

Hospital Reserve during the year 1869, and the additions which were being continually made to the numbers, in consequence of the refusal of the Canterbury Government to receive lunatics from Westland, compelled the then County Chairman to provide further immediate accommodation. As a temporary expedient, he determined to use for this purpose a portion of the Upper Gaol not occupied by convicts. I find on reference that the average number of lunatics confined in the Upper Gaol during the six months ending December, 1869, was twelve. Up to that time, and during the early part of 1870, the gaol was not declared a lunatic asylum. The patients were committed by the Magistrates to the asylum, but were sent to the gaol, there being absolutely no room for them in the former place. On my earnest and repeated representations of the illegality of this proceeding, the County Chairman took steps to have the Upper Gaol gazetted a lunatic asylum. This was done on the 7th February, of last year, Mr. Cleary, the gaoler, being appointed keeper of the asylum, and the County Surgeon, medical officer. Very shortly after lunatics were sent to the Upper Gaol, Mr. Cleary endeavoured to make arrangements for keeping the lunatics separate from the convicts. They took their meals at different hours and occupied different cells. There was, however, but one exercise yard, and this being used by lunatics and convicts in common, it was found impossible to keep them apart. During the half-year ended 31st December, 1870, the changes to which I alluded at the commencement of this Report were made. A portion of the gaol yards was set apart for the exclusive use of the lunatics, and dividing fences were erected. The passage connecting the wing occupied by the lunatics with the rest of the gaol was blocked up, the only communication between the buildings being a trap for passing meals from the kitchen of the prison to the lunatics' mess-room. Outside the gaol enclosure, to the northward, a piece of ground, formerly used as a garden by the gaoler, was enclosed as a recreation ground for the lunatics. The fence on the west side is placed far down the steep terrace, and thus a fine view of the roadstead, the coast-line, and part of the town, is secured. The look-out is one of the finest about Hokitika, and there can be no doubt as to the healthiness of the locality. Whenever the weather is favourable the patients make use of this ground, and appear to enjoy themselves. The dimensions of the buildings, yards, and recreation ground occupied by the lunatics at this asylum are as follows:—

	Feet.	Feet.
Back yard	52 ×	54
Front garden, leading to recreation-ground	74 ×	9
Front cross, leading to mess-room	52 ×	9
Recreation ground	175 ×	230
Mess-room	15 ×	10½
Eight sleeping apartments (each)	8 ×	9

It was the intention of the late County Chairman to have removed one of the attendants from the asylum on the Hospital Reserve to that at the Upper Gaol, but this has not been done, and the patients are still under the supervision of officers of the gaol. When in the yards they are seen by the warder on duty on the platform on the eastern side of the enclosure, and when in the recreation ground a warder is always present. The yards and sleeping and mess-rooms are daily cleaned by one of the convicts. The sleeping-rooms are fitted with berths, and the bedding is plentiful and kept clean. In these matters the patients are much better provided than, I believe, the majority of working men on the Coast. The food used in the asylum is cooked in the prison kitchen, and is plentiful and good. It is of the same quantity and quality as that supplied to hard-labour prisoners, with the addition of tea and milk. Tobacco is also distributed. The patients wear their own clothing, when it is serviceable, and when not, they are supplied from the gaol store. There are cards, draughts, and a few books and newspapers. Occasionally the patients play at foot-ball. I am happy to be able to say that there is scarcely any sickness. the cost of maintenance at this asylum for the six months ended 31st December, 1870, was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Rations (actual cost)	95	13	9
Medicines, medical comforts, &c.	27	11	5
Bedding and clothing	30	0	0
Warder's salary (actual cost)	101	4	0
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	£254	9	2

Average number of lunatics, 17. Cost of each lunatic for the six months, £15.

The medical officer visits the asylum on an average once a day. I am aware that certain discharged convicts have spread reports to the effect that the patients in the asylum are harshly treated by Mr. Cleary and the warders. I believe these reports to be utterly without foundation, and to have been got up for the sole purpose of injuring the officers of the gaol. My visits, and those of the medical officer, are almost always unexpected; and I am sure that had there been any ill-treatment, unkindness, or unnecessary restraint, it would have very quickly come to my knowledge. I have conversed frequently with the lunatics—with some of them I have talked for half an hour at a time—but no complaint about the treatment has been made to me. I see every inmate of the asylum. The detention is often spoken of as unjust or unnecessary, the speaker always thinking himself sane, but that is the only grievance. I have the fullest confidence that Mr. Cleary has faithfully discharged the disagreeable duty imposed on him by the custody of these unfortunate people. The system of combining, in the smallest degree, an asylum with a gaol is bad, but Mr. Cleary is not responsible for that. In working that system his conduct has been all that could be wished. In this opinion I am fully borne out by Dr. Dermott, the medical officer, who has had even better opportunities than myself for ascertaining the truth.

Coming now to the asylum on the Hospital Reserve, I regret to say that matters remain in precisely the same position they have occupied for years, nothing new having been done; not one of the