

diture to meet the suggestions contained in that report, and otherwise to render the institution thoroughly efficient. I have, however, ventured to urge that no extensive additions, or even material alterations in the present buildings, should be made until the establishment has been placed under the superintendence of a skilled medical officer, to whom the plan of any proposed alterations or improvements should be submitted. This is a course strongly urged by Dr. Manning, in the valuable report on lunatic asylums presented in 1868 to the Parliament of New South Wales. The Provincial Government have expressed their willingness to provide for the salary of such an officer, and pending his appointment some alterations have been made under my direction, which have tended greatly to improve the drainage and general sanitary condition of the buildings.

The Asylum is at present under the management of Mr. H. F. Seager, who is diligent and attentive to his duties and zealous in their discharge, but who has never had any special training for the position he holds. The establishment and the patients are generally kept in a very cleanly condition, and the latter appear to enjoy good bodily health, but I conceive that until they are placed under the charge of a resident medical superintendent having the entire control of the Asylum, the curative purposes of the institution must remain at the minimum of efficiency. There can, indeed, be little doubt that the usefulness of a lunatic asylum depends almost entirely upon its being under the undivided charge of a skilled medical officer. I have, therefore, no hesitation in stating, without in any degree desiring to disparage the efforts, either of the present Keeper, or of the medical officer who now attends the institution, that it is not likely to produce efficient results until it has been placed under such charge.

I beg specially to call your attention to the absence of any regulations for the management of the Asylum, the entire government being left to the unfettered will of the Keeper. The Visiting Justices and myself have recently obtained the regulations in force in other asylums in this colony and in Australia, and are about to suggest a code for the Mount View Asylum, but I venture to suggest the expediency of at once providing a general code providing for matters of necessity common to all asylums in the colony.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

WM. THOS. LOCKE TRAVERS.

NAPIER.

No. 5.

ANNUAL REPORT ON LUNATIC ASYLUM.

SIR,—

Napier, 7th June, 1874.

I have the honor to forward a report on the Napier Lunatic Asylum, as required by the 60th section of "The Lunatics Act, 1868."

The only Asylum in this province is that in Napier. It is a part of the gaol building, and is under the charge of the gaoler and warders.

During the year 1873 there were ten male and three female patients. One male lunatic died, and one was discharged within the year.

I observed that an honorable member of the Legislative Council found fault with my report last year as affording no information, and he supplemented it with such very remarkable statements that I felt it necessary to forward, through His Honor J. D. Ormond, Agent to the General Government, a reply (which I believe was published) as to the charge of mismanagement which the honorable member made against the officer in charge of the Asylum.

With regard to the meagre character of my report, I am afraid the materials at my command will scarcely enable me to make a valuable contribution to scientific literature. Not having a medical education, nor any experience in the treatment of insanity, I think it would be somewhat presumptuous, and certainly a waste of time, if I were to theorize upon the several cases of these thirteen unfortunate people.

Fully occupied as I am with the multifarious duties of my offices, I can but devote a couple of hours from time to time to visiting the Asylum, and seeing to the comfort and cleanliness of the patients, and affording them an opportunity of complaint or representation of any kind; but I cannot pretend to offer an opinion of any value as to the treatment of each individual, with a view to cure or alleviation of the malady. I must, therefore, as formerly, confine myself to a brief summary of facts, with a few remarks of a very general character.

Of the three female patients, one has come under my observation for several years. She has been subject to epileptic fits, which grew upon her until she became hopelessly insane; she is quiet and harmless. The other two females do not seem to me to afford much hope of recovery. There is a female attendant who is not resident on the premises, but who lives in the immediate vicinity, and attends to the requirements of these lunatics. They have a convenient yard, to which they have free access, and which is quite shut off from the other parts of the Asylum.

Of the male prisoners, four are apparently healthy and contented. One works, by his own desire, in the hard labour gang, and is always quiet when kept employed, but becomes troublesome in case of being idle. Another might probably be discharged but that his propensity for drink brings back his malady whenever he is allowed at liberty. One of these four is very violent at intervals, for a day or two, and then behaves like a sane man; he has been, I believe, in two or three other asylums, and seems much as he has always been since he came to Hawke's Bay; he has been discharged two or three times, only to be sent back after a few weeks. The other male patients are more or less imbecile and helpless, and I see no chance of their amendment.

The arrangement by which the Gaol and Asylum were combined in one building was of a temporary nature, and the time has arrived at which it is absolutely necessary to separate them. With the