

more easy-chairs are required in the wards and day-rooms. More baths should be provided and connected with the hot-water system, which should be improved. There should be a pantry connected with each infirmary ward, fitted with a small gas cooking-stove. At present if hot water or food is required during the night it is not available. The maternity ward is, we think, entirely out of place in such an institution, and should be abolished.

A better quality of food should be provided. It should be better cooked, and served hot when the inmates are seated at the tables. The present stove is worn out and inadequate, and new cooking plant is required.

The pan-closets should be removed and be replaced by water-closets of a modern pattern. The urinals should be refaced with fine cement and constantly flushed with water.

The paths round the whole building should be asphalted and surface-drainage attended to.

The present system of disposal of sewage should be abolished as dangerous to the community, and a modern septic tank constructed.

The practice of washing the clothes and linen of the Auckland Hospital should be discontinued. If only the washing of the Home was treated, the laundry, with some improvements, would be able to cope with it.

The piggeries, we were informed, produced an income to the Board of £300 per annum. It is, however, very questionable if they should be so near the Home. If they are connected with the septic tank the evil will be minimised.

There should be more planted space, with outdoor seats, for the recreation of the inmates. At present nearly the whole of the ground is devoted to the garden.

It is very desirable that the inmates should be classified. It has been stated that classification is impossible. We do not think so. There are six male-wards and four female-wards, and it should certainly be possible, with the exercise of a little care and judgment, so to arrange and classify their inmates that there need not be any intimate association of unsuitable persons in the wards. At present there is no attempt at classification.

There is no doubt there were vermin in the Home during the management of Mr. Moss, and there are vermin in the Home now. There is no reason why there should be if reasonable care is taken as to the cleanliness of the Home and inmates, and if every person admitted is properly bathed and their clothes baked before admission to the wards.

The Auckland Hospital and the Costley Home are under the control of one Board. We consider it would be of the greatest benefit to the Home, and probably to the Hospital also, if this system of management were abolished and they were under separate control.

It will be seen that we consider the condition of the Home under the present Board and Manager highly unsatisfactory. The well-being and comfort of the inmates is sacrificed to a system of economy, which does not appear to meet with the approval of the representatives of the local bodies who supply their quota of the funds. There was abundant evidence before us that the local bodies were prepared to provide the means to place the institution on a proper footing. We think that, in addition to the abolition of the present system of control, a complete reorganization of the resident staff from the Manager downwards is imperatively necessary, and that the greatest care should be taken in the selection of those in whose hands the internal management of the institution is placed.

It will be noted in the comparative table E, attached to this report, that the expenditure for the maintenance of the Home for the year 1903 is £4,516, as against an expenditure of £3,328 in the year 1901, showing an increase of £1,188. This is accounted for partly by the increased staff of the institution and the general rise in price of provisions of all kinds, and partly by the fact that the number of the inmates had risen from 173 in 1901 to 196 in 1903, entailing an increased expenditure under every head.

There is also a large increase in the number of deaths, shown in 1903 as sixty-six, against thirty-eight in 1901. This is accounted for by an epidemic of influenza, which also rendered necessary a larger expenditure in medicine and medical comforts.

We are of opinion that the reorganized staff which we recommend would not entail a much larger expenditure than the present staff, while it would result in much greater efficiency and infinitely more comfort to the inmates of the Home.

The Commission sat for twelve days to take evidence. We visited the Home on three occasions, and took the evidence of many of the inmates there. We examined forty-nine witnesses. We further append to this report,—

- A. A copy of the will of the late Edward Costley.
- B. A table showing the cost of maintenance per inmate per year from 1891 to 1903, the condition of the staff year by year, and the daily average number of inmates of the Home.
- C. A return showing the number of inmates who are in receipt of pensions, and the number of those whose friends contribute towards their support.
- D. A statement showing the expenditure for the maintenance of the Costley Home for the year 1902-3.
- E. A comparative table showing the increase in the expenditure on the Home from 1901 to 1903.

We beg to attach to this report the original evidence taken by the Commission, together with a typewritten copy thereof.

We have the honour, &c.,

RICHMOND BEETHAM,

RICHARD W. ANDERSON,

Commissioners.

Dated at Auckland, this 25th day of November, 1903.