

patient than for 1890. The money therefore actually spent per patient during the year is less by 1s. 8d. than for 1890. The opening of the new asylum at Porirua will, of course, cause a considerable increase for the future. A great relief will be experienced in the institutions that have suffered so much from overcrowding in recent years, but this cannot be compensated by a corresponding diminution in their expenditure. An entirely new staff of attendants will have to be provided, and many causes of expense inseparable from the opening of a new asylum must be faced.

ACCIDENTS AND ESCAPES.

No serious accidents have occurred during the year, and there have been no suicides to record. An attempt was made by certain persons to work up a scare about escapes at Seacliff, but it came to nothing. The public are beginning to see that the alternative lies between the virtual imprisonment of large numbers of patients who are now daily occupied in some useful work on the farm and garden, and the inevitable wandering-away of some harmless lunatics, not one of whom is known to have caused injury to either person or property since the policy of liberty has been introduced. We must therefore choose between the employment of a large staff of unnecessary attendants to make escapes absolutely impossible, or put up with a few escapes in the course of a year, for I am persuaded that a return to the system of securing immunity from escapes by practical imprisonment of the insane will never again be tolerated.

ENTRIES OF VISITS TO THE DIFFERENT ASYLUMS.

Auckland.

7th July, 1891.—I have this day completed my half-yearly inspection of this asylum. I have seen all the patients, and made special inquiries about the more recent and hopeful cases in consultation with Dr. Hassell. The total number of patients is 367—males, 252; females, 115. Of these only thirty-two men and thirty-four women are as yet incapable of being interested in some sort of occupation. There is a marked improvement in the general appearance of the inmates as a direct consequence of the attention which has been given to this important matter, and there seems to be a marked improvement in the attendants themselves, in consequence of the greater interest they take in the progress of their charges. In fact, a very pleasant and cheerful spirit pervades the whole institution. The cutting-up of the airing-courts necessitated by the drainage operations has caused a good deal of inconvenience in the working of the asylum; but this is now at an end, and in a very short time the new airing-courts will be available for the purposes of classification. There still remain to be provided for two important improvements, the ventilation of some parts of the building, and the works required for the utilisation of the sewage, which at present is causing a serious nuisance at the point where the main outlet joins Oakley Creek. Much greater progress can now be made in improving the farm with the amount of labour that is available, and I hope at my next visit to find great changes in this respect. All the books and documents are in good order and carefully kept. The stock-sheets of the attendants are in satisfactory order, and great care is taken to prevent any waste of materials. Every department of the institution is working well. I have carefully satisfied myself that the patients are kindly treated by the attendants. The regular visits of the Deputy Inspector and the Official Visitor, and the pains they take to find out how they are treated by familiar converse with the patients without any official being present, are in themselves a very strong guarantee that nothing can take place of the nature of neglect or cruelty without their being informed of it, and applying, as the law empowers them to do, an instant remedy. Several projected improvements have been discussed between the doctor and myself. Regular religious services are held, and there are regular dances for the amusement and relaxation of both patients and attendants. By-and-by we hope to be able to organize a regular series of more varied entertainments by enlisting the interest of various societies in the city and neighbourhood.

7th January, 1892.—I find, after careful examination of all its departments, that this asylum is in an efficient and satisfactory condition so far as is possible with such a state of overcrowding on the male side. The clause of the amended Lunacy Act, 1891, which prescribes that the minimum dormitory space per patient shall be not less than 600 cubic feet, cannot be carried out until the new asylum at Porirua is built, which will be at least six months. Meanwhile, the assiduous care of Dr. Hassell and his staff is a guarantee that the very best use will be made of existing means of proper classification and treatment. The best spirit pervades the staff, and the patients were free from noise and excitement, with the exception of two cases on the male side. One of these, J. R., has long been a source of great trouble and danger in the institution, owing to the frequent outbreaks of maniacal fury to which he is subject. The number of male patients is 252, and of females 121. Two men were in seclusion, and three were confined to bed. Of the inmates, 218 men and 85 women were engaged in some kind of useful occupation. With the exception of five men and eleven women, who wore strong dresses, no form of restraint is in use, and all these cases are destructive, tearing their clothes, and sometimes injuring themselves. Owing to the great amount of work entailed by the extensive drainage-works now most successfully completed, and the new roads in course of formation, it has not been possible to complete the airing-courts so much required both on the male and female side. I hope to see these improvements finished by the time of my next visit. I carefully examined the food, clothing, and bodily condition of all the patients, and found no neglect anywhere. The books and other statutory documents are in order. No patient is unnecessarily or improperly detained, except, of course, the usual complement of helpless and chronic cases, who in England and most other countries would be kept in refuges. The Deputy Inspector and Official Visitor are most assiduous in their periodical inspections of the Asylum, and