

SESS. II.—1897.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# LUNATIC ASYLUMS OF THE COLONY

(REPORT ON) FOR 1896.

*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 June, 1897.

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, 1896:—

The number of registered insane persons on 31st December, 1896, was 2,315—males, 1,390; females, 925; an increase over the previous year of 101—males 61, and females 40.

The insane of the colony are distributed as follows:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Auckland ... ..	273	152	425
Christchurch ... ..	268	210	478
Dunedin (Seacliff) ... ..	355	219	574
Hokitika ... ..	71	39	110
Nelson ... ..	76	59	135
Porirua ... ..	133	108	241
Wellington ... ..	194	121	315
Ashburn Hall ... ..	20	17	37
	1,390	925	2,315

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

New Zealand (exclusive of Maoris) ... ..	3·69	per 1000, or 1 in 271
New Zealand (inclusive of Maoris) ... ..	3·49	" or 1 in 287

The proportion of female insane to the female population,—

Exclusive of Maoris ... ..	2·74	" or 1 in 365
Inclusive of Maoris ... ..	2·60	" or 1 in 384

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

Exclusive of Maoris ... ..	3·24	" or 1 in 308
Inclusive of Maoris ... ..	3·07	" or 1 in 326

## ADMISSIONS.

On the 1st January, 1896, the number of insane persons in our asylums was 2,214. Of these, 1,329 were males and 885 females. The number of those admitted for the first time was 364—males 237, and females, 127. The readmissions were 59 men and 43 women: total, 102.

## DEATHS.

The percentage of deaths on the average number resident during the year was 5·29, as compared with 6·61 last year.

## OVERCROWDING.

I have so often called the attention of Parliament and the Government to the terrible condition into which all our asylums, especially Wellington, have been allowed to lapse owing to overcrowding that nothing more can be done or said by me. I can only express my earnest hope that orders will be given to finish the Porirua Asylum as soon as possible. We shall be fortunate indeed if some calamity or scandal does not occur to horrify the whole country.

I regret that illness has compelled Dr. Fooks to resign his position as Medical Superintendent of Auckland Asylum after seven years of faithful service in the department. He carries with him the sincere sympathy and respect of all who have served under him, and I earnestly hope he may soon recover his wonted health and vigour.

A suitable refuge and school for idiots and imbeciles is urgently needed, to enable us to rid the other asylums of those poor creatures, whose presence is a great hindrance to the comfort of all the patients, and especially to the recovery of sensitive curable and convalescent cases.

At Ashburn Hall provision has been made for the reception of inebriates.