

In conclusion, I am glad to report that the result of the inspection was very satisfactory; and that the state of the Asylum, and the care evidently taken of the patients, reflect very great credit on Mr. Seager, the keeper, and the attendants.

His Honor the Superintendent of Canterbury, &c.,
Christchurch.

I have, &c.,
W. M. MASKELL,
Deputy Inspector.

No. 10.

Mr. J. W. HAMILTON to His Honor W. ROLLESTON.

(No. 34.)

SIR,—

Christchurch, 13th May, 1873.

I have the honor to report that I inspected Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum this day in manner prescribed by "The Lunatics Act, 1868."

1. The books were all written up and in good order. The Medical Journal is now being kept in a proper bound book, and no longer on loose MS. forms, as had been the case for above two months prior to my report of 3rd December last. The Case Book also duly showed entry of *post-mortem* examination of the body of a deceased patient on which an inquest had been held by a Justice of the Peace. I had noticed on a previous occasion the omission of entries of two *post-mortem* examinations, and the desirability of the Coroner, who is also Medical Officer of the Asylum, abstaining from holding inquests on bodies of deceased lunatic patients.

2. The Register of Patients contained no entry of the admission, late on the 11th May, of one John Hunter, who was sent up from the Hospital, but without such distinct certificates as clauses 15, 19, and 20 of the Act refer to as indispensable. Clause 20 allows twenty-one days for the order or medical certificate to be amended, with the Colonial Secretary's sanction. I instructed the Keeper to take steps to get the certificate amended, and had the admission duly entered on the Register of Patients. The omission to make this entry was intentional on the part of the Clerk, who thought that the patient could not be received as a lunatic for want of a certificate in due legal form. It appears to me that the Act intends that every admission whatsoever should be entered, as no one ought to be received into the Asylum unless presumably insane, and as a patient. On visiting Hunter I found him unmistakeably very mad. There can be no doubt that on his examination before the Resident Magistrate to-morrow or next day that he will be formally committed to the Asylum.

3. The patients were—males, 83; females, 40—in all, 123. One female and two male patients were under seclusion, being violent. One female patient, No. 200, admitted 10th July, 1869, will receive her discharge immediately, and return to England, apparently perfectly cured, after four years' treatment in the Asylum.

4. I am glad to report that the tanks required as a safeguard in case of fire have been erected at the level of the top of the Asylum, and are kept full by a force pump worked by a windmill. The Keeper informs me that the windmill is too much sheltered by trees in summer, and by the building in N.E. winds, which prevail for nine months out of the twelve. I beg to recommend that the Fire Brigade should be asked to take the engines up to the Asylum at an early date, and test the sufficiency of the water supply. I am myself of opinion that the reservoir at the ground level will probably be found on trial to be too small. It is at all events very desirable, I think, to test this point in good time.

5. I found the new laundry in use. Everything about it is admirably adapted for washing for so large an establishment. The carriage of the clothes to the main building will be found very laborious and tedious owing to the distance, especially in wet winter weather. I suggest that a light wooden tramway be laid down communicating with both the new refractory wards and the old building. When the new wards are inhabited, it seems to me that a tramway must of necessity be laid down for bringing the dinners across from the kitchen and taking the mess utensils back there to be washed. The distance seems far too great for this work to be carried out daily by ordinary hand labour.

6. I am very sorry to find by the Keeper's account that the new wards can hardly now be finished till spring, owing to the great demand for builders and carpenters that has arisen since the works were suspended in October or November last. The want of these new wards will leave the sleeping room in the present old ones very insufficient, as it has been now for a very long time past.

7. Spouting is much needed along the eaves of the corridor roof on the east side of the female exercising yard. The rain off the iron roof destroys the paint on the walls making them also look very dirty and cheerless for the inmates. A great deal of soot seems to fall into this yard from two chimneys on the north side of it. This might no doubt be remedied by raising the chimneys, which are too close to the ridge board, so that the soot is not blown clear away, and the patients' dresses are at times made very dirty.

8. The cook's sleeping room is absolutely not fit for an attendant. It is damp and dark and unhealthy. A pair of boots in it were covered entirely with a thick coat of green mildew. It was built by the cook himself when the means of the Province were comparatively small. I beg very urgently to recommend that a respectable day and sleeping room, with a chimney, be at once erected for the cook before the winter sets in; and that it be raised well off the ground, which lies very low and wet at this end of the Asylum. An adjoining room used for holding kitchen bulky stores like salt, flour, &c., ought to be rebuilt when the cook's room is taken in hand; both places are equally damp and unwholesome. I may state that the cook himself complained to me of the cold and damp of his room.

9. A "tell-tale" clock lately introduced, by which the night attendant's wakefulness is guaranteed at least once during every hour of the night, seems to me to afford an important safeguard in the event of a fire breaking out during the night. I venture, however, to advise that the General Government