

Officer, and was carefully looked after during the night, but died unexpectedly on the following morning. The Medical Officer attributed the death to spasm of the heart, and the verdict was to the effect that it was due to natural causes.

The number of patients remaining at the end of the year was 1,125; the accommodation at the same date was for 893. The following tabular statement shows the accommodation at the several districts and its deficiency:—

| Asylums.                                          | Amount of<br>Dormitory<br>Accommodation<br>at 31st Dec. |     | Number of<br>Patients<br>at 31st Dec. |     | Excess<br>over<br>Accommodation. |    |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|----|
|                                                   | M.                                                      | F.  | M.                                    | F.  | M.                               | F. |
| Auckland—Asylum at Whau                           | 50                                                      |     | 173                                   |     | 123                              |    |
| „ Old Hospital in city (temporary)                |                                                         | 50  |                                       | 79  |                                  | 29 |
| Napier—(temporary, within gaol grounds)           | 17                                                      | 6   | 14                                    | 8   | 3                                | 2  |
| Wellington—Asylum                                 | 82                                                      | 82  | 84                                    | 59  | 2                                | 23 |
| Nelson—Asylum                                     | 30                                                      | 30  | 33                                    | 31  | 3                                | 1  |
| Christchurch—Old Asylum (temporary)               | 60                                                      |     | 113                                   |     | 53                               |    |
| „ New Asylum                                      | 50                                                      | 80  | 50                                    | 93  |                                  | 13 |
| Hokitika—Asylum                                   | 51                                                      | 23  | 51                                    | 22  |                                  | 1  |
| Dunedin—Asylum on High School Reserve (temporary) | 132                                                     | 76  | 137                                   | 114 | 5                                | 28 |
| „ Seacliff Farm Buildings (temporary)             | 74                                                      |     | 74                                    | ... |                                  | .. |
|                                                   | 546                                                     | 347 | 729                                   | 396 | 183                              | 49 |
| Totals                                            | 893                                                     |     | 1,125                                 |     | 232                              |    |

From this it will be seen that there were in all 232 patients in excess of the accommodation, and that the overcrowding at Auckland in particular, and at Christchurch, was very serious indeed. The additional buildings now being provided to meet the deficiency are: At Auckland, the new wing of the asylum, for 107 patients, which is nearly ready for occupation; at Christchurch, the remaining part of the male wing, for 100 patients, which should be finished this month; at Seacliff, another temporary building, for 50 patients, which is being put up by asylum labour, and the permanent asylum, for 300, which, however, will not be completed at least for two years to come.

When the new wing of the Auckland Asylum is finished it will be occupied by the male patients, and the women will be removed from the old hospital, which is urgently needed for a poorhouse, to the wing of the asylum occupied by men. But this being effected, there will still be a deficiency of accommodation at Auckland of 66 men and 29 women, not to speak of the increase which is sure to take place within the year. To meet this, after consulting with Dr. Young, the Superintendent of the asylum, I have advised the erection of a simple and inexpensive one-storeyed wooden building for 60 quiet, industrious male patients, at the farm-steading; and the District Engineer has been requested to prepare, in conjunction with Dr. Young's plan, for such a building as will be adapted to the site and the class of patients mentioned. Unless the number of the females can be reduced by retaining some of the harmless and incurable in the old hospital when it is converted into a poorhouse, it will soon be necessary to provide additional buildings for them also. Besides the above-mentioned additional ward accommodation, a good, large laundry the want of which has long been a serious inconvenience, is now being erected at this asylum.

When the male wing of the new Christchurch Asylum is finished, as it shortly will be, it will accommodate 150 patients; and there will still be an excess of some thirteen of each sex, and the inevitable increase to provide for. I think an additional dormitory for the women, the central administration block, containing kitchen, dining-hall, store-rooms, officers' quarters, &c., and a residence for the Medical Superintendent, should be erected as soon as possible; but I am not prepared to advise further extension of the male side, as it appears to me very doubtful if it would not be better to keep the population of this asylum within 300, by removing from time to time harmless and incurable patients, who have no localities, to buildings of a much less expensive kind, such as could be provided to any extent required on the large reserve at Seacliff.

The object of the temporary building for fifty men at Seacliff is principally to relieve the now excessively-crowded condition of the female department of the Dunedin Asylum, by enabling that number of men to be removed, and annexing their present quarters to the female department, which can be done without entailing any great disadvantage. It is planned by Mr. Hume, the Superintendent, with strict regard to the understanding that it is merely temporary, and is to be taken to pieces and its materials used for attendants' cottages as soon as the permanent asylum is built. It will cost about £900.

By the time these additional buildings are ready there will likely be sufficient accommodation for the numbers then existing, and it will at least be possible to remove all the patients from the present Dunedin Asylum, which for many often-mentioned reasons it is exceedingly desirable to vacate. After that, I would propose to extend accommodation as required by means of comparatively-inexpensive buildings, such as that which is about to be erected on the asylum farm at Auckland, and by means of cottages for ten to fifteen patients, like the one recently put up at Hokitika.

The Napier Asylum, which is a small detached building for twenty-three patients, within the gaol grounds, is in many respects an unsuitable place for the treatment of the insane; and apparently it will soon have to be given up on account of the requirements of the gaol. But it does not seem to me advisable to build a new asylum for this district until a considerably larger one is required. For some time to come all that will be actually needed is merely a reception-house, for the purposes of which the