

brought against Dr. Neill by ex-Warders Dundas and Sutherland. I can find no evidence in support of their allegations, while they are directly contradicted by Chief Warder Macdonald and Warder Pullar, as well as by Dr. Neill himself, and the evidence of the case-book. The fact that Dundas was under notice of dismissal before the charge was made, and that Sutherland has been dismissed since, taken together with the length of time, nearly three months from now, that has been allowed to elapse, leads me to conclude that there is nothing in it.

I was engaged in inspecting Seacliff Asylum on the 28th and 29th December, 1886, and the 21st and 22nd January, 1887.

I found that the heavy rains of last winter had caused considerable damage to the building in the line of the old cracks which had been repaired before my last visit. It is now quite evident that the injury is caused by subsidence of the foundations over what appears to have been an old deep-lying drainage-channel passing transversely under the female wing. In every other part the building is quite sound. There is one main crack through the wing in its narrowest part, with smaller cracks radiating from it on both sides. So far as I can judge, the measures taken to remedy the evil by the Public Works officers promise to be successful in preventing any further damage. The downward thrust over the weak place in the foundations has been distributed by means of concrete blocks and iron rails laid across it, as well as by building up some open archways, so that the wall is now one solid continuous mass, resting on a solid basis. In addition to these precautions a deep trench has been carried across the drainage-line behind and right round the northern wing. Since the first appearance of the new cracks no further movement has taken place, and I am hopeful that the difficulty has now been overcome.

The general health and appearance of the patients I found to be admirable. All were able to be outside, except five females and four males. Of these, five were confined to bed with slight ailments, and only for a short time; the others were allowed to remain in or out of their room as they pleased. One woman was wearing a canvas dress and another locked gloves. Except these, I found none under any form of restraint, and an examination of the medical journal showed that since my last visit there has been surprisingly little necessity for this form of control. During my visits there was a remarkable absence of noise and excitement, and I found evidence on every hand that the greatest care and kindness are exercised habitually by Dr. Neill himself, and that his example is followed by all the officers of the institution in dealing with the patients.

It gives me great pleasure to report that the staff as a whole is excellent, and that the order, discipline, and harmony of the asylum are very gratifying.

The total number of patients at present is 474. Of these, 303 are males and 171 females. Three are out on trial.

A large proportion, viz., 97 males, are usefully occupied every fine day in working about the farm, besides a large number who are at work indoors. On the female side I found 21 patients engaged in the laundry, and every effort is made to employ as many as possible in sewing, knitting, or other light work. I am very much gratified to find the progress that has been made since my last visit in laying out the grounds, and I hope that within two or three months the large space in front and both sides of the building will be laid down as a lawn and shrubbery, where all but acute cases and those who cannot be trusted can spend most of their time, instead of being confined, as at present, in the dismal airing-courts behind. When this is done I am sure most of the misgivings with which the public have regarded this asylum will be entirely dissipated.

It gives me great satisfaction to find that, as soon as the requisite alterations are made, all the working male patients will be removed to the auxiliary asylum. In this way much time will be saved, and many other advantages will result from the improved classification.

Since my last visit the Government have issued an order that every one of the staff shall be entitled to one clear month's holiday in the year. This is a most enlightened and necessary provision, and I am glad to find that, owing to Dr. Neill's excellent arrangements, this great advantage has been secured at the cost of only one extra attendant. For the other officers of course special arrangements must be made.

Divine service is regularly held once a fortnight by Mr. Torrance and Father Burke, of Port Chalmers. From May to October there are entertainments every second week, at which about 250 patients are present.

The Public Works Department has been instructed to get ready plans for the lighting of this asylum by gas, so that the many difficulties which have hitherto been caused by having to use kerosene will be removed.

An examination of the farm, live-stock, implements, and crops showed all to be in good condition and intelligently cared for. I am of opinion, however, that the time has come when it is necessary to appoint a farm-bailiff, who shall be responsible for the efficient and economical working of the farm.

One of the greatest difficulties in the management of this institution is caused by the time and expense which the railway-travelling costs the attendants. At present Dr. Neill gets four annual tickets at a cost of £100, but it sometimes happens that six or seven attendants require tickets. It would, therefore, be much more convenient that Dr. Neill should be allowed to issue what passes are necessary, keeping a careful record of the dates on which and the persons to whom they are given.

The most pressing requirements for the present are a second boiler for the laundry, which will make the drying-closet more effective, and enable steam to be supplied to the built-in boilers in the washing-room.

*Christchurch.*

5th June, 1886.—My first visit to this asylum was made on the 16th May. I found the whole place covered with water, and it would have moved any one to indignation to see the misery caused to the officers and patients. The rainfall of the surrounding fields and public roads is allowed to