

During the year there were several changes in the staff. Dr. Perry, the Assistant Medical Officer, left the service in February, and was succeeded by Dr. Coker, who has proved himself a capable officer. Miss Boulcott, the Matron, was succeeded by Miss Mills, one of the staff nurses at the Auckland Asylum, and I do not regret the choice made to fill this important vacancy. Mr. McDonald, the clerk, changed places with Mr. Holder, the clerk at the Auckland Asylum, both of whom I have always found experienced and trustworthy officers. The large number of patients requiring special attention necessitated the appointment of an extra attendant for night duty on the male side of the Asylum.

The actual expenditure for the year at Mount View was slightly less than in 1897; but the average cost of each patient (see Appendix, Table XXI.) was however considerably greater than in the previous year, and requires some explanation. The expenditure per head is necessarily greater the fewer the number of inmates. The average number resident in 1897 was 321, and in 1898, 237. Bearing this in mind, it will be found that the salaries paid to officials, which, of course, do not vary with the fluctuation in the number of patients, will account for a very large percentage of the increase shown in the table. Under the heading of "Necessaries," are included repairs to buildings, furnishing, &c., which, as a rule, do not vary much from year to year, but last year it included one or two exceptionally heavy items. Moreover, the rations and fuel consumed were purchased at a greater average cost, and so contribute to make the expenditure compare unfavourably with the previous year. The above items—the salaries, necessities, rations, and fuel—fully account for the apparent increase in the average cost per patient for 1898.

#### PORIRUA ASYLUM.

The average number of patients resident here during the year was 314 (187 male and 127 female). The admissions amounted to 117, all of whom were transferred from Mount View. Nine were transferred to Mount View, and nine were discharged. The proportion of deaths to the average number resident was slightly over 3 per cent. This is considerably below the ordinary Asylum death-rate. With few exceptions the patients in this institution are physically healthy, and mentally suffering from chronic insanity.

In February a distressing accident occurred: a male patient engaged outside working on the farm evaded the attendant in charge, and tried to make good his escape by crossing the Porirua Creek close to the harbour. Although every effort was made to save him, he was drowned before he could be rescued. No blame appears to be attachable to any one, and at the Coroner's inquest on the case the jury exonerated the attendants.

Throughout the year building operations have been going on. In January the new male wing was occupied by patients from Mount View; and by the end of December the new female wing, with accommodation for about eighty patients, was nearly complete and ready for occupation. Since then the final block on the female side, consisting of single rooms, &c., for the more troublesome cases, has been commenced. This accommodation, for reasons expressed in my last annual report, will be a great boon when available. The necessity for constructing the single-room block on the male side is equally urgent.

In the course of the current year I hope to be able to do something in the way of forming an area of about 6 acres on the north side of the Asylum into ample airing-courts, and a sports-ground, for the use of the inmates. This improvement will involve extensive earthworks, which will, however, supply healthy occupation for a large number of our patients.

I have, &c.,

GRAY HASSELL, M.D.,  
Medical Superintendent.

The Inspector General of Asylums.

## ENTRIES OF VISITS TO THE DIFFERENT ASYLUMS.

#### AUCKLAND.

25th September, 1898.—I have made a careful inspection of this Asylum—examined all the patients, saw their food and clothing—and am satisfied that the institution as a whole is well managed. All the books and statutory documents are in order.

16th April, 1899.—This Asylum is in good working-order in all its departments, except the auxiliary. This I find to have greatly fallen off in some respects. It will depend on certain steps which I have found it necessary to take whether considerable changes may not have to be made in the staff. The condition of the milking-cows has given grave cause for anxiety for a considerable time. Several months ago I arranged with the Agricultural Department to abide absolutely by their instructions as regards the treatment and disposal of the herd. Definite instructions have at length been given by Mr. Gilruth, which will be implicitly obeyed. Instructions have also been given to Dr. Levinge, of Sunnyside, to procure in the South Island milking-cows which have been tested for tuberculosis by the departmental experts, to replace all that have been recently condemned. Meanwhile every precaution is being taken to pasteurize the milk. Last week the total number of patients was 431—males, 275; females, 156. In consultation with Dr. Beattie, I examined all the recent and more hopeful cases; I visited all who were confined to their rooms and under medical treatment. All were being carefully attended to. I examined the bedding and clothing, and found them suitable and clean. The food was abundant, and of the best quality; but a little more despatch might be secured by better organization, especially at the auxiliary. The new Matron is doing well, and promises to be a very efficient officer. Dr. Liddell, who succeeded