

14th March, 1893.—After careful examination during to-day and yesterday I find that this Asylum continues to be managed with great prudence and vigour in all its departments, with the exception of some irregularities in the clerical work, which have been remedied, and precautions taken against their recurrence. The total number of patients is 403—males, 273; females, 130. No stronger proof could be given of the care and vigilance of the management than the fact that on the male side there is an excess of sixty patients over the legal limit fixed by the law, which prescribes that 600 cubic feet shall be the dormitory space provided for each patient. In the dormitories room has to be found by the simple process of illegal overcrowding for twenty-nine patients more than they ought to contain; besides that, in the day-rooms and corridors thirty-one others have somehow to be provided for. This statement of fact will, I earnestly hope, have the effect of hastening the completion of Porirua Asylum, which I hoped last year would be ready for occupation months ago. A steady progress is being made in the proportion of patients that are engaged in some useful employment in the open air. Out of a total of 273 males, 224 are found capable of being interested in some occupation, and the effect on their general health and appearance is most striking. They are much happier and more easily managed during the day, and they are much less restless and noisy during the night. The food, bedding, and clothing are ample, the building in all its parts is scrupulously clean, and good order is manifest everywhere. One female patient has to be restrained from self-mutilation by means of the strait-jacket. One of the male patients, whose case is a somewhat peculiar one, I examined again specially, because Mr. Ewington informed me that doubts were entertained as to his being a fit person for confinement in the Asylum. After consultation with Dr. Hassell, I am quite satisfied that, though this man might to an unprofessional observer appear to be not insane, yet there is no doubt whatever (as from the very first was evident on close examination) that his mind was profoundly affected, and that he will turn out to be a difficult, and perhaps dangerous, case to manage. It is very gratifying that there have been very few changes in the staff during the past year, and that so good a spirit prevails throughout the institution, a state of things very different from what existed at no very remote period in this Asylum. Messrs. Cooper and Ewington are unremitting in their watchful care over the patients' welfare, and I have to offer them my hearty thanks for the annual picnic they have established for the patients, depending on the liberality of the Auckland public.

*Christchurch.*

30th August, 1892.—I have just completed a careful inspection of this Asylum in all its departments. I find that in all the fundamental points of feeding, clothing, and kindly treatment of the patients by the staff, as well as in the careful medical treatment of the acute cases and of the infirm, this Asylum will bear the strictest examination. No one can make such an examination as I have made without being satisfied that this institution is, all through, in a very satisfactory condition. I made a special examination into certain cases who were either hopeful as regards recovery or who required special treatment because of serious illness. One such case, C. W., attracted my special attention, because of his requiring special care on the part of his attendants, suffering as he is from very serious bed-sores. I found him, immediately after my first entering the institution yesterday, about a quarter to 10 in the morning, to have had his sores already dressed, a charcoal poultice applied, his bed freshly made, an air-bed under him, and every other step taken that his case required. The other patients in bed to-day are seven males and twelve females. Two women were in seclusion, and three men were under partial restraint; all for reasons of which I approved. Owing to a lack of the same possibilities of diversified occupations in the open air at this place as compared with Seacliff, I notice there is a much larger proportion of the inmates who cannot, at this season of the year, be kept so much out of doors. In this matter I think much more of the effect of the open-air life on the health of the patient than of the value of his labour as a means of production. The Asylum farm is a model of skilful cultivation and neatness in all its arrangements, all except the pig-styes, which require draining. The new airing-courts will soon be taken in hand, the garden shifted, and the whole front grounds greatly improved by planting shrubs and ornamental trees. Much progress has already been made in this direction, but the building operations, coming in dribblets, and at irregular intervals, have hitherto almost paralysed Dr. Levinge's well-proved ability in this direction. A few days will enable the outside arrangements for fire-prevention to be at length finished. It remains now to complete the inside appliances, and to provide reels, hose, and canvas shoots for removing the inmates safely and expeditiously in case of fire. Dr. Levinge is at once to take such steps as are required to turn the existing appliances to the best advantage. A vote for the furnishing of the new buildings is now on the estimates, and I have no doubt will soon be passed by Parliament. It would do any one good to see the male and female patients at dinner in this Asylum—the food is so good, so beautifully served, and the order is so admirable as to please even the most critical.

10th January, 1893.—The condition of this Asylum is most satisfactory in every respect, except in the delay that has taken place in carrying out the often-promised completion of the fire-prevention apparatus, and the unsatisfactory plastering and painting on the female side. To-day I have gone over all these points, accompanied with Mr. Ussher, of the Public Works Department, and I am assured that everything will be put right with the utmost practicable speed. Authority has already been issued for the warming of the dormitories by steam, and the defective ventilation of the attics is to be rectified. I wish to express my thanks to the Deputy-Inspector and the Official Visitors for their frequent and urgent representations with regard to all these defects, and especially the want of proper fire-prevention appliances. The former reports, which I have laid before Parliament, and the records of the office will abundantly prove that I have left no stone unturned to get these matters put right. The number of patients in the Asylum to-day is 422—males, 231; and females, 191. On the male side there are two patients under restraint—by means of gloves, 1; and lock-belt, 1—both being destructive and violent. The total number engaged in some