

The number of loose door-frames of single-rooms increases. I saw several which I could readily have pushed completely out of their brickwork setting. It would be folly to repair the plaster without fixing them securely beforehand.

I notice that the certificate for working the steam-boiler behind the kitchen expired in February, 1885. The laundry boiler has never yet been certificated. These things should be brought to the notice of the Inspector of Machinery. It should also be remarked that the lofty asylum buildings, situated on a high hill, are not protected by any lightning-conductor.

The difficulty and expense of visiting the Seacliff Asylum continue to elicit complaints from visitors, relatives of patients, the resident staff, and from all who have business to transact there. Many find it preferable to drive from Dunedin in hired vehicles rather than incur the vexatious delays which the bad train service involves. The cost of the journey is also in many cases a grievous hardship. This is a matter which should not be beyond remedy.

Some changes in the staff deserve a passing notice. The Matron having resigned was succeeded three months ago by Mrs. Grundy, who gives abundant reason to justify her selection from a number of other candidates. Her services are already very valuable. Dr. Nelson, the Assistant-Medical Officer, retired from the service early in December, and, I regret to say, that no successor has yet been appointed. The work is far too onerous for one medical officer to perform, apart from all consideration of the additional anxieties connected with the defects in building and water supply, so often alluded to.

I have directed attention to the matter on previous occasions; and now find, as I anticipated, that Dr. Neill is suffering in health from the continued strain upon his energies and constant confinement to the asylum precincts. Nothing but a period of entire relaxation from duty will remedy this state of things, which I urge the Government to consider favourably, and without any delay. Dr. Neill has done excellent service, both here and elsewhere, and is fairly entitled to a prolonged leave of absence, from which he would return to his duties with renewed zeal and valuable information acquired beyond the colony.

Hokitika.

There were on the 1st January, 1885, 69 males and 31 females in this asylum: total, 100. 15 males and 4 females were admitted for the first time during the year, and 1 male readmitted. The total number treated was 120; of these there were discharged as "recovered" 10 males and 1 female, 6 males and 2 females died, leaving at the close of the year 69 males and 32 females: total, 101.

This asylum contains its full number of patients, and is very complete in all its arrangements. The accommodation it affords is excellent; and both the employment and the recreation of the patients receive full attention.

It has always been a pleasure to me to visit the establishment, which I have lately been unable to do through impaired health.

Napier.

The patients numbered on the 1st January, 1885, 13 males and 3 females: total, 16. 8 males and 4 females were admitted during the year for the first time, and 1 male and 1 female readmitted. The total number treated was 30; of these there were discharged as "recovered" 2 females, and as "relieved" or "not improved" 18 males and 4 females; 1 female died. The number remaining at the close of the year was 5—namely, 4 males and 1 female.

This asylum should be gazetted as closed, and provision made for its inmates at Porirua. It seems monstrous to keep up an establishment where the cost per head reaches nearly £100 per annum.

My visit was made on the 3rd October, 1885, when I left the following entry in the Inspector's book:—

3rd October, 1885.—There are this day 4 males and 4 female patients in the asylum, all of whom I have seen and conversed with. Three of the men are likely to recover shortly and to be discharged, the remaining one should be removed to Wellington as soon as there are others to accompany him. Of the females, one is a feeble and hopeless epileptic, who would derive no benefit from removal; another is retained here at her mother's wish; a third is perfectly contented, believing the establishment to be her own property; while the fourth has only comparatively recently been admitted. The last-mentioned should be transferred to Wellington after a further period of probation, should recovery not ensue. There are no patients here at present "on remand," and none are absent "on leave." The place is kept scrupulously clean, and the books and papers, all of which I examined, are in accordance with the statutory requirements.

Nelson.

The patients numbered on the 1st January, 1885, 55 males and 40 females: total, 95. 11 males and 1 female were admitted during the year, and 2 males and 1 female readmitted. The total number treated was 110. Of these 2 males and 3 females were discharged as "recovered," while 3 males and 1 female died. At the close of the year there remained under care 63 males and 38 females: total, 101.

The asylum is quite full. A small laundry is about to be erected. The additional requirements are a proper water supply, which the City Council ought to provide in considera-