

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS OF THE COLONY
(REPORT ON) FOR 1885.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The INSPECTOR of ASYLUMS to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Lunacy Department, 15th March, 1886.

I have the honour to present my fourth annual report upon lunacy as it affects this colony.

At the end of the year 1884, there were 1,452 persons of unsound mind detained in the various asylums. On the 31st December, 1885, the total had risen to 1,523; an increase of 71 insane persons under care and treatment.

The following figures will show that the above statement is a gratifying one, when regard is had to the annual increase of the general population. Increase of insane under detention. Year 1882, 106; year 1883, 93; year 1884, 77; and year 1885, 71. Thus, whereas at the end of the year 1884, we had 1 lunatic to every 390 persons; the proportion had diminished at the close of last year to 1 in 401 of the population, which was estimated by the Registrar-General at 582,425. In England and Wales the ratio was, for the year 1885, 1 in 339.

The admissions during the year 1885 into the various asylums, numbered 454. The great increase here shown is more apparent than real, being due to the transfer of a large number of lunatics from one establishment to another less crowded.

The same cause will account for the large number of discharges, which reached the total of 288. It also affects the death-rate and the percentage of recoveries.

TABLE OF TRANSFERS.

			Males.	Females.	Total
From Napier to Wellington	...	...	17	4	21
From Wellington to Seacliff	...	...	30	0	30
From Christchurch to Seacliff	...	...	0	22	22
From Ashburn Hall to Seacliff	...	...	0	1	1
From Seacliff to Ashburn Hall	...	...	1	0	1
			<u>48</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>75</u>

The insane under detention on the 31st December, 1885, were thus placed :—

				Males.	Females.	Total.
Auckland	...	...	...	231	116	347
Christchurch	...	...	...	209	109	318
Seacliff	...	...	...	292	158	450
Hokitika	...	...	...	69	32	101
Napier	...	...	...	4	1	5
Nelson	...	...	...	63	38	101
Wellington	...	...	...	101	81	182
Ashburn Hall (licensed house)	...	...	...	12	7	19
				<u>981</u>	<u>542</u>	<u>1,523</u>

At Auckland the over-crowding is becoming positively disgraceful. In my last report I directed attention to the fact that 320 patients were occupying buildings intended for 217
1—H. 6.