

small size, their relative position to the other parts of the building, which causes them to be used as passages of almost constant traffic, and, above all, to the complicated badness of the cooking apparatus. The new range which has been authorized to be obtained will not only greatly facilitate the cooking of suitable meals for the patients, but enable the cook to keep the kitchen clean, and take some pleasure in her work, which is out of the question at present.

The closets and urinals are clean, and evidently well attended to; but, owing to the badness of the drainage, whenever the wind blows from the south, the stink in the neighbourhood of these places and in the adjoining corridor is excessively disgusting.

Several neat wooden bedsteads have been got, as required by the steadily-increasing number of patients. These are much better than the clumsy iron ones hitherto used, and give the bedrooms a more comfortable, furnished appearance. Hair mattresses have also been introduced into some of the dormitories, and are a great improvement over the straw ones in general use. Water is about to be obtained from the city supply, and this will be an improvement of the greatest importance. Hitherto the chief water supply has been from two wells, situated one in the male and the other in the female exercise yard. From these it has to be pumped at intervals by the male patients into tanks, and the frequent entrance of the male patients into the female exercise yards for this purpose is found an extremely annoying obstacle to discipline, as well as a cause of the otherwise unnecessary use of seclusion.

There is at present no provision against fire. When an adequate supply of water is obtained, fire-plugs will be provided and hose.

Instead of the ostentatious and expensive entertainments formerly provided, a weekly dance is held, at which about 60 patients attend. Visitors, friends of the patients and officers, are admitted to these by invitation of the Superintendent in restricted numbers; but difficulty is found in keeping the number within desirable limits, owing to the excessive freedom with which the public formerly took part in the amusements at the Asylum. These simple and suitable entertainments cost nothing. Dramatic performances are also occasionally got up through the kindness of an amateur company. The Superintendent should jealously watch the tendency which naturally exists for asylum entertainments in proportion as they are successful becoming attractive to the public, in which case the recreation of the inmates becomes a secondary consideration to that of the visitors. Divine service is conducted every Sunday from 3 to 4 o'clock by clergymen. About 60 patients attend.

The various books and registers are very carefully and neatly kept.

It was observed that three of the patients admitted since last inspection had been received into the Asylum shortly after their arrival in the colony.

The outside of the building is at present being repainted by a convalescent patient.

*Nelson Asylum.*—The number of inmates on the 1st January was 46. During the year 15 were admitted, 6 were discharged recovered, 1 relieved, and 4 died; so that at the end of the year 58 were left, of whom 32 were males and 18 females. The Asylum has accommodation for 30 of each sex; the male side was therefore full, and there was room for 12 more women. The following is the greater part of the entry made in the Inspector's book regarding the state of the Asylum when visited on 25th March last:—

The wards and bedding are very clean and in excellent order; but the house is very scantily furnished, and presents a remarkably bare appearance. There is no furniture at all in the long wide corridors which are meant to serve as day-rooms, and there are merely tables and uncomfortable benches in the sitting-rooms.

The wards have not yet been either painted, papered, or varnished, and, beyond a very few unframed coloured prints which have been stuck on to the day-room walls, they contain nothing of an ornamental character. It is very desirable that the walls should now be either varnished or painted in a tasteful manner. Requisition should be made for pictures and other ornaments, window-curtains, valances, small tables, ordinary and easy chairs, and stuffed benches with backs to them, &c., so as to make the wards comfortable and relieve their present dull and uninteresting appearance.

The curious wire beds complained of in last report have now all been removed, and neat iron ones have been got instead. Most of the old worn-out blankets formerly spoken of have been replaced by new ones. Sheets have not yet been supplied to the male side, owing chiefly to the hitherto small staff of servants not being able to undertake any additional washing.

Hardly any of the bedroom windows are made to be opened, and they are all furnished with iron bars on the inside and have no shutters. This state of matters should be at once remedied. These windows are very dangerous for melancholic patients, and the perforated zinc panes which are placed in them admit of very imperfect ventilation.

The water supply is very deficient. It is got from the town waterworks, but the pressure is so feeble that the water does not run at all till about 9 o'clock at night, when there is less being used in town. Great inconvenience arises from this, as all water required for baths, lavatories, and the washing-house has to be carried in from tanks at the rear of the building. In the event of a fire breaking out the hydrants and hose which have been carefully provided would be of little use, because, even after 9 o'clock, the pressure is too weak to throw water over the building. It is understood that extensions of the city reservoir are contemplated, which, if made, would secure an abundant flow at the Asylum. It would be desirable to ascertain if there be really any prospect of such alterations being made. If not, steps should be taken without delay to get sufficient water from some other source. There is a stream at some little distance on the other side of the road, at the back of the Asylum, which might be available for this purpose. From a rough estimate which Mr. Heffer, the Superintendent of the Asylum obtained, it appears that for about £300 this stream could be dammed and water laid on to the Asylum.

No airing-ground has yet been made for the women. It would be a very simple matter to enclose for this purpose the piece of ground lying between the boundary fence and the female side of the house. It is recommended that a requisition should be sent in for the necessary material.

The male airing-ground would be much improved by being laid out as an ornamental garden with