

The following table shows the actual deficiency in sleeping-accommodation :—

Auckland	...	...	...	...	...	21 patients in excess.
Christchurch	...	...	...	...	...	70 "
Seacliff	...	...	...	...	...	6 "
Nelson	...	...	...	...	...	2 "
Total	...	...	...	...	...	99 patients in excess.

NEW WORKS REQUIRED AND NOW IN HAND.

Seacliff Asylum is now in course of being lighted with electricity. I earnestly hope that the best materials will be insisted on, and the most effective means of insulating the wires, especially seeing that in some places they must be placed on walls which are inevitably damp. The range of single rooms, day rooms, &c., on the female side are practically ready for occupation, and will be an immense relief to the overcrowded refractory ward.

At Nelson Asylum the new dormitories and single rooms on the female side are finished, except that some changes are required in the quality of the plaster provided. The new laundry is satisfactory, and the whole drainage system is being overhauled. It now only remains to carry out minor repairs and improvements in the older airing-courts and buildings, and to provide for suitable workshops and piggeries.

Auckland Asylum has been extended to the fullest size that the area of the site admits of, except that there is room for a new laundry, which is much needed. The new hospital wing is finished, and is an immense boon. In my last year's report I called attention to the urgent necessity, owing to the rapid increase of admissions, of authorising the construction of a new asylum in a suitable position. Before this can be provided I am afraid nothing I can do will prevent the overcrowding that for a short time we had overtaken.

The rapid increase of our asylum population relative to our available accommodation will compel us to depart from our present practice of limiting our separate asylums to a maximum of six hundred patients. I think that the new asylum must be designed to accommodate one thousand or eleven hundred patients, as the only means of overtaking the requirements for the next few years at a reasonable cost. Separate blocks should be provided for hospital cases, for idiots and imbeciles and epileptics, and nurses' home, as has been done in the new English asylums. If possible, also, a means of isolating tuberculous patients must be found.

It has been found necessary to propose an increase in the rates of pay for skilled artisan attendants, owing to the general rise in wages. I think all the asylum clerks and stewards are underpaid. Their responsibilities are heavy, and their work is in all cases admirably done.

This year has been the quietest and most satisfactory in all my experience. The Medical Superintendents are, without exception, highly qualified, and each in his own way deserving of the highest confidence and esteem. No department could have better officers. Their independent reports will give a better idea of the working of the separate asylums than any general report could convey.