

## No. 9.

G. G. FITZGERALD to the Hon. Mr. GISBORNE.

SIR,—

Office of the Inspector of Lunatic Asylums, Hokitika, 14th July, 1871.

I have the honor to report as follows on the lunatic asylums of the County of Westland for the six months ended 30th June, 1871:—

The number of lunatics confined in the Sea View Lunatic Asylum, on 30th June, was 23; there were received during the half-year 12 patients; discharged, 6; died, 1. The average number of patients for the six months was 22. The cost of each patient's maintenance per week was 11s. 1d., exclusive of the salary of the medical attendant, who also holds the offices of County Surgeon and Medical Officer to the Gaol.

Only male patients have hitherto been detained in this asylum, all female lunatics being sent to the asylum situated on the Hospital Reserve, on the south side of the Hokitika River. The medical officer of the Sea View Asylum reported that of the 23 patients detained there on 30th June, 8 might be considered incurable, whilst of the remaining 15 a large proportion were progressing steadily towards a complete restoration of their faculties. The patients almost without exception are of the labouring class, principally miners, and destitute of any pecuniary resources.

A good deal of work has been done during the half-year by the stronger patients in clearing and digging a piece of ground in the vicinity of the asylum. Under judicious supervision it seems that their labour can be turned to good account both in promoting their bodily and mental health, and in furnishing the asylum with a supply of garden produce which would otherwise have to be purchased. I expect during the ensuing spring to see not a few of the patients take an interest in laying out and cultivating the enclosure attached to the asylum. I mentioned in my report for the half-year ended 31st December, 1870, that although the house accommodation of this asylum is merely a wing of the County Gaol, the lunatics are kept strictly apart from the prisoners. A short-sentence prisoner cleans out the asylum, but he is the only prisoner who is admitted on any pretence whatever to the asylum. I submit, however, that it is very desirable that the asylum should, as soon as possible, be entirely removed from the gaol enclosure. Not unfrequently patients have complained to me of their detention in the gaol. I believe that this important matter is receiving the earnest attention of the County authorities. I am happy to say that since my last report the County Chairman has engaged an experienced attendant, so that the patients are no longer under the care of the gaol warders; though the latter are at hand to render assistance when necessary. The bodily health of the patients during the half-year was generally excellent. One patient died.

The number of patients confined in the asylum on the Hospital Reserve on the 30th of June, 1871, was eight. There were received during the half-year, 4; discharged, 6; died, 1. The average number of patients for the half-year was 8.8. The cost of each patient's maintenance per week was 22s. The accommodation in this asylum remains the same as I reported it to be in January last. I can only repeat that the building is totally unsuitable for the purpose to which it is put, and that there are none of the conveniences which every well-regulated asylum for the insane should possess. I beg to refer you to the remarks I made on this asylum in my last report. Nothing has been altered for the better. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the health of the patients has been good.

The number of patients remaining in the Sunnyside Asylum, in the Province of Canterbury, at the cost of the County of Westland, on the 30th of June, 1871, was 6—all males.

Their weekly maintenance per head amounts to 22s. 6d.

I have, &c.,

G. G. FITZGERALD,  
Inspector of Lunatic Asylums for the County of Westland.

## PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY.

## No. 10.

REPORT OF INSPECTION, Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum, near Christchurch, Canterbury.—

30th May, 1871.

I HAVE much gratification in being able to report that on visiting the above-named asylum for an inspection, I found that preparations were begun by the Provincial Government for the erection of a new and substantial building, in stone, in lieu of the present wooden one. Ample accommodation will thus be provided, on a plan carefully devised beforehand, and suited to the requirements of an establishment of this kind, and to the mode of treatment by which it is hoped to effect the cure of the persons admitted into it. The present building, begun at a time when the public funds could be spared for it in only small and inadequate amounts, and added to from time to time, as emergencies arose, but not on any general systematic plan, is necessarily defective in many respects, and wanting in both room and conveniences. The good management and talent for contriving of the present keeper, Mr. E. W. Seager, has, however, gone far towards supplying a partial remedy for what is wanting in regard to a sound plan of building worked out from the very first. What is now so much needed, as the number of patients will continue to increase with the growth of population, is, abundant room for the more minute classification of the patients according to their different conditions of mental aberration and their progress towards full recovery. It is satisfactory to note that a large quantity of stone for the new building is already stacked on the ground.

Since my previous inspection the dwelling accommodation for the keeper and his family has been increased, and a visitors' room provided, as recommended by me.

In addition to the amusements already provided for the patients, and which seem to contribute in so important a degree to their recovery, an organ has been just erected in the large recreation hall. The acquisition of this instrument, at a moderate cost and within the resources of the asylum, is owing to the exertions of the keeper, and to the kindly interest taken in his work by his brother, Mr. S. H.