

in use, and that in rather more than four years a sewer will pass near or through the Mental Hospital estate at a level which will take all our drainage. I had first thought of a connection with the Arch Hill sewer, but under the circumstances the most reasonable solution is to wait for the sewer designed to take the drainage of the district, and trust to the installation being hastened.

With Dr. Beattie, and Mr. Dodge, of the Public Works Department, I went carefully over the ground on which it is proposed to erect the new buildings suggested in my last report. A survey of the ground was made, which is being cleared and levelled. The site is an excellent one for the purpose, and will afford extensive views from the day-rooms, and large exercise-grounds under easy supervision.

Yesterday, a simple-minded unmarried woman, a recent admission, was delivered of a healthy-looking child, and a similar occurrence took place shortly after my last visit—the mother on that occasion being an unmarried Native. In these cases the mental symptoms became sufficiently pronounced for the women to be brought to the Mental Hospital, and they will thus be afforded protection in the future, but the law is at present powerless to protect many feeble-minded women, who readily succumb to temptation, and whose children become a burden on the State.

I inspected the patients' food and found it well cooked, of good quality, and abundant. The laundry machinery is working well. The institution was in good order. One of the parole patients, who had therein no purpose to serve, volunteered the statement that the patients were well looked after and kindly treated by the staff. The statutory books are up to date.

The patients in the Wolfe Bequest Hospital expressed themselves as contented.

#### CHRISTCHURCH MENTAL HOSPITAL.

21st June, 1911.

I inspected this Mental Hospital on the 18th, 19th, 20th, and to-day. A visit earlier in the year was cut short owing to my having to return to Wellington and proceed to Nelson after Mr. Chapman's death. That visit was not sufficiently complete to report upon separately, but I noted that everything was in smooth working-order. Since then this Hospital has sustained a great loss in the death of Mr. Newport. His memory, I am sure, will long be cherished by both patients and staff. I have every reason to believe that Mr. Harris, his deputy, promoted to be head attendant, will receive the loyal co-operation of the attendants in carrying on the high traditions of the office to which he has succeeded.

On the 19th, in company with Mr. Anderson, of Porirua, and Mr. Rose, Dr. Gow and I went into the engineering requirements of the institution. On these Mr. Anderson will report, keeping in mind the possible electrification of the plant in the future.

On that day there were resident in the Hospital 667 patients (males, 354; females, 313), all of whom were seen and a large number of whom were conversed with during the course of the visit. No rational complaint was made. There are absent on probation 29 patients (m., 21; f., 8). Of the patients resident 7 only (m., 4; f., 3) are classed as suicidal, and 28 (m., 7; f., 21) are classed as dangerous. Though there are large exercise-grounds, the limitations in the way of open-air occupation for women, after making due allowance for other causes, no doubt contributes to the larger relative proportion classed as dangerous. The number of epileptics is 45 (m., 25; f., 20), and the number of general paralytics is 10 (m., 7; f., 3), a small total, but disproportionate with respect to the usual sex incidence in this malady. Two patients only require to be fed, but the number requiring to be assisted to wash and dress is 110 (m., 36; f., 74). Generally this class is comprised of unrecovered patients who have long been in residence and have gradually sunk into dementia, but there have been here and elsewhere numbers of admission of persons in senile dementia. In the case of such persons coming from private houses it may fairly be reasoned that the resources of relatives were at an end, otherwise they would not after long endurance have willingly been parted from a parent or grandparent when the exacerbation of symptoms preluded the end. But a considerable number of such patients have been sent from institutions in which the aged are cared for and where the persons admitted could have continued under care for a very little extra expense. In October last Dr. Gow reported four admissions in one evening from the same Home, and certified three as helpless old people in their dotage. Such people, of course, require special attention, and are no doubt sent to mental hospitals to get it at the cost of the State, and the local rates are saved not only the expense of the care of such persons, but that of extra buildings which would be necessary were they retained, to which buildings, also, others approaching dotage would be admitted. The same robbing of Peter to pay Paul has been experienced in England over the 4s. grant paid to guardians of poor-law unions in respect of the insane poor chargeable to the union maintained in an asylum. Originally started with the laudable desire of having the insane adequately provided for, it soon became evident that the troublesome aged were being transferred from work-houses because, with the assistance of 4s. a week, they could be kept in asylums with less expense to the union. This is perhaps more properly a question for the annual report, but having discussed the admission at one time of three such patients the matter called for some remark.

There are 5 men and 14 women confined to bed, 7 owing to their mental state, 4 who are senile and debilitated, 1 in advanced cardiac disease, 1 epileptic, 1 general paralytic, and the others as a matter of rest for minor complaints, except in the case of another general paralytic who during the visit slipped and fell, fracturing the bones of the left leg above the ankle. The fall was purely accidental, no one being to blame, and in any but a general paralytic would probably not have produced an injury. Dr. Gow and I placed the limb in plaster, and I noticed with approval that he made the event a subject of demonstration to the attendants employed assisting, and that they, by their questions, were keenly interested.

Very few patients are idle—most do something according to their capacity, and many work well. Employed in the garden and on the farm are 165 men, and the result of their labours, though perhaps individually small, is collectively manifested in the good order in which everything is kept. Twenty-five patients have the parole of the grounds, and 14 are permitted to go