

tion of the large sum paid to them by the Government for that end. The rebuilding of a cottage for the night attendant is also necessary.

During the past year the services of both Mr. and Mrs. Mills—the Superintendent and the Matron—were lost to the Government through their death. The high pitch of excellence which the Nelson Asylum has attained is due to their industry and ability. They are succeeded by Mr. and Mrs. White, who bring with them a long experience, acquired here and in the Old Country. I have no doubt that the asylum will in their hands continue to merit its present good reputation.

My last visits were paid on the 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 11th, and 14th December, 1885, when I left the following entry in the Inspector's book:—

7th December, 1885.—I have devoted a portion of each of the following days—the 4th, 5th, and 7th of December—to my periodical inspection of the asylum, and have visited every part of the buildings and grounds. The former have undergone neither alteration nor enlargement, but the latter have been materially added to by the expiry of certain leases, and the consequent falling-in of adjoining land, which will be very valuable for asylum purposes. This land consists of orchards and nursery-gardens, which had been permitted to fall into a state of utter neglect. Considerable progress has, however, been made already in reclaiming them and bringing them under proper cultivation. The whole asylum estate gives evidence of great care and industry. The prospects of good crops, both of fruit and vegetables, are very favourable. At present only two cows are kept, and for these there is little or no pasturage. Milk consequently has to be purchased, and the need of more grazing land is very apparent.

I find the buildings in good order both externally and internally. The wards and dormitories are very clean, and the bedding all that could be desired. The supplies, which I examined and tasted, are of good quality, and I heard no complaints upon this score. No illness of any kind exists at present, only one aged man being in bed, and that only for a short rest. One very troublesome female patient was in charge of two attendants, and to some extent restrained. She is desperately suicidal, and constantly endeavours to injure herself, requiring to be watched day and night. This is the only instance of restraint which I have to notice, and I should mention that seclusion is very rarely resorted to in this asylum. There is a population to-day of 63 males and 38 females, exclusive of attendants. This is more than the asylum can properly or safely accommodate. The universal quietude which prevails is attributable to the diligence which is used in inducing the patients to employ themselves. The proportion usefully occupied is very large, 50 males and 30 females being placed in this category. A large number enjoy the privilege of walks outside the asylum grounds on Saturday afternoons and on Sundays. Divine service is attended by about 80 patients.

I have examined the registers, books, orders, and certificates, in accordance with the statute. All are in due form and properly kept, with the exception of the case-book, which is in arrears. The medical officer will no doubt take an early opportunity of remedying this defect. The contributing-patients' ledger shows that great efforts are made by the Superintendent to collect money due for maintenance, and that those efforts are very successful.

I have now again to draw attention to the necessity for making some enlargement of the front wings of the asylum and of building a detached laundry. To-day being washing day the evil of using a room in the main building for a wash-house was only too apparent, while the heating of irons in a room full of patients' beds renders the atmosphere stifling and the heat intolerable. Plans have already been prepared for a new detached laundry; as the expense will not be large no further delay should occur in erecting it.

The addition of a day-room to each of the two front wings of the asylum and the rebuilding of a cottage (the chimney excepted), in the ground recently acquired will remedy the over-crowding for a time. I urgently recommend that these things be done.

A source of anxiety, even greater than that caused by the over-crowding, is the defective water supply. It is lamentable and certainly not creditable to the City Council that, after a subsidy of £800 paid to them for a good supply of water by the Government, it should be necessary to look elsewhere for a remedy. Day after day no water can be drawn from the mains, and the asylum is dependent upon what flows at night into a few iron tanks. It has, indeed, happened that these tanks have been found empty in the morning, causing vast inconvenience and labour in carrying water from a distance for the whole of that day's use. Doubts have been thrown upon my previous statements as to the defective supply, and a good pressure of water was shown to exist when the late Colonial Secretary (the Hon. Mr. Dick) last visited the asylum; but I do not hesitate to assert that special arrangements were made for his edification, and that such a pressure has not since been witnessed. Thirty acres of land immediately at the rear of the asylum are now obtainable by purchase, and with them may be secured a permanent water supply, with every facility for forming proper storage. The land is in grass, and would enable the formation of a proper dairy-farm if required. Having regard to the extension of asylum accommodation at no distant date, I earnestly recommend that the opportunity of acquiring this property be not lost.

During my visit to the asylum I was appealed to by a female who has been confined here as an "habitual drunkard," and who passes her time day and night with noisy and troublesome lunatics. No separate accommodation exists here in which she could be placed, nor is there any room or ward, in which lunatics are not placed, available at Wellington or Christchurch. It appears to me that the treatment of this woman is illegal, and that she has grave cause for complaint.

I should fail in my duty did I not place on record my sense of the great loss this asylum has sustained, since my last visit, in the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Mills, the late Superintendent and Matron. The high opinion which I held of their abilities, untiring energy, and upright conduct is