

*Customhouses*.—The Customhouse at Greymouth having become, through age and other causes, unfitted for its purpose, a contract has been let for a new building in wood.

*Native Buildings*.—A comfortable cottage has been built at Otorahanga, in the King-country, for the Chief Wahanui.

*Sanatorium at Rotorua*.—Since the destruction of the former hospital by fire it has been urged that some Government institution of the kind must replace it. A plan embodying the views of the department of charitable aid was drawn out, and tenders invited; but the lowest amount being considerably in excess of the vote, amendments and alterations were made, and the first cost reduced to £3,000, at which figure the work has been undertaken, and is now in progress by the lowest tenderer on a definite basis of agreement. The sanitary and fire-prevention systems, which were fully elaborated in the original specification, have been withheld for the present, on account of cost; but it is obvious that they must be executed before occupation—a sanatorium is not a sanatorium in reality without the former, nor an institution of this kind admissible without the latter. The design is on the one-story bungalow plan, and covers a good deal of ground; light, aspect, ventilation, roominess, and general comfort and convenience of arrangement have been carefully studied.

*Lunatic Asylums*.—As the greater portion of the requirements of asylums are defrayed out of loan, and these institutions are very important, the principal remarks upon them are included here. Ordinary maintenance repairs are, of course, defrayed out of Consolidated Fund.

*Avondale*.—Owing to cases of typhoid fever having occurred at Avondale Asylum, a special and exhaustive examination and investigation was made in March of the sanitary system and appliances of the institution throughout, down to the smallest details, including the auxiliary asylum and all other dependencies. A few of the worst evils were temporarily put right or improved, and the buildings are now in a condition which has been wont to be regarded somewhat with complacency in the case of other similar large institutions. It is proposed to initiate operations in the winter, the summer and autumn months being unfavourable for such work in the Auckland climate and in connection with so crowded an institution.

To place this large institution in a thoroughly sanitary condition, keeping in view the absolute necessity of non-interference with the management and convenience of the inmates, there is no other course to adopt but practically to relay and remodel the whole of the drains; and as to the rest of the system, to reform it altogether. This will cost not less, first to last, than £1,500 for the house-connections and drains proper. In addition, there is the very large question of the main outfall drain from both the principal and auxiliary institutions to be dealt with. A large portion of this requires to be relaid, and the whole of it requires overhauling. This outfall delivers at a point where a tidal creek comes up to a public road, and has caused a continuous series of complaints, to which it will be necessary to give due consideration. There are three methods by which the difficulty can be met—firstly, by purchasing a right of drain-way through private lands to the sea; secondly, by carrying an iron pipe down the creek to the beach; and thirdly, by instituting a system of collection and distribution of all the sewage on the Asylum farm-grounds, and converting the outfall sewer into a main effluent of filtered water. Of these methods the first and second are probably only convenient ways of postponing the evil day of further troubles and complaints; the third is attended with many difficulties, but would, on the whole, be the best. Any one of the three is a large undertaking, and will involve, say, an additional £1,500. The total cost of placing the institutions, both main and auxiliary, in a thoroughly sanitary condition, according to modern requirements and principles, will be probably not short of £3,000.

The only new work executed at Avondale during the year has been the erection of an additional attendant's cottage, most of the material of which was obtained by the demolition of a temporary annexe on the female side which was no longer required. A stone-crusher and engine have also been employed.

The ventilation of the main institution is defective in the older portions; in the interests of the patients, and owing to the conditions of the climate, it requires very considerable improvement. The ventilation at the auxiliary is good.

*Mount View*.—No new works have been undertaken at this institution during the year. Successive Medical Superintendents have from time to time much improved the sanitary condition, but to thoroughly modernise things here also no inconsiderable amendments are necessary. An inquiry, however, has not yet been held.

*Sunnyside*.—The contract for the rebuilding of the west wing, destroyed by fire, was let for £11,686 in March, 1889, and practically completed in March, 1890, the total cost being, in round numbers, £12,000, exclusive of furniture—an inconsiderable addition for extras, seeing the very involved nature of the work to be specified. The whole of the work has been well and substantially carried out. The result is a female side much superior in arrangement and convenience to that which it has replaced, and affording quite new and valuable additional accommodation in the attic-dormitories and the large new day-room and dormitories at the west end. It was hoped that the new buildings would have been occupied in the early autumn, but two reasons have stood in the way of this. In the first place, the sweating of the new walls prevented the distempering and finishing of the plastered walls; and, in the second place the locks sent out from England were unsuited for asylum requirements, through a misunderstanding as to the order. New locks are under order, and as the first supply will be utilised in the new prisons and in police-cells and lockups, there will be no actual loss occasioned to the public.

The sanitation of the new portion has been arranged in accordance with the modern rules and regulations of the Christchurch Drainage Board, and has been executed in every detail under their Engineer or Inspector, and is therefore well assured. That of the undestroyed portion of the Asylum will require amendment.

The subjects of water-supply and fire-prevention at Sunnyside are both large questions. The