

nurseries, and planted about in various places, both for shelter and ornament; that clearing the bush is being steadily continued by the patients; that the five-acre section on which the cottage stands is nearly all cleared, and will probably be under crop next year; that the old cottage formerly standing on this section has been taken down and re-erected at the rear of the main building, and furnishes sleeping accommodation for seven patients; and that owing to this addition there is ample room for all patients in the asylum."

*Napier Asylum.*—There were 13 males and 6 females in this asylum at the beginning of the year, in the course of which 1 male and 3 females were admitted, and 1 female was discharged as recovered. I inspected it on the 14th August and on the 25th September, and on both occasions found it in good order. It had been repainted externally, some nice pictures had been hung up in the day-rooms, and matting had been laid on the floors. Vine shades and an aviary full of canaries had been provided for the female airing-court. The ground in front of the building was being altered so as to admit of its being laid out as gardens for the use of the patients. An abundant supply of water had been secured by means of a large tank in which the rain-water was collected, and to which water was also laid on from the town. I saw all the patients; they were very quiet, and seemed contented and well cared for. None were in seclusion at either visit; at the second, one man was wearing locked gloves and a canvas dress. I instructed the Superintendent to send in a requisition for materials to paint the asylum internally, for timber with which to fence the ground in front of it and provide shades for the protection of the patients from the sun, and an addition of two more rooms for the accommodation of the attendants in charge of the asylum; and this has been done.

*Wellington Asylum.*—There were 136 patients on the 1st January—83 males and 53 females. During the year 27 males and 17 females were admitted for the first time, and 9 males and 8 females were readmitted, and the total number under treatment was 197—119 males and 78 females. Of these, 17 males and 9 females were discharged as recovered, 11 males and 9 females as relieved, and 7 males and 1 female died, leaving at the end of the year 84 males and 59 females, being an increase of 1 male and 6 females. Five of the deaths were due to brain disease, 1 to gastric fever, 1 to senile decay, and 1 to stricture of œsophagus. The recoveries give a percentage of 42·62 on the admissions, and the deaths a percentage of 5·71 on the average number resident. I inspected the asylum on the 2nd and 4th March, 19th April, 9th August, 15th October, and 15th, 16th, and 23rd December. On these occasions I was generally speaking well satisfied with the condition and management of the asylum and patients, and made short entries to that effect in the Inspector's book. It is impossible for me now to report on this asylum without going over the whole ground covered by the report of the Royal Commissioners, who recently investigated its management, and entering into a discussion for which this is not the proper place. I wish only, with reference to the subject of restraint, to make one or two remarks. Although this was latterly used to an unusual extent, and more than appeared to me necessary, yet on no occasion whatever, so far as I am aware, was it used in the case of any patients in such a manner as to cause the slightest pain or serious inconvenience; and, believing, as I still do, that both the Superintendent and the Medical Officer were fully alive to the importance of resorting to its use as little as possible, and that they would not employ it except where it seemed to them necessary, I did not, in any case, feel it my duty to insist on its disuse, or to take such steps as would have indirectly compelled these officers to act in a matter of great responsibility against their own judgment. To use a homely phrase, "you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear," and nothing could be more unreasonable than to expect that in a wretchedly-constructed building, perched upon a cutting on a hill-side, where there is not even room to make an airing-ground, you can carry out in its entirety the same method of treatment which, amidst immeasurable difficulties, risks, and anxieties, is pursued in the splendid asylums of England by accomplished and resident physicians, with large and highly-trained staffs of attendants. Nearly £12,000 have now been spent under my direction in altering and enlarging this so-called asylum, and you are now going to endeavour to complete its transformation by spending some £5,000 in further alterations, and to place it under charge of a resident physician. When these things are done it may be possible to carry out the non-restraint system in the treatment of the patients; but I have no hesitation in saying that to insist on the non-restraint system in such an asylum as this has hitherto been, would simply mean to insist on broken ribs or something worse.

I have, &c.,

FRED. W. A. SKAE,

Inspector of Lunatic Asylums.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary