

1927.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(REPORTS OF THE).

(MR. GIRLING, CHAIRMAN.)

Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

THURSDAY, THE 14TH DAY OF JULY, 1927.

Ordered, "That a Select Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to consider all matters relating to public health, infectious diseases, contagious diseases, hospitals, and to local authorities having charge of these matters, and to such other matters affecting public health as may be referred to it; to have power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Bell, the Hon. Mr. Buddo, Mr. Girling, Mr. H. Holland, Mr. Horn, Mr. W. Jones, Mr. Parry, Mr. Reid, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. YOUNG.)

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REPORTS.

No. 190.—Petition of ROBERT MARTIN BEATTIE, of Auckland.

PRAYING for inquiry into the administration of mental hospitals.

I am directed to report that the Health Committee, after having sat and taken extensive evidence over a period of seven days, including three afternoons and two evenings, and a visit of inspection to the Porirua Mental Hospital, has given most careful consideration to the petition of Dr. R. M. Beattie relative to the administration of mental hospitals in the Dominion, and praying for a Commission of Inquiry in that connection, and is of opinion, after a most searching inquiry, that nothing was brought out to warrant the prayer of the petitioner being acceded to. On the contrary, voluminous and convincing evidence which was tendered to the Committee showed that from the moment Dr. Beattie was relieved of his charge at the Auckland Mental Hospital marked improvements were effected in the care and treatment of the patients; that the staff was not only strengthened to a point of sufficiency and efficiency, but that the relationship between the members of the staff and the administration were placed on a footing of good will and mutual confidence; and that extensive improvements were made in the hygienic conditions generally of the buildings. The Committee therefore reports as follows:—

1. That in regard to the petition it has no recommendation to make.
2. That it desires to place on record that it is of opinion—

(a) That the letter of the Hon. Minister of Health (Sir Maui Pomare) of the 9th March, 1925, addressed to Dr. Beattie, on the subject of the organization of the mental hospitals in general, and of the Avondale Institution in particular, was fully justified.