointed out, is still permitted to deface the walls.

The woodwork and fittings of windows and doors throughout the establishment continue to show additional evidence of bad material and worse workmanship. Locks, bolts, and hinges are of trumpery character and unsafe, while the beads intended to secure window frames and shutters can be pulled off with the fingers. Door-frames of single rooms are only held to the brickwork by a