

## No. 10.

His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Canterbury, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office,  
Christchurch, Canterbury, N.Z., 30th May, 1870.

Mr. Hamilton having been appointed by me under "The Lunatics Act, 1868," to be Inspector of the Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum, I have the honor to forward herewith an official Report by that gentleman on the state of the Asylum.

I have, &amp;c.,

W. ROLLESTON,  
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

## Enclosure in No. 10.

Mr. J. W. HAMILTON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 26th May, 1870.

Having been appointed, by warrant of the 17th instant under the hand of His Honor the Superintendent of Canterbury, (exercising powers delegated to him under "The Lunatics Act, 1868,") to be an Inspector of the Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum, I have the honor to submit to you, as required by clause 60 of the Act, the following Report:—

*Report of Inspection of Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum, Canterbury.*

The Lunatic Asylum, now pretty generally known in Canterbury as Sunnyside, was established by the Provincial Government about six years ago. It was proclaimed by an Order of the Governor in Council, dated 9th December, 1868, (see *Gazette* No. 71, of 14th December, 1868,) to be a Public Asylum within the meaning of "The Lunatics Act, 1868" (clauses 2 and 22).

The buildings and grounds occupy a space of fifty acres on the north bank of the Heathcote River, about two miles out of Christchurch, on the Lincoln road. The site is a healthy one, being slightly elevated above the general level of the plains, with good capabilities for draining. I inspected the Asylum on Wednesday, 18th May. Illness prevented me from visiting the patients again on the Friday or Saturday during evening recreation, and at some of their choir practice, as well as during Sunday service on the 22nd instant. I have thus not seen all I wish to see at once of the working of the establishment. But from what I did see on the 18th, and from information acquired formerly when a near connection was under treatment at Sunnyside, I feel quite justified in now sending up a report, which I am told is required at once, to be in time for the session of the General Assembly.

Taking the Lunatics Act requirements in the order of the clauses, I notice that the following points require to be attended to:—

The "medical officer" Dr. Coward, the "keeper" Mr. E. W. Seager, and the "clerk" Mr. W. E. Payne, have held their appointments under the Provincial Government for some time—Mr. Seager as "keeper" or "steward" for some six years. But these appointments, I think, require to be formally made by the Superintendent or the Governor under clause 23.

The "Register of Patients" is now in course of completion in the form required by clause 24. It has only quite lately been furnished, and is being written up from the old register from the earliest date; the names being all entered up to this date. The old register seems to have been thoroughly kept up, and contains substantially almost all the information the new form requires.

The "Medical Journal" prescribed by clause 25 I found only entered up. The "Case Book" ("to be kept in such form as the Governor in Council may direct") was not produced. The reason given was that no order on the subject had yet been promulgated.

The inspection was made strictly in accordance with clause 53, every part of the building being visited, and every patient seen. The "Inspector's Book," bound up with the Act, as required by clauses 53 and 57, was not forthcoming, from which I assume that this was the first inspection made under the Act of 1868.

The copy of the plan "given to the Colonial Secretary on applying for the license," which should be "hung up in some conspicuous part" of the house (in clause 57), was not there. The Provincial Secretary has however since certified to me that it is in preparation.

The "Patients' Book" (clause 58) has also yet to be provided for any observations the Inspector or Official Visitor may wish to enter respecting any patient. At present the Official Visitors appear to use the same book as is kept for ordinary visitors' observations, or for any patients who may wish to enter remarks on their being discharged cured.

Having brought to your notice these few shortcomings in regard to strict and literal adherence to the Act of 1868, I feel bound to state that I cannot look upon them as of any serious moment, after observing how thoroughly the spirit of the law is acted up to throughout the Asylum.

I visited the Asylum on a day when I was not likely to be expected. The greater number of the patients were engaged in some occupation or other; out of doors some were employed gardening, others at the wash-house, others indoors were preparing for the midday dinner. These were all going steadily and quietly to their work, and with no appearance of a feeling of restraint upon their movements, or of their being vigilantly watched. I saw the dinner being served up in the kitchen, where the arrangements for securing cleanliness are excellently devised. The whole of the cooking is done by steam or by baking in the oven, on a plan by which it is impossible that any dirt can get into the food. The food was of excellent quality, and the ration abundant, both of meat, vegetables, and pudding. The kitchen and larder and provision store were in a state of perfect neatness and cleanliness throughout. The meals were being eaten, in all the wards but one, in a quiet and orderly manner; patients were told off to carry in the rations, and afterwards to clear away. The male patients afterwards were mostly either enjoying their pipe of tobacco or taking exercise in the yards.

There is an abundant supply of pure water to insure the comfort and cleanliness of the patients.