

1884.
—
VICTORIA.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON ASYLUMS FOR THE
INSANE AND INEBRIATE.

FIRST PROGRESS REPORT.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.

By Authority:
JOHN FERRES, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

*Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Ireland QUEEN, Defender of the Faith:*

*To our trusty and well-beloved EPHRAIM LAMEN ZOx, Esquire, M.P.;
the Honorable ROBERT DYCE REID, M.P.; the Honorable
DAVID CHAPLIN STERRY, M.L.C.; HENRY BELL, Esquire, M.P.;
DAVID MORTIMER DAVIES, Esquire, M.P.; CHARLES MYLES
OFFICER, Esquire, M.P.; CUTHBERT ROBERT BLACKETT, Esquire,
J.P.; and ROBERT ELWALL JACOMB, Esquire:*

GREETING :

*Whereas the Administrator of the Government of our Colony of Victoria, with the
advice of the Executive Council thereof, has deemed it expedient that a Royal Commission
should forthwith issue for the purposes hereinafter mentioned: Now know ye that we,
reposing great trust and confidence in your zeal, discretion, and ability, have constituted
and appointed and by these presents do constitute and appoint you the said EPHRAIM
LAMEN ZOx, ROBERT DYCE REID, DAVID CHAPLIN STERRY, HENRY BELL, DAVID
MORTIMER DAVIES, CHARLES MYLES OFFICER, CUTHBERT ROBERT BLACKETT, and
ROBERT ELWALL JACOMB, to be Commissioners for the purposes following, that is to
say: To inquire into and report upon the state and condition of Asylums for the Insane
and Inebriate, both public and private; the mode of management and supervision; the
remedial treatment and its results; the classification of the inmates; the policy of
continuing large metropolitan institutions; the advisability of licensing patients to
private individuals; the due classification of the imbecile and the insane; the proper
position of medical officers in relation to the system of management; the special qualifi-
cations necessary for all officers and employés before appointment; the mode of their
appointment; the system of official visitation and inspection; the mode of obtaining
supplies; and to further report generally on any and every matter which to you
Commissioners may appear important and desirable. And we do by these presents give
and grant unto you, or any three or more of you, full power and authority to call
before you such person or persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information
upon the subject of this our Commission, and to inquire of and concerning the premises
by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever: And we will and command, and by
these presents ordain, that this our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue,
and that you our Commissioners, or any three or more of you, shall and may from
time to time proceed in the execution thereof and of every matter and thing therein
contained, although your proceedings be not continued from time to time by adjournment:
And we do hereby appoint you the said EPHRAIM LAMEN ZOx to be the Chairman of this
our Commission: And for your assistance in the due execution of this our Commission
we do hereby appoint E. C. MARTIN, Esquire, to be Secretary to you our Commissioners,
and to attend you, and his services we require you to use from time to time as occasion
may require: And lastly, we direct that you do, with as little delay as possible, report
to us under your hands and seals your opinions resulting from the said inquiry:
In testimony whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent, and the seal
of our said Colony to be hereunto affixed.*

*Witness our trusty and well-beloved the Honorable Sir
WILLIAM FOSTER STAWELL, Knight, the Chief Justice
of our Colony of Victoria, and Administrator of the
Government of the said Colony, &c., &c., &c., at
Melbourne, the seventh day of May, One thousand
eight hundred and eighty-four, and in the forty-seventh
year of our reign.*

W. F. STAWELL,

L.S.

*By His Excellency's Command,
GRAHAM BERRY.*

ENTERED on Record by me in the Register of Patents Book 22, page 179, this seventh day of May, One thousand eight hundred and eighty-four.

J. R. WILSON.

FIRST PROGRESS REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ASYLUMS FOR THE INSANE.

To His Excellency Sir Henry Brougham Loch, Knight Commander of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Victoria and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

Since we entered upon the inquiry confided to us by your immediate predecessor, Sir William Foster Stawell, Knight, as set forth in the Commission prefacing this Report, several important matters have come under our attention; and, after due consideration, we have arrived at the conclusion that it would be inexpedient to defer dealing with them until the date arrives when we can present our final Report, as the matters we propose to bring under Your Excellency's notice are of an urgent nature, and demand speedy adjustment.

We may observe that many of the matters comprised within the scope of our Commission had, prior to our instructions, formed the subject of inquiry by Select Committees and Boards, and the Reports of these bodies have been utilized by us. In making this acknowledgment, we wish to say that it is not only our intention to avail ourselves to the fullest possible extent of the valuable information contained in such Reports and other official records, but we desire to do the bare justice of saying that the gentlemen who have preceded us in this field of usefulness have left behind them a rich fund of information and valuable thought, which it would be both ungracious and unwise to ignore.

