

that the total remaining at the end of 1871 was 118, whilst it was but 79 at the end of 1868, it will be seen that the demand for more room is urgent and imperative, and that it must be liberally and promptly met, if it be desired to avoid the sickness and irritation and discomfort which inevitably arise in an over-crowded asylum for the insane.

I am decidedly of opinion that the best course the Government of Auckland can take in this matter is to begin at once to build the second wing of the Asylum, and to push it on to completion with the least possible delay. I am aware that a large outlay would be required for such a work, but I do not hesitate to urge it, for I am satisfied it is right, alike on humanitarian and on economic grounds, to provide at the onset proper and permanent shelter for the insane, and not to meet pressing calls for accommodation by temporary structures, which are always unsatisfactory to officers and patients, and which always prove most expensive in the end.

In the course of my inspection, I was particularly struck by the cheerless and comfortless aspect of the day room for male patients, as also by the unsuitableness of the airing courts, which were small, without any shelter from sun or rain, and so shut in by buildings and walls that no view of the surrounding country could be had from them.

With regard to the day room, I would suggest that it be furnished in a plain comfortable way, with seats having backs, arm chairs and tables, at which the patients could read or otherwise amuse themselves in the evening or in wet weather. The walls of the room should be coloured, and it should be made bright and cheerful in appearance, by placing in it pictures, pot-plants, birds, &c.

As to the airing-yards, I would recommend that a shed be built in each as a shelter from heat and rain; also that extended means of exercise be given by enclosing a portion of ground on the slope at the back of the building, the boundary wall forming a ha-ha fence at the foot of the bank, and allowing a free view over it.

On inquiry I received the following information as to water supply and drainage:—

The building has three sources of water supply: 1. Rain water tanks; 2. A well; 3. A creek. The well water was reported unfit for domestic purposes, being rendered foul by percolation from one of the house drains. Thus, when the rain water tanks are emptied (and this happens, of course, in hot weather when water is most needed), the whole supply for all purposes has to be carried in a water-cart from the creek, and the quantity procurable by the labour at the disposal of the superintendent is insufficient to meet the sanitary requirements of the inmates. This condition of things is not satisfactory, and I would recommend that underground tanks should be constructed, of sufficient capacity to store a supply in seasons of ordinary rainfall, and that these tanks should be provided with force pumps, by means of which service cisterns at the top of the buildings could be filled, and the pipes laid from the cisterns to all parts of the Asylum. I would also advise that the well water should be made available by removing the house drain which now runs near to it, and preventing any soakage of sewer water in future, by laying earthen pipes large enough to carry the whole sewage direct to the ground under cultivation at the bottom of the slope, where it might be at the same time utilized and rendered innocuous, by applying it to the irrigation of the growing crops.

In walking over the Asylum grounds while investigating the drainage system, I found that an intercepting sewage tank had been made at the rear of the building, and that the overflow from it had saturated the surrounding ground to such an extent as to render it very foul and offensive; and I was told that, in certain states of the wind, the atmosphere of the Asylum was rendered impure by the exhalation from it. I think this tank should be abolished, and the sewage conveyed (as before suggested) in earthen pipes direct to the cultivation ground.

I beg now to submit the following recommendation for consideration, observing only that my opinions on the several points adverted to have been formed on personal investigation and experience; and that I believe the suggestions, if adopted, will have a tendency to promote the comfort and well-being of the staff and the patients.

1. Provide increased means of amusement for patients, such as bagatelle, chess, draughts, &c., which should be placed in the convalescent wards, and books, newspapers, and standard periodicals, which should be kept in "reading rooms," one being set apart in the male, and one in the female division of the Asylum, for the use of attendants and patients of either sex. Occasional evening meetings for dancing, music, singing, theatrical performances, &c., are of great use in cheering and humanizing insane persons, who are melancholy, morose, and inclined to habits of solitude. At these, officers, attendants, and patients of both sexes should meet and take part, together with such visitors as may be deemed admissible by the authorities. In my opinion, the plan of paying the cost of these amusements by the sale of tickets, and by voluntary contributions is not a good one, because it is uncertain in its working, and because under it the officers must necessarily have great difficulty in refusing admission, even to ineligible persons after they have paid the price of their ticket. It would be much better, I think, to place a sum in the estimates to be disbursed by the Medical Superintendent with the concurrence of the Inspector, in purchases for library, books, and amusements for patients, the accounts, supported by vouchers, being rendered monthly or quarterly as might be directed. Under this head might be charged the cost of outdoor excursions, visits of patients to places of amusement in the neighbouring town, and of outdoor games, such as cricket, quoits, skittles, bowls, &c., for the men; and La Grace, battledore, &c., for the women. It is quite justifiable to make such outlay a charge in the