

2. There were in the Asylum in all 140 patients; 94 male, 46 female. None were under restraint. Three males are under curative treatment in the building recently erected for inebriates at the north end of the grounds.

3. There is no road to this building, except partly across a very rough paddock, and partly by a lane outside the grounds. The driving distance from the old main building is thus increased to about one mile. Taken direct and within the fences, it ought not to be above half a mile. I would urge that the completion of a good road at once is a work of primary necessity. In two months hence April rains may set in very heavily, as has happened often before in early autumn, and the new road ought to have been completed, settled down, and in use before then. I think several other outdoor works ought to be postponed in preference to the making of this road. As a visitor, I should certainly be deterred from taking my own carriage to the inebriate's ward, and for a cab I should have to pay extra for the distance, for the bad road, and for going off the Asylum premises. I think it will be admitted by every one that every facility of access by wheeled vehicles should be offered to visitors who take the trouble or incur the expense of driving so far out of Christchurch either to inspect the Asylum or to see friends who are inmates of it. Another reason for urging on the immediate completion of a proper road, is that till it is made there will be too many openings in the main boundary fence, and too much facility offered to patients to leave the premises unobserved by the attendants, now that the buildings are so far apart.

4. The gorse forming the main boundary fence has been let grow far too long without proper trimming. In places it is dangerously overgrown for the safety of the new timber fencing that is being erected close by, at the two new buildings. Both for the sake of neatness and security against fire, I recommend that orders be issued to trim all the boundary fencing forthwith, and to cut it especially close where the new timber fencing runs near it.

5. A stack of hay has been built up close to the laundry. It is estimated at 60 tons, value £2 to £2 10s. per ton; say worth £120 to £150. I recommend that it be insured against fire as soon as possible. I suppose it would cost the Government another 5s. or 10s. a ton (say £15 to £30) to replace the stack if burnt down. The hay seems to have been saved in first-rate condition. It seems to have been a mistake to stack it so near the laundry.

6. If it has not already been thought of, I suggest the desirability of insuring the new inebriates' ward, and also the several attendants' cottages, and any sheds recently erected. An addition has been made to the old buildings, viz., a new room (with a grate and new chimney) for the cook, one for the kitchen-boy, and a new provision store-room. Unless this was all done with the consent of the Insurance Company, the insurance may have become vitiated, and would require attending to afresh.

7. I think that, with reference to clause 27 of "The Lunatics Act, 1868," in each of the new buildings a plan of the lower and upper floors should be kept hung up in some conspicuous place. At the old building there is no plan yet hung up of the upper floor.

8. I again made inquiry of the Keeper and Mr. Pain, in reference to the latter's appointment as clerk, under clause 23 of the Act, but both state that he has received none up to date. I beg to suggest that the point be looked up, lest for want of a strictly literal compliance with clause 23, some important case raised in the Law Courts should break down on merely technical grounds.

9. The Keeper informed me that the tanks set up for safety against fire in the old buildings have been empty at some time since I last saw him. As I had already reported, the windmill has been placed too much to leeward of the building for the N.E. wind, which prevails for nine months out of the twelve. During the comparatively calm days of winter there has not been power to drive the sails. Hand gear might be provided for occasional use during calm weather. The risk of being without this supply ready for sudden emergencies again induces me to ask your Honor to urge on the General Government the immediate completion of the telegraphic communication between all the three main buildings at Sunnyside and the Police Barracks and Fire Brigade Office at Christchurch. The frightful loss of life at the North Ohio Asylum, mentioned in the *Home News* of November 1st, 1872, shows how indispensable it is to be able to bring up promptly several hundred people to assist in preventing insane inmates, rescued from the flames, from rushing back to their accustomed places in the burning building. I beg also to recommend that the sufficiency of the water supply provided by the Provincial Engineer's department be practically tested by the fire brigade at an early date.

10. A Dead House has been erected, with necessary fittings, and what seems to me, so far as I am competent to judge, proper provision for *post mortem* examinations. The floor, however, is of ordinary concrete, and is not standing against wear and tear. I recommend that it be asphalted by a competent workman.

11. I am very glad to report that the upper floor of the new concrete building is at last occupied by about twenty-three of the convalescent female patients. Their former day-ward has become available for the convalescent male patients. The great increase of space thus gained seems to me to have produced a beneficial effect on the patients; but an increase in the number of attendants has also contributed to this result; more range can be given to the patients generally. The employment of an overseer of outdoor work has enabled the Keeper to give employment to several who were hitherto confined to the wards and airing yards, particularly to one patient (long considered dangerous), who has been one of the earliest placed under his charge, when the lunatics used to be confined in a separate ward of Lyttelton Gaol. It appeared to me that the patients generally seemed to be in better bodily health and more cheerful than I had ever observed them on former visits.

12. This improvement in the condition of the patients leads me to remark again on the astonishingly slow progress in completing the ground-floor rooms of the new concrete building. The Keeper states that the plasterers seem to come and go as they please, but that as soon as they finish their work this floor can be occupied. In the known scarcity of plasterers at present, I venture to suggest that some premium be offered for getting the plastering finished without any further interruption of the work. It is most desirable for the sake of the male patients that they should have the use of proper dormitories, which they could have as soon as the female patients are all removed over to the new ward.