

or patients selling for their own benefit goods or farm produce belonging to the institution." This evidently refers to something which occurred during my last holiday. A patient disposed of some vegetables owing to the negligence of the man who then had charge of the garden, and whose removal from that position by me has been strongly criticised.

Charge 7.—"That Dr. Truby King has been guilty of gross abuse of power by improperly causing attendants to be locked-up." I have never on any occasion either authorised or ordered attendants to be locked-up.

Charge 8.—"That Dr. Truby King has conducted the Seacliff Asylum in such a manner as to be injurious to residents in the neighbourhood."

No complaint of injury or annoyance has ever been made to me by any resident in the neighbourhood. I know on the contrary that the Asylum is regarded as a great boon to the district, quite apart from the fact that for several miles round Seacliff the inhabitants have the advantage of free medical attendance in all cases of serious illness. The best spirit has always prevailed between us and our neighbours, and I feel greatly indebted to them for the sensible kindly manner in which they mingle with the patients at our various entertainments and dances, and for the hospitalities they dispense towards patients allowed out on parole. They have long since got over the prejudice which I understand existed when the Asylum was first established here—a prejudice founded upon a very common misconception, and one which agitators have recently tried with no great success to rekindle. Dr. Mercier ("Sanity and Insanity," Scott, 1890), says: "The usual conception that the laity have of a lunatic is somewhat as follows: He is usually raving, shouting at the top of his voice, and smashing the furniture; when not in this state, he is controlling himself, and in the plenitude of his cunning—for he is no lunatic if not cunning—he is lulling the surrounding people into a sense of false security, until he can get a convenient opportunity of cutting their throats; instead of a hat he wears straw in his hair, speaks of himself in the third person, and talks in ingenious and complicated parables. . . . Having now spent many years in daily and hourly contact with the insane, the one fact about them which continually impresses me with more and more conviction is the wonderfully little difference that there is between them and other people."

Exception has been taken to my dispensing with the services of a rabbitier and giving a patient the work to do. The fact is that the patient working alone caught many more rabbits than the rabbitier did when assisted by the same patient. The insane man delivered nearly four times as many rabbits to the Asylum as the two men had produced previously. (*Vide Appendix Z.*)

Charge 9. "That Dr. Truby King has been guilty of cruelty to patients by allowing them to be worked under improper conditions." I cannot conceive what this refers to.

Charge 10. "That Dr. Truby King has issued orders by which patients were left without sufficient attendance." I am probably the better judge as to what constitutes sufficient attendance.

Penultimate paragraph.—The meaning of the first part I have no clue to. The latter portion, that an "attendant has been dismissed simply for giving a truthful answer to a question," can only refer to ex-attendant John Buchanan, who was dismissed for very aggravated falsehoods. A misconception appears to have arisen through a compassionate allowance, which was granted to this man on account of his crippled condition and long service, being interpreted as compensation for wrongful discharge. A list of all dismissals for the last two years and a half, with reasons therefor, is appended. (*Appendix ZA.*)

In conclusion, I would simply state that the various charges made against the Asylum and myself, taken as a whole, have been directly contrary to the truth. The wild stories of a few spiteful men have been eagerly accepted, and though it is possible that Mr. Kitchen really believed much of what he heard against the Asylum, he certainly never troubled to verify statements, and kept himself wilfully in the dark. The only names he produced were those of Emerson and Captain Stewart, and it should surely have suggested itself to him that possibly the others who did not wish to appear might have been even less reliable. As a matter of fact, the principal agitators were a few ex-officials who had been dismissed, a few discredited employés, and two or three settlers in the district who sympathised with these. It is worthy of remark that, while they and their supporters have been straining every nerve to demoralise the staff and disorganize the Asylum, everything here has been going on almost as smoothly and quietly as usual. As I have said before, the petty excitements of sensational articles have diverted attention from more useful trains of thought, and much time and energy have been wasted, but so far as the Asylum itself is concerned, little more can be said. On the public a harmful effect must have been produced. The ravings about rapes and homicides cannot but have alarmed timid people, and assertions about starving and ill-treating patients can scarcely have been reassuring to the friends of patients.

I have, &c.,

F. TRUBY KING.

The Hon. A. J. Cadman, Minister of Native Affairs, Wellington.