

SLEEPING-ACCOMMODATION IN ASYLUMS.

| Asylum. | Number of Patients, April, 1898. | Number of Single Rooms. | Number of Patients to be accommodated in Common Dormitories. | Common Dormitory Accommodation: Cubic Feet. | Statutory Accommodation in Common Dormitories: Number of Patients. | Number of Patients in excess of Statutory Accommodation. |
|------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Auckland* ... | 423 | 94 | 329 | 218,015 | 363 | ... |
| Christchurch ... | 521 | 81 | 440 | 220,296 | 367 | 73 |
| Seacliff ... | 596 | 139 | 457 | 189,617 | 316 | 141 |
| Hokitika ... | 122 | 18 | 104 | 58,266 | 97 | 7 |
| Nelson ... | 141 | 30 | 111 | 35,380 | 59 | 52 |
| Porirua† ... | 323 | 7 | 316 | 212,808 | 354 | ... |
| Wellington* ... | 222 | 67 | 155 | 100,173 | 167 | ... |
| Totals ... | 2,348 | 436 | 1,912 | 1,034,555 | 1,723 | *273 |

* At Auckland there is statutory dormitory accommodation for thirty-four more patients. At Wellington there is apparently room for twelve more, but in reality there is only floor-space for five more than the number now accommodated. The total number of patients in excess of the statutory accommodation at all the asylums is therefore 234.

† It will be noticed that at Porirua there is apparently room for thirty-eight more patients than the number accommodated. The floor-space, however, is not sufficient for more than 316, the great height of the dormitories giving a larger number of cubic feet space for each patient than the statutory requirements.

Single Rooms.

| Asylum. | Number of Single Rooms. | Total Space: Cubic Feet. | Cubic Feet for each Room. |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Auckland ... | 94 | 84,499 | 899 |
| Christchurch... | 81 | 69,651 | 860 |
| Seacliff ... | 139 | 105,886 | 762 |
| Hokitika ... | 18 | 12,301 | 684 |
| Nelson ... | 30 | 27,116 | 904 |
| Porirua ... | 7 | 6,168 | 880 |
| Wellington ... | 67 | 60,663 | 906 |
| Totals ... | 436 | 366,284 | 840 |

234 patients in excess.

600 cubic feet space required by Act.

140,400 cubic feet deficient.

NOTE.—The following sleeping-accommodation is in course of erection: Seacliff, 30 beds; Hokitika, 20 beds; Nelson, 26 beds: total, 76 beds. When this work is completed the number of patients in excess of the statutory requirements will be 158.

OVERCROWDING.

Consideration of the foregoing figures, and of the reports of the Superintendents of the various asylums, will enable any one to see that, except Porirua, Wellington, and Auckland, all our asylums are distressingly overcrowded, and even in Auckland great difficulty is still experienced owing to the want of single rooms on the female side. Nothing like proper classification can be attempted until this defect is supplied. Plans have been prepared by which, for an expenditure of £1,000, twenty single rooms can be provided. I earnestly hope that a vote will be taken for this purpose, and that authority will be given at the earliest possible moment to proceed with the work.

At Seacliff during the year we have had a terrifying experience of the evils of overcrowding. During an epidemic of septic pneumonia ten persons died, and, in the words of Dr. King, "their deaths must be attributed to the overcrowded state of the Asylum."

I made most urgent representations to the Minister on the subject, with the result that a portion of an auxiliary building designed to accommodate a hundred patients is now in course of construction; but even if this can be got ready in time it will give only from thirty to forty beds.

The grievous state of things at Wellington Asylum, owing to the delay in finishing the Porirua Asylum, had to be relieved at all hazards; so after every bed in the new wing at Porirua was filled we had to transfer twenty-five females to Sunnyside, and twenty men to Hokitika, where a new dormitory is now being built.

At Nelson relief is promised to the extent of twenty-six beds by means of a new dormitory which has just been contracted for, but meanwhile we lose the old cottage, which contained seventeen beds, and the rooms formerly occupied by the Superintendent gave eight beds, so that we have nine beds less than before until the new contract is completed.