

to save his wife from poverty and his children from the consequences of their being children of his and inheriting his peculiarities." Communicated to Dr. Craig by others: "Elizabeth Johnston, wife, informs me that he has been depressed lately; that a few months ago he shot her through the arm as she lay in bed." Dr. Craig expresses the opinion that trouble is due to misfortune and financial worry and the excitement due to the strike, and he considers Johnston suicidal and dangerous.

The preliminary statement as to the mental and bodily condition of the patient on admission was signed by Dr. G. Wishart Will, (then) Assistant Medical Officer. It is dated 16th December, and is as follows: "His mental condition confirms the statements made in the certificates. He is despondent and depressed; admits having shot at his wife some time ago, and says that he did so to save her from poverty; says the act was premeditated, and he feels no regret for it; says that some years ago he was hypnotized by a man who subsequently married his mother. No evidence of *petit mal* has yet been obtained. He is in fairly good bodily health and condition. There are no signs of organic disease of the viscera. His face is of a degenerate type. Reflexes are active. There is a scar of a bullet-wound (both entrance and exit) on the right thigh immediately above the knee. This was received at the Waihi riots. There are no evidences that he is suffering from active communicable disease, and no signs of recent injury."

The law requires a second notice of the mental and bodily condition to be sent within fourteen days. This notice, signed by Dr. R. M. Beattie, the Medical Superintendent, and dated 29th December, is as follows: "I, —, hereby certify, with respect to mental state, he is probably sane; and with respect to bodily health and condition, he is in good health and condition."

The Medical Superintendent has the power to discharge any patient whose detention as a mentally defective person is no longer necessary, either for his own good or in the public interest (section 85 (1) (12)); but I can understand any one not acting immediately upon his own opinion and without further observation or making further inquiry in a case like this, where it was alleged that the patient was homicidal, suicidal, and epileptic, and where the certificates were apparently so unequivocal.

On the 4th January, 1913, Johnston escaped. He remained at large until the 14th February, when he was permitted to be absent on a month's leave, and he was discharged on the 15th March under section 80 (5).

23rd August, 1913.

FRANK HAY.

## POLICE REPORT.

SIR,—

Police Department, Wellington, 26th September, 1913.

With reference to the petitions of T. H. Johnston and his wife, Elizabeth Johnston, relative to the former's committal to the Avondale Mental Hospital, I beg to report as follows:—

Johnston first came under the notice of the police shortly after starting work at the Waihi mines. For some days before the 12th November, 1912 (on which date he was shot in the leg during the disturbances in connection with the miners' strike), he was observed going about in a very excitable state, and it was he, Harvey "the Cockney," and Foster who first entered the Miners' Hall when the shooting took place there. After being shot he was removed to the Waihi Hospital, where he was placed under chloroform and the bullet removed, and was discharged after about three weeks. He was subsequently subpoenaed as a witness in some cases arising out of the strike, and the evidence he gave was fairly clear and connected. He appeared, however, to be a highly strung, nervous man, and it was noticeable that his self-control grew less as the cases proceeded. He was also a witness at the inquest of F. G. Evans (a striker who died of injuries received during the strike disturbance), and under cross-examination he reached such an emotional condition that he appeared likely to break down, and an interval was allowed for him to collect himself.

On the 2nd December he went voluntarily to the police-station at Waihi, and, in the presence of Sergeant Wohlmänn and Detective-Sergeant Cooney and other police officers, made a statement to the following effect:—

"My father is dead. He was a chemist in Melbourne and a very able man—so clever that he made a fortune and retired when about thirty-five years of age. He was a very delicate, epileptic, nervous man. He died when thirty-five (I think), leaving several sons and daughters. I inherit my father's weaknesses, and of all our family most closely resemble him. I could not get on with my brothers and sisters, and left home young. My mother is a haughty, selfish woman. I am epileptic too. Sometimes when I am walking along a fit will come on me, but I have a very strong will, and by fixing my eyes on some object ahead and by force of will I can walk straight onward so that any one passing me would not know that I was under an attack. I suffer much from sleeplessness; often I do not sleep for nights. On leaving Australia I came to New Zealand. One day while I was at work I got an impression, a warning, all was not well at home. I knew I was wanted at home, so I immediately ceased work and took the first boat for Melbourne. On arrival I found a man, an adventurer, was courting my mother; he wanted to marry her for her money. My brothers, sisters, and I made up our minds we would frustrate his designs, but he was too strong for us. He hypnotized all of us. I was completely under his control, and he made me do as he liked. He married my mother. Shortly afterwards I met my present wife in Melbourne. I had known her but a few weeks when I proposed to her, and we were married. I was still under hypnotic influence when I married, and it took my wife