

We will do what we can for him, and I think it would be wiser and fairer if you trusted to us rather than give credence to his complaints.

He did, by the way, speak to me about carpentry and gardening, and I promised him that I would arrange to give him something to do in due course in these directions.

My relationship with him has been most amicable and friendly, and he has never given me any indication that he felt aggrieved or discontented in regard to the institution.

Yours, &c.,

F. TRUBY KING,
Medical Superintendent.

—, Esq., Erewhon.

When examined next day by Dr. Alexander and myself, the patient confirmed everything stated in my letter as to health, sleep, the taking of medicine, &c. When confronted with what he was alleged to have written, he was much disconcerted, and said repeatedly, "It is all a mistake. I came here under the impression that I was to be treated by injections and cured in a few weeks." He continued, "We were assured that you had cured several persons in that way. The medical treatment you have given me is not what I understood by 'treatment.' I would not have come had I known that I was not to have injections." Further, he volunteered that he had received every attention and kindness, and said that his brother had not been warranted in writing as he had done, that his letters had been misinterpreted and distorted; and, finally, that he insisted on my seeing them "because you have treated me like a gentleman, and I should not like you to think so badly of me." However, when asked by Dr. Alexander to sign a telegram the next day asking for the letters to be returned he became indignant, swore, asked what right Dr. King had to see his private correspondence, and refused absolutely to satisfy my "curiosity."

Certain defamatory newspaper articles, written by two ex-patients, call for passing notice. The statements contained in the articles reflected especially on the Manager, but as I have already conclusively shown you they were as baseless as the charges referred to in the foregoing letter. I should have liked to publish a short refutation in detail in this report, but defer to the opinion of the authorities that this is quite unnecessary on account of the obvious rancour and the limited moral responsibility of the authors. However, I give in Appendix A extracts from two letters written by these malcontents before the management incurred their hostility. The principal complaint made referred to the fact of some patients from Seacliff Asylum being employed on the estate, and a few employees being drawn from Sunnyside and Seacliff. As to the desirability or otherwise of selecting some employees from tried members of our asylum staffs, and of utilising asylum labour in pioneering work in such a case, I have no doubt whatever. The asylum patient whom one can select for such work is not only harmless and unobtrusive, but is on the whole a much more capable worker than the average alcoholic. The small party of some fifteen Seacliff patients have done willingly and with zest more to improve the estate in eighteen months than could be effected by the whole of the inebriate population at Orokonui in ten years. Their withdrawal means that more paid labour will have to be employed in future at the public expense if any active progress at all is to be made in the way of developing the estate and its resources.

I have clearly shown you that the inebriate patients themselves nearly all recognised the advantage of having the Seacliff party at Orokonui, and were very friendly to them. Even when one or two of their number worked the "insane element" as a platform, they failed to evoke any general enthusiasm for their grievance in the Home itself.

The quarters of the Seacliff patients were quite sufficiently remote from the Home building, and no intercommunication or mixing was in the slightest degree necessary. However, we decided that it was expedient to remove all ground for anxiety by transferring the Seacliff patients back to the Asylum when we found that a few malcontents were succeeding in causing alarm among their friends and relations. Nothing is easier than to make a successful appeal to popular misconceptions about asylums and the insane.

For my own part, I cannot say how strongly I feel the injustice and cruelty of the opprobrium which even well-meaning people are inclined to attach to the idea of insanity. If, of his own volition, a person has brought himself to almost any conceivable pitch of degradation through the vice of drinking, it may be felt by the public that his course of life has been reprehensible, but it is, at least, respectable, and he should be the subject of our most tender concern and solicitude. If, on the contrary, through fever or any other bodily sickness, or through the stress of motherhood, poverty, or grief, the reasoning faculties should have become clouded, it is permissible to regard our less fortunate fellow-being as a pariah; and it is not even bad form for a demoralised inebriate to scornfully apply the epithet "lunatic," and beg protection from possible contamination. The great majority of the insane are not the pitiable creatures they are supposed to be; they still have most of the qualities we any of us possess more or less intact, and by their very disabilities they appeal to any human being who is capable of feeling at all. Nor are the people who enter the asylum service as a rule rendered hard and callous by their calling. There are black sheep everywhere in the world, but, as a class, I have no hesitation in saying that I know no more considerate or humane men and women than those who attend on the insane. There can be no greater misconception than the assumption, recently given utterance to in public, that employees are selected simply on account of physical strength. Nothing can be further from the truth.

It was fortunate for the patients sent to Orokonui that I could select attendants from tried members of our staff at Seacliff, and I can say with some pride that, in spite of many trials of patience and temper, not one of our men has discredited himself throughout the whole period during which the Home has been opened, and we have managed to avoid resorting to any of the punishments which the law entitled us to enforce with regard to the inmates.

The difficulty of inducing the male patients to work would have been insuperable if I had not been more than loyally helped and supported throughout by Dr. Allen, whose devotion and zeal in this, as in the rest of his work, have been beyond all praise. I have, indeed, been singularly fortunate in having associated with me two colleagues of the capability and untiring energy of Dr. Allen and Dr. Alexander. For the last two months the main work at the Home has devolved on Dr. Alexander, and I wish that, for the sake of the institution, he could have been