

From the foregoing it will be seen that up to the 31st March, 1904, inebriate-home experiments have cost a gross sum of £14,720 19s. 1d., whilst the total receipts amounted to £1,549 7s. 11d. On the 19th May last there were seventeen men in the Home and seven women in the Retreat. The present number of patients in the Home is twenty-six, and the total past and present patients number in all eighty-one. The weekly cost per patient, omitting any allowance for rental, is £2 8s. 6d.—a sum greatly in excess of the average payments.

Our first experiment has not, I regret to say, been a success, chiefly owing to defective law, there being no power to compel patients to work or even take necessary exercise, and in respect to non-paying patients committed there is no authority in law to meet what is required. If it is decided to continue the Orakanui Home as an inebriates institution the present law will require to be amended in the direction of giving the Medical Superintendent an effective voice concerning the patients to be admitted to or discharged from the Home. Power, too, should be given for the provision of proper punishment in the event of any breach of the regulations by any patient or person, and for the compelling of patients to do a certain amount of physical work as prescribed by the Medical Superintendent.

It is quite clear to me that we cannot have the two classes of patients in the one home. The law should admit of Magistrates committing habitual drunkards of the vagrant class to places like the Samaritan Home in Christchurch or kindred reformatories. There should then be a home where voluntary patients could be received, or others whose friends had them committed for curative treatment, power being given to the Superintendent of these homes to enforce regulations and compel patients to do physical work and take exercise, and to submit to such curative treatment as may be prescribed.

There is another alternative, namely, to transform the Orakanui Home into an additional mental hospital for the treatment of those first mentally afflicted. Later on my colleague will submit definite proposals on this subject.

FARMS FOR SOCIAL OUTCASTS.

We have, as in other countries, a large number of persons who are simply the derelicts of society—human wrecks who, in order to live when not maintained in the gaols by the colony, prey upon society. Land should be set apart upon which these persons should be placed. The value of the work done would be equal to the cost of their maintenance, whilst the collateral advantage of keeping them from the public gaze would more than compensate for the cost of the erection of the buildings and acquiring the land. If allowed to go on as at present, a shocking example is ever present before the rising generation, the criminal records of our colony are unduly increased, and the social and moral condition of the colony is thereby prejudiced.

NEW ZEALAND INTERCOLONIAL EXHIBITION.

As pointed out to members last session, it is many years ago since a national exhibition was held in this colony. The time is opportune, coming as it does immediately after the St. Louis Exposition, and prior to the Empire Exhibition in the Mother-country.

Timely notice is required to be given so that the manufacturers and producers of the Commonwealth, those of Canada, America, the Mother-country, Germany, and other manufacturing countries, may have an opportunity of exhibiting in our colony.

I am still of the opinion that the most fitting place for the exhibition would be the Hagley Park, Christchurch; and I hope to see the matter taken up with vigour, thus insuring success.

I regret that the movement to have a local exhibition at Wellington has fallen through. Last year, at the request of the Wellington Committee, the Government postponed holding the national exhibition for a year, and, though not yet approached with a view of extending the time, I think it is as well to here state that it would be inadvisable to postpone beyond next year the holding of the national exhibition.