

another away daily with a few patients cutting up firewood, there are only two attendants practically left to look after fifty-three dangerous lunatics—an unheard-of state of matters, carrying grave risk of life to both attendant and patient.

In most British asylums the largest proportions of patients allowed to each attendant, taking them all over, quiet and gentle with refractory and dangerous, is never more than eleven to each attendant, and here it ranges as high as twenty-six violent cases to each.

In the front ward, where there are thirty-five quiet patients, there are two attendants, one of whom, the gardener, is always out of doors, thus leaving one man to the care of all these lunatics; and in wet weather, when the patients are in-doors, the condition of matters is even worse. There can scarcely be much of a remedy for this state of things, as, owing to the crowded dormitories, there is not any sleeping accommodation for an increase in the staff at present.

On the 31st December there were five males in excess of the estimated number, who had to sleep on shakedown on floor in bath-room and passages, but in the female side there was room for three patients.

The total admissions for the year 1881 were 113, of whom 92 were for the first time, and 21 were cases which had been under treatment on previous occasions.

On the 31st December, 1880, there remained a total of 315, of whom 211 were males and 164 females.

On the 31st December, 1881, there was a total of 327, of which number 219 were males and 108 females, showing an increase annually of 12 patients.

Of the discharges during the year, 39 were recovered, 40 relieved, 2 not improved, 20 died.

It is scarcely a trustworthy fact (the increase on year's admission) on which to found an assertion that lunacy is on the increase in this colony. I do not think that among the population who have been born in the country, or who have been resident for some years, there is any appreciable increase of lunacy in proportion to population over any other country; if anything, it may possibly be less; and there is no difficulty in accounting for the apparent increase of twelve during the year 1881 over 1880, a portion of admissions being those under the habitual drunkards' section of the Act, and others being recent importations from beyond sea, who have been in many cases, I believe, shipped off to get rid of the burden of looking after them. Then there are many cases sent to asylums as lunatics, who, if in Britain, would be cared for in poorhouses, who are not quite able to take care of themselves, but are quiet and harmless; such cases as these ought not to be secluded in asylums, where all their surroundings are kept up with so much expense, and which really they do not require. These patients could be more cheaply maintained in ordinary hospitals or benevolent institutions, and the already large number of so-called lunatics be reduced, instead of being annually increased, as they will be when old age and poverty creep on with the present population.

I cannot conclude my remarks without bearing testimony to the admirable manner in which this institution has hitherto been managed. Care and kindly forethought on behalf of the patients are evident at all hands, and each and all appear comparatively contented and happy.

Seacliff Asylum.

The Seacliff Asylum is situated about twenty-four miles from Dunedin, on the Northern Railway, and is on a reserve of 900 acres; it stands high above the sea-level, and is surrounded by dense bush, but owing to the formation of the soil there is a magnificent and comprehensive view of both sea and inland.

The permanent asylum is being built, and when complete will be one of the finest buildings of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere; but progress is very slow in building, and month passes month without much perceptible increase in work done.

There are three temporary wooden houses, occupied by 133 patients, under the charge of a manager, and a large portion of these patients are able to work on the farm, clearing bush, and bringing the land into cultivation; of the above number all are males except five female patients, who are employed in the kitchen under a cook. No patients are sent to Seacliff who are dangerous or troublesome, or who are weak and sickly; all such are kept in Dunedin, and if any case of sickness occurs it is at once sent to town.

Already a good many acres have been cleared, fenced, and cropped, and there are now a few cows kept, which supply the milk to asylum here; there are also three horses, which are kept constantly at work carting firewood to stations and otherwise employed on the farm.

All supplies are brought out from Dunedin Asylum, where the books are kept, and so a saving occurs in the staff, one set of books and accounts serving for both places. The patients here are all healthy, and comparatively happy and contented.

Reports by Mr. J. B. Bradshaw, Deputy-Inspector.

Dunedin, 13th March, 1882.

ON Sunday, the 12th instant, I made my first inspection of the Dunedin Asylum. The number in this Asylum is 196, viz., 100 females and 96 males.

It being a Sunday all the patients were indoors or in the immediate vicinity, and I had an opportunity of seeing them all. I was shown by Dr. Neill every patient, and every part of the building. Throughout the building—in every part of it—bedding, beds, &c., were in a most satisfactory order, and perfect cleanliness. The patients were all apparently in good health, with the exception of a few suffering from decline, abscess, and paralysis. The wards occupied by male patients are overcrowded, so that some have to lie on the floor, and there is no room for more. The female wards are not full, there being room for fifteen more.

The food here, as at Seacliff, is of most excellent quality; in fact the management seems to be all that is desirable.