

bring it up to the Home standard; but he has many difficulties to contend with, which can only be gradually removed. Great inconvenience is experienced from the unfinished state of the new building, the central block of which, containing the offices, kitchen, dining-hall, &c., has not yet been begun. The water-supply is deficient both for ordinary purposes and as a provision against fire. There is ample storage in the shape of tanks in the new building, but no means of raising the water to many of these has as yet been provided.

*Dunedin Asylum.*—The number of patients in this asylum on the 1st January was 303—206 males and 97 females. During the year 106 were admitted—51 males and 33 females for the first time, and 11 of each sex who were readmissions. The total number under treatment was 409. Of these, 25 males and 17 females were discharged as recovered, and 17 males and 12 females as relieved; 15 males and 8 females died; and there remained at the end of the year 315—211 males and 104 females. The recoveries give a percentage of 39·62 on the admissions, and the deaths of 7·30 on the average number resident. Of the 23 deaths, 14 were due to cerebral, 3 to thoracic, and 2 to abdominal diseases; 1 to pyæmia, 2 to senile decay, and 1 to syphilis. At the beginning of the year there was one inebriate patient of each sex who had been committed to the asylum under the provisions of section 21 of the Lunatics Act, and one other female was committed during the year; the male and one of the females were discharged as “relieved,” and one female was still in the asylum at the end of the year. There are no special wards for these cases. I inspected the asylum in January and again in November. At the latter date I reported as follows:—

On the 12th and 15th November I inspected this asylum. Considering the overcrowding, and many other often-mentioned disadvantages, under which the treatment of the patients is conducted, I think it is very satisfactory. The general management of the institution reflects the greatest credit on Mr. Hume and the other officers. The female department has now become very crowded. The recreation-room has had to be converted into a dormitory, and shakedown rooms are scattered throughout the building. It is positively necessary that the accommodation for the women should be increased. The way in which Mr. Hume proposes to do this appears the best and cheapest, viz., to give them the fourth male ward, which can be completely cut off from communication with the rest of the male department, and make an addition to the temporary buildings at Seacliff, sufficient for fifty men. This is a work which he could accomplish entirely by means of asylum labour, and the materials used would afterwards be available for attendants' cottages, and separate buildings for quiet industrious patients. I have requested him to send up for approval a plan of the proposed addition, and a requisition for the necessary material, as soon as possible. I inspected the buildings at Seacliff on the 13th instant. All the mischief done by slips to the temporary buildings has been completely repaired. It was found in very good order, but there is a great want of comfortable furniture and pictures and other ornaments, and this might easily be remedied at a small cost. The means of ventilating the sleeping-rooms are very deficient, but this is being attended to by Mr. Hume. The inmates, most of whom are employed in various outdoor occupations, appear very well cared for, and derive much benefit, both mentally and physically, from the life they lead, which is indeed a very happy one for them, and far better than many sane people enjoy. It is certainly a charming contrast to a life of pacing up and down a dreary airing-court, with nothing to do and nothing to think about, which will continue to be the lot of vast numbers now detained in the old asylum, until the completion of the new one at Seacliff. It is of the utmost importance that this new building should be gone on with as quickly as possible. As yet only the central and least-urgently required portion has been begun. I would strongly urge that there should be no unnecessary delay in proceeding with the whole of the rest of the building. It is no exaggeration to say that many of the present patients have gradually lapsed into hopeless dementia, partly owing to the utterly unfavourable circumstances by which they have been surrounded at the old asylum, and that they would, in all probability, have recovered had they been treated in such a place as the new one will be.

The asylum was also inspected on the 17th December, by the official visitors, Messrs. A. Chetham-Strode and J. P. Maitland, who had been recently appointed, and they reported as follows:—

We have this day (17th December) visited this asylum and inspected every part of the same, and have seen all the patients confined herein, with the exception of those at Seacliff. We find that at present no patient is under restraint. At the time of our visit we find there are 212 males and 106 females on the books; of this number, Mr. Hume informs us there are 74 males and 4 females at Seacliff Branch Asylum. On going through the establishment we found the patients quiet, orderly, and cheerful; the dormitories and day-rooms were extremely clean and well ventilated. On the female side we found the wards over-crowded, but this, we were informed by Mr. Hume, will be shortly remedied by additional temporary buildings at Seacliff. On inspection the provisions we found of excellent quality, and the kitchen department well ordered, and in fact every part of the establishment in a satisfactory state.

The temporary building, which the Superintendent proposed to erect, was duly authorized, and is now in course of construction. Before proceeding with another portion of the permanent asylum it was considered desirable to have a further report on the site from Dr. Hector; and from this there appears to be no reason against going on with the erection of the south wing at once, which I would strongly recommend should be done. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of getting the patients removed from their present dismal abode to a roomy and well-constructed asylum, with extensive grounds, where they can be engaged in cheerful and healthy occupation. It is no doubt surprising, and in some respects gratifying, to observe the tranquillity and apparent contentment which generally speaking characterize the inmates of this asylum. But the life they lead must in some respects be positively injurious to them. With a few exceptions all the males at the time of my inspection were unemployed, with hardly any means of recreation, and restricted for exercise to the airing-grounds. The majority of the women were in the same plight. It is also impossible to dispense with the use of restraint in such an ill-constructed and over-crowded asylum as this, where many of the male patients are exceedingly dangerous and intractable. I understand that it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Medical Superintendent to this asylum, and it is evident that this should be done with as little delay as possible. In English asylums of this size it is invariably considered essential that there should be two Medical Officers, and that on no pretext whatever should they both be off the premises at the same time. When it is remembered that there are now in reality two asylums, one in Dunedin and the other at Seacliff, and that the management of both of them is impeded by difficulties altogether unknown in England, it must be seen that it is full time that at least one such officer was appointed.

*Nelson Asylum.*—The number of patients in this asylum on the 1st January was 60—34 males and 26 females. During the year 5 males and 9 females were admitted for the first time, and 3 of each sex were readmitted. Altogether 80 were under treatment; and of these, 6 males and 4 females were discharged as recovered, and 3 of each sex died, leaving at the end of the year 33 males and 31 females. The recoveries were 50 per cent. on the admissions, and the deaths 9 per cent. on