

Waitati. I have been all over the farm, and I am very pleased with the progress that has been made. The home for the farm-workers at Simla is well looked after, and is admirably adapted for its purpose. The careful way in which Mr. Chapman has explained the effect of the slow earth-movement which has been such a source of difficulty and expense at this Asylum renders it needless for me to say more than that I concur and approve his recommendations. This certainly is a problem requiring the highest technical knowledge and skill to deal with it; but so far as I can judge there is no such immediate cause for alarm as to compel us to lose the use of the space involved, and cause such misery and suffering as would inevitably follow. The Asylum is full, and I can see no remedy but the new asylum, which I earnestly hope the Government will bestir themselves to find a suitable site for and build without delay. The total number of patients is—males, 414; and females, 231. I have seen them all, examined those confined to bed—three males and five females—and discussed the recent and more hopeful cases with the medical officers. I find a general condition of good bodily health and comfort, so far as our accommodation makes this possible. The food, clothing, and care of the patients are good. The staff works with the utmost harmony, and Otago has come to learn the value of Dr. King.

2nd March, 1903.—This Asylum is, except for the overcrowding and its complicated effects on the health of the patients and the manifold discomforts it causes, in a surprising condition of harmonious working. This can only be understood by seeing the incessant vigilance and skill which are brought to bear by Dr. King and his staff. Dr. S. Allen seconds Dr. King's efforts in the most praiseworthy manner. His constant cheerfulness and sympathetic interest in the patients has earned my fullest appreciation and gratitude. A new auxiliary building for the convalescent male patients, similar to but more extensive than the cottage provided for females, is urgently required. An admirable site near the garden is ready for building on at once in a safe situation so far as the earth-movements are concerned. Provision ought at once to be made for a suitable mess-room for the male attendants. It is wonderful how patiently they have put up with their discomforts in the past. To-day there is a total of sixty-four patients in excess of the statutory accommodation, and much trouble and lowering of the general efficiency of the Asylum is the inevitable result. There is an annual increase of at least a hundred patients in New Zealand, and nothing but a new asylum will give permanent relief, and that only for a few years. The male side requires painting almost throughout, and new linoleum almost all over is required. The requisite estimates will be laid before the Minister. The office is very efficiently manned, and the Asylum grounds and farm are in excellent order.

#### HOKITIKA ASYLUM.

14th November, 1902.—On a very wet and stormy day I saw all the patients clean and comfortably dressed, evidently well fed and cared for; none were in bed, and they were all well and warmly clad. Every corner of the building was scrupulously clean and comfortable, except that, seeing them all sitting together, I thought there might be provided a few comfortable forms and easy chairs for the older and more helpless patients. [This has since been done.] The staff are capable and working harmoniously. Especially it is incumbent on me to gratefully acknowledge the fact that the Hokitika Asylum has caused very little anxiety or difficulty to the Department—in fact, it has no history except that of steady and wise administration ever since I have known it. Mr. Downie, the head attendant, is faithful and efficient. The new building for the attendants will soon be finished and prove a great boom.

#### NELSON ASYLUM.

23rd November, 1902.—I saw all the patients, in company with Dr. Mackie and Mr. Morrison. There are very few hopeful cases among them. Only about twenty-five male patients are at all useful on the farm, though about fifty out of a total of eighty-four inmates are occupied in some way in the open air. The building is kept very clean; the bedding and clothing are suitable. As everywhere almost at present in New Zealand, the meat is very dear and much inferior to what it used to be. The staff is harmonious and efficient, and the head attendant, Mr. McLean, is extremely careful and very kind to the patients. Mrs. Morrison, who has for sixteen years been matron of this and Mount View Asylum, desires to retire at the end of the year, and I wish to record that during all that time she has most capably and faithfully fulfilled her arduous duties. She has deserved well of the Department, and it will be very difficult to replace her. Mr. Morrison's administration is remarkable for vigour and capacity; while Dr. Mackie's skill and devotion to duty have deserved my fullest confidence.

16th March, 1903.—The Asylum is in good working-order. I found only one female patient confined to bed. The new reservoir has, after long delay, been taken in hand, and will soon be available. Last night there was no water at the auxiliary. Neither the workshops nor the piggeries have been touched, so that the votes will lapse a third time unless they are undertaken at once.

#### PORIRUA ASYLUM.

21st September, 1902.—I have seen a great many asylums in England and Scotland since I last visited Porirua, and I am able to say that, in all essential points, Porirua is as good for its purpose as anything I have seen, always excepting the fact that we have not yet been able to provide a detached hospital building for acute cases, and are as yet unable to provide separate accommodation for idiots, epileptics, and criminals. Of course the luxurious fittings and decorative appliances almost universal in the Home asylums will for many years be beyond our reach; but, considering the time that has elapsed and the means at our command, I am proud of the progress that has been made at this Asylum. I am sure that our Medical Superintendents and their assistants, and head attendants and matrons, are all quite up to the Home level. The body of our