

The Porirua Asylum is now being pushed forward with energy, and I hope to have it fit for occupation in about four months. Meanwhile, some parts of the building have been occupied perforce, owing to the shed in which some patients were sheltered having been blown down during the great hurricane of April 9th.

In Auckland the new farm-steading has been finished, and the irrigation system of drainage will soon be complete, thus removing the public nuisance which has been so long complained of, and greatly increasing the productiveness of the farm and garden.

FINANCIAL RESULTS OF THE YEAR.

The total cost per head, including gas and water, which formerly were paid out of the public works vote, is £21 16s. 8½d., as against £20 16s. 2½d. for last year. Calculated on the same basis as in former years, and making allowance for a diminution of 7s. 1¾d. per head in maintenance receipts, the cost per head is 2½d. less than last year.

ENTRIES OF VISITS TO THE DIFFERENT ASYLUMS.

Auckland.

10th May, 1892.—I have paid this Asylum a visit this year earlier than usual owing to the anxiety I felt about the overcrowding on the male side. Dr. Hassell has frequently expressed his fear that injuries and suicides might prove inevitable in spite of the utmost vigilance; and the repeated observations of the Deputy-Inspector and the Official Visitor have laid a grievous responsibility on me. The new asylum for chronic patients at Porirua will, I hope, be ready for occupation in a few months, and then for the first time in the history of the colony there will be sufficient accommodation for our lunatics. I find the utmost vigilance and harmony prevailing throughout this Asylum. The spirit that pervades the staff is most gratifying, and I am hopeful that in consequence of the strenuous efforts made by the attendants and their officers we shall be able to tide over the difficulties of the interval. There is ample room on the female side, and the state of things there is very satisfactory. The number of patients this day is 377—males, 252; females, 125. Two women and six men were confined to bed under medical treatment; one woman and two men were secluded for reasons which I approved of. I was very much impressed by the order and quietness of even the most refractory patients on the male side. I saw 68 women and 199 men dining in the hall with the utmost quiet and order. The food is abundant and well cooked, and, what pleased me very much, it is served quite hot, a great improvement on what used to be the case. The clothing of the patients is sufficient and suitable. Every weakly person is provided with comfortable flannels. The beds are comfortable, and the utmost cleanliness prevails everywhere. The stock-sheets are well kept by the charge attendants, who now find no difficulty in working the new system, which at one time they found such a formidable undertaking. All the statutory books and the admission-papers are in order. The new farmstead is being put up by asylum labour under the direction of a skilled workman, approved by Mr. Vickerman, of the Public Works Department. It is intended as soon as possible to introduce a gravitation scheme of sewage irrigation to remedy the nuisance at present caused at the mouth of Oakley's Creek, and this will involve some changes in the management of the farm. The patients' amusement is carefully attended to. The picnic to the Ellerslie Racecourse was greatly appreciated, and I owe great thanks to Messrs. Cooper and Ewington and the many benevolent people who, at their instance, gave the patients such a treat. The newly-relaid male airing-courts will prove a great benefit during the coming winter, and these remove what used to be a very great drawback to the working of the Asylum.

18th October, 1892.—I have found this Asylum working most efficiently in all its departments. A good spirit animates the staff, and I heard no complaints that seemed to require attention. The statutory books and documents are all well kept and written up to date. The total number of patients is 391—males, 262; females, 129. I examined them all, and found them suitably clad, and very clean. The inmates of the refractory ward on both sides were very quiet and well behaved. Notwithstanding the overcrowding on the male side, the order and cleanliness are very gratifying. The food is abundant, of good quality, and well cooked, besides being expeditiously served. The ninety-nine patients in the auxiliary asylum look exceedingly well, and bear the most striking testimony to the wonderful effect produced on the health and happiness of the insane by an active out-of-door life. Mr. Macleay, the head attendant, who has done so much to improve this aspect of the patients' treatment, has requested, on the ground of impaired health, to be transferred to Wellington. Mr. Leys, the head attendant at Wellington, replaces him. Mr. Boyd, who has been farm bailiff for thirteen years, retires at the end of the present month. This is rendered inevitable by the necessity which has been thrust upon him to undertake the construction and subsequent working of the new system of sewage irrigation, of which he has had no previous experience. Mr. Cruickshank, of Seacliff, who has constructed the Seacliff system, will take Mr. Boyd's place. I expect that within a few months the new asylum at Porirua will be ready to relieve this institution of from fifty to sixty patients, thus putting an end to the grievous pressure which has been so heavy on the male side for the last few years. This will also make it possible to reduce the staff by two or three attendants. The clause in the amended Lunatics Act, 1891, which declares that the legal minimum of 600 cubic feet must for the future be insisted on, will, I hope, prevent a return to the distressing overcrowding which has until now prevailed in this Asylum. Messrs. Cooper and Ewington are unremitting in their efforts to improve the comfort of both patients and attendants, and to provide the means of relaxation and amusement. Several benevolent ladies and gentlemen have also been taking a most praiseworthy interest in the welfare of the unfortunate inmates. The condition of the Asylum as a whole is very satisfactory. While it is economically administered, no saving is ever made at the expense of the comfort and proper treatment of the patients.