

Inebriates should have rooms apart from those occupied by the other inmates, with whom they ought not to associate in their daily life, nor even be allowed to come into contact, except on the invitation and in the presence of some of the officers of the institution. I should not be understood to include in the class "inebriates" those who are accustomed to be temporarily maddened by a drunken debauch, nor those who are under a passing delirium as the result of a more prolonged excess in alcohol. I would be understood to mean only the dipsomaniac proper, who has periodic cravings for over-indulgence in alcohol which he is utterly unable to resist, and for the cure of which morbid appetite it is necessary to place him for some time beyond reach of temptation and under appropriate medical treatment.

In conclusion, I beg to state my conviction that the establishment of such an Asylum home for middle-class insane persons of small means would be a great boon to many living outside the district or Province in which it was placed, and under careful and judicious management would soon become a self-supporting institution.

E. PALEY.

APPENDIX 1.—E.

SUNNYSIDE ASYLUM, CHRISTCHURCH, CANTERBURY.

On the 26th of August, the 30th of September, and on the 1st of October, 1872, I visited and made official inspection of this Asylum.

I saw all the patients, 116 in number, viz. 78 men and 38 women. At the time of my visit the staff consisted of 1 keeper, 1 matron, 1 clerk, 6 male attendants, 3 female attendants, and 1 cook.

The various rooms and airing grounds occupied by the patients were minutely examined, as also were the kitchen, stores, and several offices of the Asylum.

The patients generally were neat as to dress and person, and there was no undue excitement amongst them; but the space available for them throughout the Asylum was manifestly insufficient, and nearly every dormitory was very much overcrowded with beds. It is satisfactory, however, to report that provision was being made for increased accommodation by putting up a substantial building of concrete, to which, when finished, it was proposed to draft the female patients, many of whom could then be usefully employed in the laundry, which was also in course of erection. The rooms vacated by the female patients will be occupied by the men until the male division of the new building is fit for use, when they will be transferred in turn, and the existing Asylum will no longer be required for its present purposes.

I would strongly recommend that certain of the more substantial and comfortable parts only of this structure be retained for future use, and that the remainder be taken down as soon as possible. It seems to me that the front rooms might, at very little expense, be made comfortable for middle-class private patients, and that separate accommodation might also be found for patients of the "inebriate" class. But I do not advise that a large number of patients be again collected in a building which, in spite of all care, is liable at any time to be destroyed by fire, for I believe that, in such an event, many of the inmates must inevitably lose their lives.

With regard to the staff of attendants, I am of opinion the numbers should be increased by two men and two women; and I think when the new laundry is opened, a laundress should be appointed to manage it. At present the female attendants overlook the laundry work, and I venture to suggest that it would be better to make this a separate duty, and to confine the services of the attendants to the personal charge of their patients.

In the course of my inspection I was much struck with the varied means of amusement provided for the patients, and with the ingenuity of the keeper in bringing so many resources to bear in this desirable direction. I would recommend that every help and encouragement be given in this matter; and I cordially indorse the opinion of the Inspector, as given in his report of 26th June, 1872, "that numerous expeditions to a distance from the Asylum have done much to improve the mental condition of those who were on their way towards recovery."

I was informed that an average of 70 patients attended Divine service; about 76 were generally able to take part in recreation; and 55 were employed in miscellaneous works about the grounds and buildings.

In connection with the new building, I think it would be found advantageous to have a working plan prepared for laying out the grounds and approaches, so that the work of planting, &c., might be commenced without loss of time; and it would be a great comfort to the invalid and infirm patients if they were provided with easy garden seats in shady spots in various parts of the enclosure.

An examination of the different kinds of food used in the Asylum satisfied me that the quality was good; and seeing the dinner served in some of the wards, I considered the quantity of provisions abundant, and that they were cooked with care.

The medical service of the Asylum is performed by a gentleman living in Christchurch, who visits every day, or more frequently in case of need; and I was informed that any medical extras ordered for sick or feeble patients were freely supplied to them.

Several valuable suggestions which have been offered by the Inspector (Mr. Hamilton) have