

would be a great convenience, as there are patients in the ward who do not require single rooms, and who have to be conducted over to the wing every evening.

The male refractory day-room is too small, and this is especially apparent in wet weather, and is a source of anxiety, as the patients are inclined to be quarrelsome, and it also has a detrimental effect on the recent cases who, unfortunately, have to be treated there.

The danger of fire in the building is a serious consideration, and at my request the Public Works Department have begun to instal the May-Oatway automatic alarm, which will be connected direct with the Newtown Fire-station. In this connection I would beg to draw your attention to the poor supply of gas to the institution, and I would strongly recommend that, instead of patching up the existing pipes, which are corroded and leaking badly, electric light should be introduced, thus affording better light, as well as safety from fire.

Towards the end of the year I began to photograph all patients on admission, and it affords a valuable aid to identity, and allows a comparison to be made of the patient's condition on admission and discharge.

There are several idiot children among both the males and females, and it is a pity to see the chance of educating what little brain-power they have being lost for want of a separate institution, and officials who have been trained for this special work. It would be a boon to the children themselves if an idiot home were erected for the colony, and also a great relief to the adult population of the asylums, who are wearied and upset by the tricky and mischievous ways and mournful and monotonous cries of these unfortunates.

The question of morality and heredity, as it bears on insanity and criminality, has been forcibly thrust upon me by one case admitted during the year. Herewith I give a statement of this patient's antecedents and progeny, and one is bound to wonder if there is no State remedy to prevent such an awful legacy being left to pollute the coming race: Mr. X married Y, and the marriage produced Mrs. Z, the patient spoken of. Mr. X also lived with a woman to whom he was not married, and "the children followed father's footsteps" (Police report). Mrs. Y lived with a man out of wedlock, and produced, with one or two exceptions, children similar to their parents, "generally immoral and depraved." Mrs. A lived at one time with Mr. A, but also lived with a Mr. B, and they produced B (boy) and B (girl). At the present time the afore-mentioned Mr. A is living with B (girl), his former paramour's daughter.

There have been several attempts at escape during the year, and three men and one woman eluded pursuit at the time, principally owing to the proximity of the Asylum to the town, but all were recaptured except one man, who was concealed by friends, but was afterwards re-committed.

Walking parties go outside the grounds every Sunday, and there are a large number of patients on parole, whilst others have been allowed out for a day in the care of their friends. This affords great pleasure, and is a bright spot on the horizon of some of the quiet and well-behaved, who are not yet well enough to be trusted with full liberty.

There are the usual fortnightly dances, and these are varied at times by visits from musicians and singers from the town.

The picnic was held at the Government grounds at the Upper Hutt, and was attended by over one hundred patients.

There has been a feeling of unrest and many changes among the attendants, due principally to the small inducement to stay in the service. This might be overcome by either a bonus or a pension at the expiry of a certain number of years.

To the officers and staff I have to convey my hearty thanks for their co-operation in carrying out the working of the institution for the past year.

The Inspector-General of Asylums, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

W. BAXTER GOW, M.D.

D. MACGREGOR, M.A., M.B.,
Inspector-General of Asylums.
