

I may mention also that some of these plays have been composed by the Superintendent-Surgeon, who does all in his power, not only to assuage their bodily sufferings, but to cheer and comfort them in every way he can. Perhaps it may not be out of place for me to state that for the five years he has been connected with the institution, he has only once been a whole day absent from it; the mere mention of it speaks volumes in his favour.

Whatever pleasantly occupies the minds of the patients must, I think, be beneficial to them. This I know, that entertainments, plays, concerts, picnics, and amusements are strongly recommended by the highest medical authorities in Great Britain and in the colonies, as having sedative and curative effects, and I believe they are practised and given, if not in all, in most of the best-conducted lunatic establishments. It were wrong were I to omit mentioning that His Honor the Superintendent of the province has been indefatigable in supplying the inmates of this establishment, as much as lay in his power, with entertainments and suitable amusements.

In the neighbouring colonies it seems that the "well to do" class are in the habit of contributing liberally towards the amusements of the insane, by money donations, by sending them books, illustrated papers, musical instruments, and things of that sort. I wish I could truthfully state that such was also the practice here, even if it were only in the sending of books and illustrated papers, which the insane seem to crave for so much. For the sake of the poor sufferers in our institute, I earnestly hope the hint I have thrown out, of what is done elsewhere, may be followed here by such as have it in their power to contribute towards so beneficent a purpose.

Complaints have frequently been made that the apartments and appliances in this institution are not at all suitable for the respectable portion of the community. I admit it: it is a pauper Lunatic Asylum, and with pauper appliances. There is no use blinking the fact; and not until the additional wing is built, that I have ventured to recommend, can that want be supplied. An hospital too a long felt necessity, will then have to be laid out also. I need scarcely observe that there is always an hospital in every well-supported and properly laid out Lunatic Asylum. I notice these matters in no fault-finding spirit, but in the hope they may not be lost sight of, but duly provided for at some future, but, I hope, not remote date.

There have been eighteen deaths since the beginning of the last year, viz. from 1st January to December, 1874; that is to say, a percentage of 8.65.

Many people seem to be altogether unaware, at all events they certainly do not sufficiently consider, that a very great portion of the cases sent to the Asylum consists of the aged, the paralytic, and people subject to diseases likely to terminate fatally; many of them, in fact, in the very last stage of bodily illness. The truth is, so far from being struck with the number of deaths, I am rather surprised that so many have recovered. I have seen many snatched, as it were, from the jaws of death, and of whose recovery I had not the slightest hope when they were brought in. Dr. Aicken is unquestionably entitled to great credit for his judicious treatment of his patients, and his unwearied attention to them, night and day. Those who know him will unhesitatingly acknowledge that the institute that has him at its head is indeed highly favoured.

Before I close, perhaps I may be pardoned for remarking that the great error the relatives of lunatics commit consists in their keeping them till it is too late to effect a recovery. It is a well known fact, and it requires no medical skill to understand it, that a lunatic stands a ten times better chance of recovery in an asylum than in his own house, however comfortable it may be, and will recover sooner when placed with strangers than among his own friends.

I apologise for the excessive length of this report. I have now "said my say," *Liberavi animam meam*. My next report, if I should ever have to make another, will necessarily be a very great deal shorter.

H. D. MORPETH,

Inspector of Lunatic Asylum in the Province of Auckland.

Ponsonby, near Auckland, 22nd January, 1875.

HALF-YEARLY STATEMENT, under Section 60 of "The Lunatics Act, 1868."

From 1st July to 31st December, 1874.

1. Official visits made to the Asylum from 1st July, 1874, to 31st December, 1874	...	...	...	...	25
2. Official visits elsewhere in connection with the Asylum	...	...	...	...	30
3. Number of patients seen in the Asylum	...	...	...	...	181
4. Number of miles travelled, during the above period, to and from the Asylum and elsewhere on the business thereof	...	...	...	...	224
5. Letters sent and received	...	...	...	...	95

H. D. MORPETH, J.P.,

Inspector of Asylums for the Province of Auckland.

Ponsonby, 31st December, 1874.

No. 2.

MR. CROMPTON to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Taranaki.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 4th January, 1875.

I have the honor to state, for the information of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, that since my last report, dated the 30th June last, I have visited the Lunatic Asylum weekly. I regret to state that there has been a sudden increase in the number of lunatics committed to the Asylum, and nearly all of them of a hopeless character.

From information which has reached me, it is to be feared that the number will be still further increased. The consequence is that the Asylum is too small for the inmates, and there are no means