

1895.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# LUNATIC ASYLUMS OF THE COLONY

(REPORT ON) FOR 1894.

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

THE INSPECTOR of ASYLUMS to the Hon. the MINISTER of EDUCATION.

SIR,—

1st May, 1895.

I have the honour to lay before you the following report on the lunatic asylums of the colony for the year ending the 31st December, 1894.

The number of registered insane persons on the 31st December, 1894, was 2,168: males, 1,308; females, 860; an increase over the previous year of 79 males and 50 females—total, 129. These are distributed as follows:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Auckland ... ..	249	148	397
Christchurch ... ..	250	174	424
Seacliff (Dunedin) ... ..	342	205	547
Hokitika ... ..	71	38	109
Nelson ... ..	72	50	122
Wellington ... ..	301	227	528
Ashburn Hall (Private Asylum) ... ..	23	18	41
	1,308	860	2,168

The proportion of the male insane to the male population of New Zealand is:—

New Zealand (exclusive of Maoris) ... ..	3.60 per 1,000, or 1 in 278
New Zealand (inclusive of Maoris) ... ..	3.38 per 1,000, or 1 in 296

The proportion of female insane to the female population,—

Exclusive of Maoris ... ..	2.67 per 1,000, or 1 in 375
Inclusive of Maoris ... ..	2.52 per 1,000, or 1 in 397

The proportion of the total insane to the total population,—

Exclusive of Maoris ... ..	3.16 per 1,000, or 1 in 316
Inclusive of Maoris ... ..	2.93 per 1,000, or 1 in 336

## ADMISSIONS.

On the 1st day of January, 1894, the number of insane persons in our asylums was: 1,229 males; 810 females: total, 2,039. The number of those admitted for the first time during the year was: males, 279; females, 213: total, 492; while readmissions numbered 41 males; 43 females: total, 84.

As compared with last year, the total admissions were 576 against 460.

As in former years, the proportion of insane to our population looks much larger than it ought to in comparison with other countries. Our peculiar system of local government has the effect of crowding into our asylums all congenitally deficient persons and an unusually large number of aged people who are suffering merely from senile decay, people who elsewhere find refuge in workhouses and other similar institutions. In fact, the proportion depends on the issue in each case of a struggle between the local bodies, who are anxious to relieve the local rates, and the General Government officers, who try to defend the consolidated revenue. The Stipendiary Magistrates have the power of admission on the certificate of two medical men, while the officers of the General Government cannot venture to discharge unsuitable admissions unless they previously can provide some means of providing for them, either with friends or in some local refuge. Thus it comes that our insane are steadily increasing, especially in times of depression, at a far higher rate than the real increase of our population warrants.