

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS OF NEW ZEALAND
(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The INSPECTOR of LUNATIC ASYLUMS to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,— Inspector of Lunatic Asylums' Office, Wellington, 6th July, 1879.

I have the honor to lay before you my third annual report on the condition and management of lunatics and lunatic asylums in New Zealand.

The number of registered lunatics on the 31st December, 1878, was 957. The distribution of these, and the increase in the number at each asylum, is shown in the following tabular statement:—

ASYLUMS.	PATIENTS.			Increase over 1877.
	Male.	Female.	Total.	
Auckland	132	64	196	15
New Plymouth	2	1	3	1
Napier	17	6	23	5
Wellington	69	48	117	18
Nelson	38	21	59	9
Hokitika	51	19	70	3
Christchurch	152	84	236	32
Dunedin	177	76	253	4
Total	638	319	957	87
Increase over previous year	58	29	87	...

These figures show a total increase of 87 over the number at the end of the preceding year. The increase at the end of each of the last six years has been as follows:—

Year.	Increase.
1873	55
1874	77
1875	56
1876	61
1877	81
1878	87
Total	417

The proportion of lunatics to the estimated general population at the end of the year was 1 in 451; and at 3rd March, the day for which the census returns were made, 1 in 471—Maoris being excluded.

There is a considerable difference in the proportion in the colony among people of different nationalities. At the date of last census 1 in 311 of the English population was insane, 1 in 264 of the Scotch, 1 in 205 of the Irish, 1 in 221 of the Germans, 1 in 184 of the Scandinavians, and 1 in 5121 of Europeans born in the colony. The fact that insanity is chiefly a disease of adult life will largely explain why the last of these proportions is so comparatively small, and why the others are greater than that in England, and may perhaps to a certain extent explain why they differ so much from each other.