

On the 1st November Mr. Seager returned to duty, and was appointed Steward. The patients were delighted to see their old Superintendent again, and at Christmas-time were entertained by him in the theatre. No one man can satisfactorily perform the duties of Medical Superintendent and Steward in an asylum of this size, and there is great necessity for the proper management and development of the store, kitchen, and farm departments, which are now being worked by the Steward under my supervision; and he is making such good use of the experience which he has gained by visiting the large stores and kitchens of the English asylums, that, as soon as the new kitchen and store are built, I apprehend that not only will a great saving be effected, but the work of the asylum will be conducted in a far more complete and orderly manner than has hitherto been possible. A bakehouse is to be built, and bread will be baked for the asylum use, and also for other institutions if found convenient. Mr. Seager will be responsible for the different workshops, such as carpenters', blacksmiths', shoemakers', tailors', upholsterers', printing office, &c., and regulating the supply of gas, water, firing, &c. The institution is assuming such large dimensions, that nothing but constant vigilance and inspection on the part of the several officers can keep it in proper order, and the inmates and attendants under perfect discipline.

The asylum is at present unfinished. I cannot approve of the site, which is damp and low, not surrounded by a large enough area of farm land, and the buildings are situated too near the public roads. As to the construction, it is on the corridor system, but (although undoubtedly a great credit to the colony) I should have preferred the block or pavilion system. The new wards have been furnished with strong and necessary furniture, and the patients have all the advantages and requirements of civilized life; the accommodation now provided being far better than can be found in many hotels. There are already three water-towers—one large one would have been sufficient. At the present time there are no proper means for raising the water to the tanks; windmills are too uncertain, and hand pumps are an unnecessary waste of time and labour. I have recommended that a centrally-situated steam-engine be erected for pumping water, as well as for steam-cooking and heating purposes, and also to work the steam-pump in case of fire. Hydrants and hose have been provided in the different wards, but I consider that a fire-engine to be worked by hand should be purchased for the institution. Fire-drill is held at stated intervals.

I have endeavoured to obtain an efficient system of drainage for the buildings and the land (which is under water in winter), but hitherto without any practical result. I am not satisfied with—neither will I sanction—draining into the adjacent stream. A cesspit at some distance from the building is in process of construction, but it has for some months past remained in its present condition. All the solid sewage at the present time is daily buried on the farm land. All the laundry water, bath water, &c., drains into the Heathcote Stream. An additional dormitory for the females, which is urgently required, will soon be ready for occupation. This will relieve the overcrowding on the female side. The plan for the kitchen, bakehouse, store, and administrative block is decided, and the work of building will soon commence. There will be special accommodation for a few inebriates (who can temporarily occupy the old building, and will then have no occasion to be in close contact with lunatics). I recommend that the plan for the asylum be at once finished, and that a block of buildings to accommodate fifty more male patients be at once erected, also a large dining and recreation hall with corridors, and the addition of a few more single rooms to the female division, and the enlargement and improving of the female refractory day-room, and the erection of a proper boundary-wall or railing, with entrance gates. The old buildings should be pulled down, and in their place convenient stables, storehouses, cow-sheds, piggeries, &c., should be built.

More farm land is required not only to afford greater opportunities to the patients, but also to enable larger crops and quantities of vegetables to be grown, and to provide feed for cattle and sheep. The grazing of calves for vaccination purposes requires all available grass-land at the present time. Maize, linseed, and lentils are cultivated in small quantities, and the mulberry trees for sericulture have all been carefully transplanted, and are thriving well. A large number of pigs are reared. Eggs are now supplied from the asylum poultry-yard. There is one cow—a nucleus for a further dairy, and three promising young heifers. A list of vegetables supplied to the institution from the garden is appended, as also a statement of the sale of pigs and farm produce.

Owing to the small staff of attendants, I have not been able to develop the useful working of shoemending, tailoring, &c., but, although most of the patients belong to the labouring class, I hope, now that I have a larger staff, to produce still more satisfactory results. Looking back on the past year, I feel that I have endeavoured to make my patients healthier and happier, and to promote their recovery under difficult circumstances and that I have not sacrificed efficiency to economy.

As far as medical treatment is concerned, my experience here has fully confirmed my opinion that early treatment in mental disease is most important, and that constant and special attention during the first month is of more use than any amount of after treatment, when the disease has advanced.

The subsidence of goitrous tumours, the improved appearance and behaviour of many patients, the tranquillity and contentment, the almost total absence of the "insane ear" (*hematoma auris*), the prolongation of the intervals between the paroxysms of the chronic patients and between the occurrence of fits in the epileptics, all show the efficacy of treatment which can only be properly directed by a physician conversant with the insane and their peculiarities; and some of the recoveries have impressed me, once again, that, when all seems lost, a great deal may be gained by continued perseverance in the administration of remedies.

In the *Journal of Mental Science* (October, 1872) Dr. Rogers, of the county asylum, Rainhill, writes thus: "Let us imagine a person appointed as medical chief to a large asylum, who had never seen a lunatic professionally, but who had thoroughly posted himself up in the literature of insanity, and relied on his knowledge acquired by reading to direct his practice. In the first place he would find that mechanical restraint was held (or professedly held) as an accursed thing, and not to be thought of in the modern treatment of insanity. Then he would hear from an eminent authority that giving narcotics to put 'chemical restraint on a brain cell' was almost as heinous, and that if these improved the bodily condition of a patient they did so at the expense of the mental; by another writer he would