

HOKITIKA MENTAL HOSPITAL.

19th July, 1906.—I visited this Mental Hospital on the 17th and again to-day. It is fulfilling its functions satisfactorily. The patients are well treated medically and otherwise, and no complaints were made during the visits. All the patients were seen, looked well, and were suitably clad. Their food is wholesome and abundant, and the behaviour at table was most orderly. In fact, one is struck with the quiet that reigns. To some extent this is to be explained by the disproportion of acute cases and the number labouring under senile dementia. A large number of cases require special attention for this reason. There are 40 men (31·5 per cent.) between the ages of sixty-four and eighty-six years, many of them requiring to be fed and dressed; and 14 women (38 per cent.) between the ages of sixty and seventy-seven requiring similar attention. There are 13 (males, 8; females, 5) congenital idiots who require everything to be done for them, and 9 epileptics (6 males, 3 females) who demand special attention. The patients are encouraged to do some useful work, according to their capacity, and the usual outings and amusements are provided for their recreation. The following is a statement of the changes in the population since the date of my last visit:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
In Hospital, 1st January, 1906	132	39	171
Admitted since	5	3	8
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total under care	137	42	179
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	Males	Females.	Total.
Discharged recovered	3	2	5
" unrecovered	0	0	0
Died	3	2	5
Total discharged and died	—	—	—
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Remaining on register	131	38	169
Absent on probation	4	1	5
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Resident in the Hospital at this date	127	37	164

Because of transfers from other hospitals in the past these numbers must not be interpreted to bear a definite relation to the incidence of insanity in this province. Nothing has happened to call for special comment since my last visit. The books and registers were examined and found to be neatly and correctly kept. The Register of Restraint contains one entry referring to the employment of gloves on one occasion for four hours to prevent the removal of surgical dressings. Five men and one woman are to-day confined to bed for medical reasons. I discussed their cases with Dr. Macandrew. One case has developed bedsores, which are, however, looking healthy and are healing. There is incontinence of urine combined with a condition rendering this man specially liable, and on inquiry I am persuaded that every precaution was and is being taken. With Dr. Downey I discussed projects for repairs and alterations of the buildings and asked him to furnish a special report of this and some other matters. The town is about to be supplied with a water-service, and it is to be hoped that this may be extended to the Hospital. Future extensions of buildings and alterations in system of drainage should have this in view. I understand that the staff is working well and loyally, and certainly my visit gave me the impression that all were doing their best. I understand that £500 would cover the cost of bringing the water-supply from town in a 4 in. pipe to the Gaol and Mental and General Hospitals.

NELSON MENTAL HOSPITAL.

20th August, 1905.—I spent the afternoon at this Hospital, and found everything in good order; I saw all the patients and examined the recent cases with Dr. Mackay. The clothing was suitable, the food good, and the staff attentive. Great improvement has already resulted from the painting of the interior, which I hope will be steadily prosecuted. The farm and garden are being vigorously improved, and I hope to have all the improvements which will be provided for in this year's estimates carried out at once. The upper reservoir is leaking badly because the clay has not been properly puddled at the south end of the dam, and if vigorous steps are not taken at once the whole thing will soon be useless. It is not a work on which patients can be either usefully or safely employed, and the wire safeguard against suicides is neither safe nor suitable. A contract ought to be made to finish the work, and it ought to be roofed in. Mrs. Cooke is very assiduous as Official Visitor.

PORIRUA MENTAL HOSPITAL.

29th March, 1906.—I visited this Hospital to-day on the eve of Dr. Hassell's departure. To Dr. Gribben, who is to act for Dr. Hassell, will be handed over the charge of an institution working harmoniously in all parts, and it must be his endeavour, and will no doubt be his pride to return it in the same excellent order. The numbers in the Hospital to-day are—men, 319; women, 277; total, 596. Eight men and four women are on probation. Eleven patients are confined to bed (men, 5; women, 6) because of physical disorder, and are receiving careful and appropriate treatment. No rational complaints were made. The wards were looking more pleasant than I have hitherto seen them, owing no doubt to the agreeable effect of pot plants and hanging baskets, and as usual every place was clean. The newly painted dining-hall looks well. A good dinner was served during the visit. The corridor on the female side between the kitchen and the laundry, and the main entrance to that side of the house, is close and pervaded with the smell of cooking—it is used as a visiting-room. The kitchen is being painted. I notice that steam from the cooking-boilers escapes into the room round the canopy. Either the exit is too small or the canopy not wide enough, or both. The new laundry machinery was