

Both of the asylums were in the best possible order, under very disadvantageous circumstances; and the cleanliness of the dormitories, and freedom from any offensive odour, was remarkable.

At Dunedin considerable encroachments have been made since my last visit by the High School authorities, and much skill and ingenuity have been displayed in making the most of what has been left of the asylum premises. I witnessed no patient in an excited state here; all appeared fairly contented, and none made complaint. Amusements are necessarily in abeyance; but some patients are sent occasionally to places of amusement in the town, and others have the advantage of walking and driving in the neighbourhood.

Seacliff was seen by me at its best, for the weather was dry and bright. I could, however, see unmistakable signs of the trouble which wet weather entails, where the soil is a retentive clay, and where little or no drainage has been carried out around the buildings. The basement floor of the female centre-wing is, in part, unfit for habitation, on account of percolation of water through its walls and floor, and the same remark will apply, in a minor degree, to the male centre-wing. I also noticed various leaks, particularly in the large upper hall, resulting from broken slates, and gutters uncleared from mortar. These matters ought to receive immediate attention. There has been for some weeks past no water-supply (hot) in the part of the building now occupied by females; and I learned that similar trouble had been experienced on a former occasion in the male division. I find that the hot-water tanks are ill-constructed, and lined with lead; the wood-work has bulged and given way, and the lead becomes leaky with alternate expansion and contraction. The tanks are unfit for their use, and dangerous. Many defects are apparent throughout the building. The height of the dormitory windows from the floor-line renders them gloomy and cheerless. The doors of the single rooms, having been originally intended to open inwards, but afterwards altered in plan, are very unsafe. The whole of the framework has been shifted by a patient in more than one instance. A certain number should be made secure, without resorting to the heavy iron bars now in use as a temporary expedient. These savour too much of the prison. I find that many of the wards are unprovided with a washing-up sink, which must necessarily be provided. The door-locks and fastenings are ill-planned, ponderous bunches of large keys being everywhere required. Separate steam-valves should be fixed in the boiler-house upon pipes running up to the hot-water cisterns in each division, and also upon the pipes supplying the kitchen. At present the engineer has to go up into the roof several times daily to adjust the supply, which otherwise is insufficient for cooking purposes. This passing through the wards is very objectionable. The cold-water supply has so far been ample; but the water is very muddy, and requires to be filtered before use. The pressure is sufficient for fire-extinction, but no hose for this purpose has yet been supplied.

At present the furnishing of the new buildings is very meagre, and it is absolutely necessary to make additions to it by purchase. Everything which can be made useful will be brought from Dunedin, but the supply from that source will be quite insufficient. Nothing whatever has been done to provide the gas supply for which all the fittings exist in the asylum buildings. Kerosene is now used, but is a source of trouble and danger. All the washing is still performed at the old laundry in Dunedin. No progress has been made with the erection of the new laundry, which was long since authorized; had this been in use the whole of the patients might, ere this, have been transferred to Seacliff.

Regarding the grounds, I was glad to find that the portion immediately in front of the asylum was being levelled. Airing-courts will be formed here at some future time; and from them a good view will be obtainable. The temporary ones at the back are completely shut in.

Considerable additions continue to be made to the cultivated portions of the estate. There is a well-bred herd of cattle, and some excellent pigs. The returns of labour and produce, furnished for my information, are exceedingly satisfactory. For some time to come, however, much labour must be devoted to levelling, fencing, road-making, and other necessary works, which will show no immediate return of profit.

Taking into consideration the distance of the Seacliff Asylum from town, I think the appointment of an assistant medical officer cannot long be deferred. A residence for the Medical Superintendent ought immediately to be erected. To compel him to occupy his present rooms for any length of time would be in every way prejudicial.

Dr. Neill deserves much credit for the great progress which has been made in the Seacliff establishment under many difficulties. The whole of the patients are evidently well cared for; and in only one instance did I notice any dangerous excitement. All the statutory inquiries were made by me with satisfactory results, and I found all the books and papers in due form and well kept.

Hokitika.

There were, on the 1st January, 1883, 59 male and 28 female patients in the asylum: total, 87. Fifteen males and 4 females were admitted during the year for the first time; three males were readmitted. The total number treated was 109: of these, there were discharged as "recovered" 7 males and 4 females; 2 males and 1 female were discharged as "relieved" or "not improved;" and 4 males died. The number remaining at the close of the year was 91—64 males and 27 females. The percentage of recoveries on admissions was 50·00; the death-rate on the average number resident, 4·49.

The asylum was visited by me on the following dates: 30th and 31st October, 1883; and again on the 3rd and 4th April, 1884. The entries below were made by me in the Inspector's book:—

30th October, 1883.—I have made my periodical inspection of the Sea View Asylum, and have seen every portion of the buildings and their surroundings. I have also seen the whole of the
2—H. 7.