

of the police in attendance. I am surprised to find that in the Colonies of Victoria and New South Wales the sums collected by the Masters in Lunacy for maintenance amount only to £5,389 and £5,097 2s. respectively.

ASYLUMS.

Auckland Asylum.

The number of patients in this establishment on the 1st of January, 1883, was 274—viz., 191 males and 83 females. During the year 88 were admitted—55 males and 33 females—10 of the males and 7 of the females being readmissions. The total number under treatment was 362—246 males and 116 females. Of these, 17 males and 15 females were discharged as “recovered,” 7 males and 2 females as “relieved” or “not recovered;” 26 males and 4 females died; leaving, at the end of the year, 196 males and 95 females: total, 291. The recoveries show a percentage of 36·36 upon the admissions, and the deaths a percentage of 10·42 upon the average number resident.

The asylum was visited by me on the 10th, 11th, 14th, and 15th December, 1883; and again on the 30th January, 1884. I made the following entry in the Inspector’s Book:—

10th, 12th, 14th, and 15th December, 1883.—On each of the above-mentioned dates I have been more or less occupied in my periodical inspection of the Auckland Asylum. The Colonial Architect and the Deputy Inspector have, on two days, accompanied me on my visit, and conferred with me respecting the occupation, with as little delay as possible, of the auxiliary asylum, and its water-supply.

I find that, since my report dated March, 1883, the number of patients resident has increased by 18, and now stands at 291: of these, 196 are males and 95 females. The whole of them have been seen by me, with the exception of two males and one female, who are absent on leave; and I satisfied myself that all are properly detained, with the exception, perhaps, of a little girl recently admitted. This patient will be watched by Dr. Young, and shortly recommended for discharge, if no symptoms should present themselves which would warrant her detention in an asylum. The complaints received by me related to illegal imprisonment and matters relating to property, and emanated from those who were obviously the least fitted to be at large.

I found four male patients and three females in bed. Most of these were labouring under the debility of old age. No case of acute illness is under treatment, and there has been no recurrence of the typhoid fever alluded to in my last report. One man (Gschnell) is secluded during a portion of each day, and, when released, is placed under the special care of an attendant. The circumstances attending the murder lately committed by him were fully reported to the Lunacy Department at the time, and need not be entered upon here. The man is a lunatic of the most dangerous type, whose case must entail constant vigilance and anxiety upon those who have the care of him. Regarding the treatment of patients by seclusion, I regret that the overcrowding which prevails in the asylum has rendered it much more frequent than should be the case in a well-ordered institution. Occasional restraint by the camisole has also been made use of; and, under present circumstances, I cannot say that it is unnecessary. The difficulties of management and successful treatment are greatly increased by want of space in the building, and of any separate airing-courts for excited patients. With these defects in view, I have every reason to be satisfied with the comparative quiet which prevailed during my visit.

I found the whole establishment in very fair order, but very wet in parts from the continued damp weather, which would not permit the floors of the rooms to dry. The patients were, as a rule, suitably clothed, most of the men now possessing a second suit. In the female division I noticed three persons wearing dresses of strong material. The bedding seems to be well attended to: every bed has now two sheets, and a number of good paillasses and hair mattresses have recently been made or procured. The pails or buckets used as chamber utensils in some of the bedrooms are unsightly and objectionable, and should be replaced by more suitable utensils. In the day-rooms there is a great want of ornamental or decorative objects. I have directed Dr. Young to requisition for a sum of money to be expended in supplying this want. Throughout the building there are signs of dilapidation, and numerous things require repair. One mantelpiece has fallen down bodily, while others have lost one of the stone corbels. Plaster has broken from the walls in numerous places, and there is a general want of painting and colouring. The dining-room needs a wooden dado as a protection to its walls. Some of the waterclosets require renovating; and the asphalt of the male airing-court greatly needs repairing, being in parts flooded with water. In No. 3 (male division), the stone pavement of the passage leading to the baths and closets has decayed completely through in parts. The Public Works Department will report upon these and other necessary repairs, and send an estimate of their cost.

The Medical Journal shows that about two-thirds of the patients are more or less usefully employed. If proper workshops existed, this proportion might be considerably increased. The usual inquiries have been made regarding religious services, and also amusements. Service on Sundays is attended by about a hundred patients. Recreation is not lost sight of; and I find that a theatrical performance took place in the dining-hall last evening. The Book of Admissions, Register of Discharges and Deaths, Patients Book, and Case-book have been examined by me and found to be carefully kept. I have also seen the orders of admission and medical certificates of those patients recently admitted, and ascertained that they were in due and legal form. No patient has hitherto been committed to this asylum, on remand, pending examination by medical practitioners.