

immediately he is released, by men who count themselves his friends, and we have had the same experience in connection with the Home for Inebriates. If the persons guilty of such crimes were ordinary criminals, their offence would not be so unthinkable; but what amazes one is to find that they are often simply easy-going, good-natured people who do not realise that they are doing anything specially wrong. The men who offer to bet £5 that they will make their comrade, who has conquered his vice, drink again are not necessarily cruel people in the ordinary acceptation, indeed they are usually the reverse. Their fault is thoughtlessness and the densest ignorance.

In the way of prevention we cannot hope to cope successfully with inebriety as a disease until it is thoroughly realised by the public how grave and incurable the malady is when once established; and until it is further generally recognised and admitted that the man who takes drink to excess commits a disgraceful act, while the man who tempts another—especially a drunkard—to exceed, is a criminal.

I have, &c.,

F. TRUBY KING,
Medical Superintendent.

APPENDIX A.

1. Copy of letter from an ex-patient at Orokonui Home to an acquaintance. This letter was returned to the Superintendent by the lady to whom it was written:—

MY DEAR MISS ———,—

The Inebriate Home, Waitati, 12th June, 1902

In the first place, let me state that what I was afraid would prove a penitentiary or prison, with perhaps one or two of the worst penal features chamfered off, in actuality turns out to be a “home” in nearly every acceptation of the term.

Our table is excellently supplied, the sleeping accommodation quite equal to that of the best hotels, while the scenic or landscape views on all sides of the Home are simply charming. In a word, I feel myself more at rest and settled in mind and body than I ever hoped to be again.

* * * * *

I trust most devoutly that this will find you happy, and well in health. My own is excellent, thanks to kindly nursing, salubrious air, a good table, and regular hours and habits. We have plenty of outdoor work and exercise; a little boating and fishing; a capital billiard-room and table; a first-class piano, and occasional singing; and, in fine, everything conducive to health and contentment. Kindly remember me to A., and Messrs. B. and C., and believe me to remain,

Yours, &c.,

2. Copy of paragraph printed in a Christchurch newspaper at the New Year, 1903. This paragraph was extracted by a journalist from a private letter which he received from an inmate of the Home, and was not intended by the writer for publication. It was written at the end of a five-months sojourn in the Home:—

“There is a mixed crew here—a parson, a J.P., a doctor, a Customhouse officer (pensioner), and others. The place is everything that the most difficult to please should approve, and better calculated to keep a fellow from drink or to cure him than all or any means ever I heard of before.”

The special interest attaching to the two foregoing extracts is the fact that they were written by the very persons who subsequently published defamatory articles concerning the Orokonui Home.

APPENDIX B.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE INEBRIATES ACT OF 1898.

1. I consider the existing Inebriates Act specially needs amending in the direction of providing for patients leaving the Home on probation. This was possible under section 48 of “The Lunatics Act, 1882,” referring to habitual drunkards, but is not allowed in any way in the special Inebriates Act of 1898, under which the Orokonui Home was established. The only means available for getting away from the Home (except for a few days as provided for in the authorised rules and regulations) is by an absolute rescission of the committal order by a Magistrate, and then the authorities cease to have any hold whatever over the patient. Such a position is unfortunate, because a considerable number of cases arise in which it is desirable, in the interests of the patient and his family, that he should return home before the completion of the term originally stipulated, and yet where it is extremely important that he should not feel himself free to resume drinking habits with impunity. In such cases, before lending any countenance to the rescission of the order, I have been in the habit of obtaining from the patient and his friends a form of undertaking engaging to apply for recommittal to the Home for twelve months should there be any relapse prior to the date