

who occasionally work in the little piece of ground in front of the house, when the attendant can spare time to go with them, are restricted for exercise to the airing-yards. These are exceedingly small—merely a few yards in area—and enclosed by high wooden fences. There is no view from them, and they contain no shelter from the sun. Most of the patients were found pacing up and down these melancholy courts. It is obvious that such a manner of spending their time must have a strong tendency to confirm their insanity, instead of curing it, or even allowing it a chance of working its own cure. At present there is no other place where the patients can take exercise. It would be an immense improvement if the now exposed and unfenced piece of ground, which slopes suddenly down from the front of the Asylum to the public road, were securely fenced in, and an additional attendant got. The ground could be turned into a pretty, cheerful garden, in which many of the now idle inmates could be got to work, and all of them allowed to take exercise. It would also be a great improvement if the high mound on the seaward side of the female airing-court were levelled, and the court extended in this direction and raised in the centre, so as to allow the patients to look out on the sea.

At present almost all the inmates are unemployed, and there is no general recreation.

The patients are evidently treated with kindness and consideration; but it is imperative that another attendant should be got, in order that they may be removed from the injurious influence of continual confinement in the airing-yards, engaged in healthful occupation and recreation, and enjoy an occasional walk beyond the Asylum bounds.

The Asylum is dependent for its water supply on the rain which is collected from the roof into two tanks. These do not hold nearly a sufficient quantity, and for some time lately, during which there has been no rain, it has been necessary to use brackish water, which is carted by the prisoners from a neighbouring well. Mr. Miller proposes to supplement the present storage by making a sunk tank of cement at the back of the Asylum, to hold 12,000 gallons, which would insure a supply both for ordinary purposes and in case of fire. This appears to be the best thing which can be done.

The lavatories on both sides of the house are much too small, and are not properly fitted up. Small tubs are used instead of basins, and the baths are merely tubs of an extremely inconvenient size and shape. These rooms should be enlarged by being increased at least 6 feet in width; ordinary fixed baths, free from the walls on three sides, should be provided, and also three or four basins of block tin or enamelled iron. They should be boarded up to the roof on the inside and painted. Windows should be made, and locks should be put on the doors.

All the windows of the sleeping-rooms have iron bars on the inside, and only one is furnished with shutters. Two or three on each side of the house should have shutters, without which they are very dangerous for suicidal patients.

A few quilted blankets, made of a pair of ordinary blankets sewn into strong sailcloth, should be got for those patients who destroy their bedding.

The diet is the same as that of the prisoners; butter is consequently only given as an extra; so also is milk, which has hitherto been supplied gratuitously by Mr. Miller from his own cow, which is now, however, not giving enough. Both these important articles should be on the diet scale, and an allowance of 1 oz. of butter and 1 gill of milk be given to each patient daily.

A new Register of Admissions and a Register of Discharges have been got since last visit, and both books are very neatly and carefully kept. There is no Medical Journal or Case-book.

There is only one patient towards whose maintenance contributions are made from private sources.

The Superintendent is recommended to apply for another attendant,* to send in a requisition for some matting as a substitute for the old sacks at present spread on the floors of the wards, for cement for the proposed tank, for material for fencing the ground in front of the house and for enlarging the lavatories, for the requisite fittings of these places, for wood sufficient to make much-required verandas in the airing-courts, for material with which to paint the wards, and for an allowance of £20 with which to purchase some pictures, books, and a few ornaments for the wards.

Auckland Asylum.—There were 163 patients in this Asylum on 1st January. During the year 56 were admitted, 12 were discharged recovered, and 8 not recovered, and 16 died; leaving, at the end of the year, 128 males and 55 females: total, 183.

A full report of the cause and origin of the fire which occurred here, and its immediate consequences, having been already furnished by Mr. B. Maclean and myself, it need not now be further referred to.

The following is almost the whole of the entry made in the Inspector's book with reference to the condition of the Asylum when visited on the 15th and 16th April last:—

The women continue to reside at the old hospital, whither they were removed when the fire occurred at the Asylum in September last. The building is of a very unsuitable construction for an insane community, and affords no facilities for their proper classification. It is moreover crowded, and contains but one day-room for the whole number of the patients, for whom it serves also the purpose of recreation and dining-hall. The wards, the walls of which are merely whitewashed, are as bare as barns of any ornamentation or objects of interest, and contain nothing but the most necessary furniture of the poorest description. They are infested with bugs, which it is found impossible to dislodge from the shrunken and decaying boards. The building is, generally speaking, in a dilapidated condition, and the roof lets in the water freely in several places. Accommodation of a very indifferent kind has been obtained for violent and noisy patients, by partitioning off the two apartments in the separate buildings intended as a fever ward into twelve single rooms. These are not found sufficient. Constant changes have to be made in their occupants, and frequently one or more of them are occupied by two patients at a time. There being but one day-room, troublesome patients have frequently to be kept in seclusion—not because it is the proper treatment for them, but because it is necessary for the peace and quiet of the other patients.

* An additional attendant has been engaged.