

Of the large asylums, Seacliff has this year signalled the continued vigour of Dr. King's management by a reduction of £2 0s. 11½d. per head on the cost of the previous year, and that over and above an unusually large amount of expense for general improvements.

The increase of £4 4s. 10½d. per head for the year in Auckland Asylum is largely accounted for by permanent improvements made out of revenue, and will not recur. I am confident, therefore, that this Asylum will show a great reduction next year.

It will be interesting to review the steps by which the cost per head has so notably fallen during the last five years.

The total annual cost per head, including everything, general expenses and all, was—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
In 1886	30	11	8¾	giving a weekly cost of	0	11	9
Less repayments	27	0	9¾	"	0	10	4¾
In 1887	28	4	10	"	0	10	10½
Less repayments	24	7	9½	"	0	9	4½
In 1888	26	3	1½	"	0	10	0¾
Less repayments	21	8	1	"	0	8	2¾
In 1889	26	16	11½	"	0	10	3¾
Less repayments	21	10	4	"	0	8	3
In 1890	26	1	8½	"	0	10	0¼
Less repayments	20	10	3	"	0	7	10¾

It must be remembered that those figures include every shilling spent on the maintenance of the whole of the patients in the colony, with the cost of their committal, medical fees, &c., and all the cost of the central office, including the salary of the Inspector-General, and the collecting of maintenance-moneys. Dealing in the same way with the figures given in the annual report for the Colony of Victoria for 1889, I find that the weekly cost per head for each lunatic per week comes to 12s. 9¾d., or less maintenance 11s. 4d., as compared with 10s. 0¼d. and 7s. 10½d. respectively in New Zealand. In making these comparisons I am glad to be able to assure you that the comfort of the patients and the care bestowed on their treatment have been increased in nearly as high a proportion as the cost has been diminished. No single request has been refused on the ground of expense that could be shown to be necessary for the patients' well-being. The only drawback has been the overcrowding from lack of sufficient accommodation, and that will be removed as soon as the Porirua Asylum is ready for occupation. The staff of attendants has been increased, and its quality improved very greatly in some places. In the large asylums a regular system of instruction for attendants has been introduced, from which I expect very great results in raising the whole tone of our asylums.

## ENTRIES OF VISITS TO THE DIFFERENT ASYLUMS.

### *Auckland.*

27th September, 1890.—I have been occupied the whole of to-day and yesterday in my half-yearly inspection of this Asylum. I find that the inmates have diminished by fourteen since my last visit, so that there has not been so much hardship as anticipated during the winter from overcrowding. Nevertheless, the state of the male wards calls most imperatively for relief; and I am greatly relieved from anxiety on this account by the vote which has been passed by Parliament for building the nucleus of a new asylum at Porirua, near Wellington, into which the chronic cases which have accumulated in all our asylums may be drafted. I most earnestly press it upon the Minister that no delay be allowed in calling for tenders for this work, for which the plans have been ready in anticipation of instant action as soon as the money should be authorised. The complete scheme of drainage which has been prepared by Mr. Bell, after a thorough examination of the existing system, is now ready, and has by this time, I hope, been approved by the Minister. The matter is one of extreme urgency, and ought to be attended to at all hazards before the return of summer brings another epidemic of typhoid fever. I regret to find that Dr. King's health has been seriously impaired by an attack of erysipelas. Mr. Christie also, who had a long and dangerous illness, is quite well again, and actively at work. I regret that I have not been able to make any acknowledgment of the admirable way in which Mr. Leys has carried on the double duty cast on him by Mr. Christie's illness. I was very much gratified with the state of the female side: the staff work most harmoniously under Mrs. Skillen. On the male side, owing to the overcrowding, the state of things is much less satisfactory; but I am bound to acknowledge thankfully the efforts which have been made by the male staff to cope with the great difficulties they have had to contend with. The painstaking manner in which Messrs. Cooper and Ewington have performed their purely honorary functions is a cause of much gratification to me, and ought to be a guarantee that no effort is spared to make the most of the means at our command for relieving the unfortunate sufferers committed to our care. The stone-crusher, which has been procured for the purpose of providing metal for the new airing-courts, and for laying down good roads, which are much wanted, is now actually at work. A considerable extent of land has been reclaimed, and the stones which have been accumulated in the process of clearing will enable us to supply metal to the local bodies in the neighbourhood. The new drying-shed is finished, and will remove the great difficulty which has in the past been experienced in drying mattresses and bedding during the wet months. A large quantity of the best linoleum has been laid, and the appearance and comfort of the wards, especially on the male side, has been greatly improved thereby. This expenditure, however, has necessarily