

considering the piecemeal way in which it has been extended, the building is fairly suitable for its purpose. All its capabilities are made the most of that is possible, and, so far as I have been able to ascertain, the management and care shown in all its arrangements reflect the greatest credit on the Superintendent, Mr. Hume.

There is, however, one thing which ought to be immediately attended to, *i.e.* the drainage. All the sewage is collected into large cesspools, whence, instead of being conveyed by a large channel, there is absolutely no outlet at all. The Town Council do not appear to think it necessary to make any provision for draining this part of the town, and I do not hesitate to say, that, but for the painstaking and ingenious methods in which Mr. Hume has utilized the sewage, great mischief would by this time have probably resulted. As it is, the soil all round the Asylum must be saturated with human excrement, for the area is limited, and the patients average 176.

Another matter calling for the serious consideration of the authorities is the food provided for the patients. Any one who is familiar with the fact, knows that good food, well cooked, is of more importance to the insane than all other curative means whatever. Let for instance the bread on any day be too raw, or otherwise unsuitable, and the evil effects are at once manifested all over the Asylum. When I became Inspector, I found the bread unfit for human food, though it is now much improved. From considering this matter, and from observing the quality of food supplied generally, I have come to the conclusion that it is idle to expect anything but evil results from the present system of getting everything by contract. I would respectfully suggest, that the proposed plan of having a farm in connection with the Asylum be entered on, with a view to grow, by the labour of the patients themselves, all the farm produce they require. I would further suggest, that all the bread and beer required be manufactured within the Asylum, as is done in similar institutions elsewhere. I am persuaded that by this means, not merely would the insane be saved from much misery, but what is also of importance, the province would be saved from much expense.

The amusements of the patients are being sedulously attended to by Mr. Hume, who is fully alive to their curative value. I am glad to see that a cricket ground is being got ready against the summer. Such patients as are fit for work are continually employed in improving the building and its surroundings, with the most beneficial results to themselves.

I have been much struck during my visits with a circumstance which appears to me of sufficient importance to warrant me in calling attention to it, though by so doing I may seem to go beyond my province.

A large proportion of the cases admitted are found to come from the gold fields. After making allowance for the peculiar circumstances and mode of living of the miners in Otago, I think it can be shown that their needlessly unvaried diet is to blame for the large number of lunatics from this class. As a rule the lunatic miner is extremely constipated, the bowels being loaded with hardened fæces. Once this is removed rapid recovery usually ensues. I am of opinion that the chief cause of this state of things is the enormous quantity of strong tea daily consumed by miners, and the entire absence of milk from their diet. Could nothing be done to remedy this by encouraging miners to settle on the land and adopt a more rational mode of life?

The great evil in this, as in all similar institutions, is the accumulation of chronic harmless lunatics. In this country this evil is greatly exaggerated by the impossibility of getting families to take charge of such cases, as is so extensively done in Britain. It is therefore all the more incumbent on the authorities to provide suitable accommodation and employment for this class of patients.

With regard to the books required to be kept by the Act, the only ones that are kept, owing to the peculiar circumstances of the Asylum, are the Register and the Inspector's Book; the Medical Journal and the Case Book are not kept.

Accompanying this will be found all the requisite statistical information.

His Honor the Superintendent.

D. MACGREGOR,

Inspector.

TABLE I.

RETURN of PATIENTS Admitted, Discharged, and Died during the Twelve Months ending 31st March, 1874.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Number of patients remaining in the Asylum 1st April, 1873	123	51	174
Admitted from Dunedin and Suburbs	18	8	26
„ Invercargill	6	1	7
„ Dunstan	4	2	6
„ Tuapeka	6	3	9
„ East, West, and North Taieri	1	1	2
„ Wakatipu	2	0	2
„ Tokomairiro	1	1	2
„ Hawksbury	5	1	6
„ Port Chalmers	3	0	3
„ Blacks	3	0	3
„ Oamaru	5	0	5
„ Clutha	1	0	1
„ Dunedin Hospital	1	3	4
„ Dunedin Gaol	0	1	1
Total number under treatment	179	72	251