

for ten days. The progress that is being made with the new building is dishearteningly slow; only three bricklayers at work.

4th January, 1897.—The patients are all looking very well. The day-rooms and dormitories are in good order. The dinner was abundant, well served, and of good quality. I found everything in good order except that the fire-brigade is not familiar with its work, and is so slow as to be almost useless.

22nd March, 1897.—I have found everything in good order.

28th April, 1897.—I examined every part of the building, and am pleased to find that the plastered portions of the walls appear to have successfully kept out the wet during the recent severe storm. Was present at dinner, and found it good and abundant. The patients are all suitably clad, except that some of the male patients had no buttons on their flannels. I regret that so much delay has taken place in fixing up the steam connections with the wards, for the weather is now getting so cold that it is of vital importance to have the rooms warmed at once. The rate of progress with the building of the new ward is still distressingly slow.

WELLINGTON.

18th May, 1896.—I visited this Asylum on the 14th, 15th, and 16th May. Every patient was seen, and the whole building and annexes carefully inspected. The total number of patients was 301—males, 191; females, 110. One very violent and dangerous female patient was under restraint for reasons which I found satisfactory; three women were secluded; three males and four females were confined to bed under medical treatment. The excess of patients over the legal limit was 41 men and 20 women. This fact shows how urgent is the need for the completion of Porirua Asylum. Every effort is made to employ as many as possible in some form of healthy outdoor occupation. Ninety men were engaged on the farm and garden, while 40 men and 37 women were usefully occupied in the wards. I saw the meals served, the food being good and well cooked. The bedding and clothing are clean and sufficient. The suicidal cases numbered 13 women and 21 men; all these are under special supervision, cards of instructions being issued to the responsible attendants. The number of general paralytics is 1 woman and 8 men; the epileptics number 10 women and 21 men. Divine service is held regularly, and the distraction and amusements of the patients are systematically provided for. All the statutory books and documents are in order.

The admissions (for the first time) exceeded those in any other asylum, while the readmissions for the year number 18. Owing to departmental exigencies Dr. Hassell has been put in charge of Mount View and Porirua Asylums; and, in consequence of this, Porirua, which for a time was a separate institution in charge of Dr. Burns, is no longer so. The voluntary retirement of Dr. Burns from the service of the department was greatly regretted by all who came in contact with him. Dr. Thomas Radford King has been appointed assistant to Dr. Hassell, and resides at Porirua. Miss Boulcott, the new matron appointed on Miss Erskine's promotion to Auckland, fills the position very satisfactorily. I found three or more patients in the refractory male ward had been greatly excited by the recent inquiry by Mr. Martin, and were busying themselves in making notes of real and imaginary shortcomings on the part of the attendants, but I could ascertain no facts to justify their complaints. The greatest care and self-control is exercised by the attendants in dealing with these men, who are constantly endeavouring to annoy and thwart them in the performance of their duties. Mr. F. H. Fraser, the Deputy Inspector, accompanied me in one of my visits, and I discussed with him the various points requiring our consideration in the working of the Asylum. He takes a constant active interest in all that concerns the welfare of the patients.

3rd August, 1896.—Visited every part of the Asylum, and found everything in good order. The female refractory noisy, owing to an unusual number of excited cases.

7th December, 1896.—I have examined both sides of the Asylum; seen all who are unable to be about, and the recent cases. Everything going on satisfactorily.

31st December, 1896.—I have seen every patient, and have gone over all the wards. Notwithstanding the overcrowding the staff are doing their utmost to keep everything in order.

11th May, 1897.—I went through all the asylum; saw all the patients; examined their clothing, their dinner, and their bedding, and found the whole satisfactory. I satisfied myself that all the recent and acute cases were being properly looked after. Two patients were temporarily secluded for sufficient reasons. Five men and seven women were confined to bed, all of whom I saw and examined in company with Dr. Hassell and Dr. Perry, the assistant medical officer. A patient, well known as an inveterate grumbler, and very cunning and malicious in making charges of ill-treatment against attendants, has requested to be transferred to Auckland because of the milder climate, offering to pay his expenses. I have written him saying that in my opinion the climate of Wellington is better for his health, but that, if it will not involve any cost to the public, I am willing to grant his request. I have heard many complaints from this man, but they have all in my opinion been unfounded. He is a man of considerable education and ability, and most dangerous to deal with owing to the cunning plausibility with which he is able to set forth his delusional grievances as facts. — is another most difficult patient for the same reasons. Nothing but long experience of mental disease can enable any one to judge between their plausibly narrated delusions and facts.

The total number of inmates this day is 327—showing an excess of 63 men and 42 women over the number for which proper accommodation is provided. No rhetoric is needed to show the miserable state into which this asylum has been allowed to sink, owing to the delay in finishing the Porirua Asylum.

It has been found necessary, in consequence of the excessive increase of patients in Wellington District, to appoint Dr. Perry to relieve Dr. Hassell of part of the terrible strain which the medical care of such numbers imply in these circumstances. The difficulties of administration are enormously increased; the harassing anxiety and care required to avoid accident and scandal are