It is not our intention to attempt to prove, by further formal inquiry, what most reasonable people will regard as already proved, and where it is possible we intend to profit by the work already done. We see before us a new and large field for useful labour, where our energies will be taxed to the fullest extent, and we take this opportunity of saying that we shall have no appetite for the work unless we are encouraged by practical effect being given to the recommendations we are about to make. Some of the subjoined suggestions have been made before, while others, as far as we know, are entirely new.

The recommendations made by former Boards and Committees, and now presented afresh, have been adopted, and are endorsed by us with as much sincerity as if the ideas had emanated from ourselves. With regard to the proposed new departure, we are no less confident; and as we have the assurance of the Government that our suggestions shall be embodied in a Bill, we are emboldened to hope that our labours will be followed by practical results, and that this document will not share the fate that has overtaken the Reports of too many Royal Commissions in this country.

The proposals we have to submit for the consideration of Your Excellency are as follow:—

THE MASTER-IN-LUNACY'S OFFICE.

We directed our attention, in the first instance, to the mode in which the business of this office was conducted. We examined the Master-in-Lunacy, the chief

clerk in Lunacy, the assistant clerk, and other witnesses. The result of the evidence taken may be summarized thus:—The office of the Master-in-Lunacy has been in a state of disorganization ever since the end of the first year of its creation. The officers, past and present, have quarrelled almost incessantly, the work of the office has been continuously neglected, and the revenue, according to all the witnesses, from the Master downwards, has suffered to the extent of thousands of pounds—how many thousands it would be very difficult to say. The evidence also shows that the officers under the Master have been left pretty much to their own devices, any controlling power exercised being purely nominal when it was not spasmodic. We also learned, from the evidence, that instructions issued by the Attorney-General, to the effect that the various asylums should be visited by an officer from the Lunacy office for the purpose of discovering property belonging to patients in the asylums, and looking after the payment of maintenance moneys, were at first only obeyed in a perfunctory manner, and then continuously disregarded, though the attention of the Master was called to the fact that the instructions in question had been set aside. Attention was directed to the neglect by one of the Audit Commissioners in a very pointed manner, but to no purpose. We have discovered that returns of arrears of maintenance, ordered to be prepared and furnished every month to the Attorney-General, were unreliable and practically worthless. Items of arrears, regarded by the officers as bad debts, were omitted from such lists of arrears without the knowledge of the Attorney-General, for whose information they were prepared, and without the knowledge or consent of the Master. Even these lists, unreliable as they were, had not, at the time of our inquiry, been prepared for several years, though no permission had been given to discontinue them. In another case, we found that a return ordered by Parliament was answered by two documents, in which there were very wide discrepancies as to the arrears of maintenance. No satisfactory explanation was afforded us as to why two such contradictory documents were prepared.

This evidence disclosed to us that not only was the Master-in-Lunacy's office in a state of disorganization, but that the simplest rules of discipline were entirely disregarded. For this state of things the Master-in-Lunacy is primarily responsible.

He was the permanent head of the department, and as long as he bore the responsibility of the office he should have exercised effective control. But we cannot avoid the conclusion that is forced upon us, much to our regret, that the lax and weak-handed control—or rather, all absence of control—was the result of the Master's complaint that the office had been thrust upon him, that it was distasteful to him, and was one for which he did not receive a "penny piece." It is not our business to inquire whether it was impolitic or wrong on the part of the Government of the day to impose such an office as that of Master-in-Lunacy on the Master-in-Equity for the time being without his consent, and without giving him additional emolument to that already secured to him under Schedule D. The then Government may have given the Master-in-Equity cause for complaint. But a gentleman holding an exalted position, and in receipt of £1,500 a year, was not justified in discharging a public duty in such an unwilling manner that the State suffered serious loss, and his office became a reproach to the Public Service. Public men in similar posts of honour and responsibility to that enjoyed by the Master-in-Lunacy discharge laborious and onerous duties for which they get no pay, and the fact that this duty was forced on the present Master does not relieve him from any responsibility the enforced duty entailed, or entitle him to be judged by a common standard that might be applied to persons in lower walks of life,

where money alone is the measure of service. It seems to us that Mr. Wilkinson should have discharged the duties first, and sought his remedy afterwards, if he had a real grievance.

The fact remains that the Master-in-Lunacy's office is, and has been, in a state of disorganization, and we can see no way to cure its disorders. We, therefore, propose that it shall be abolished, as at present constituted, by an alteration in the law, and suggest that the Attorney-General shall have conferred upon him the power to appoint some competent person to discharge the purely judicial functions pertaining to the office of Master-in-Lunacy, that the care of patients' property be handed over to the Curator of Intestate Estates, and that the collection of moneys for the maintenance of patients be entrusted to the Superintendents of the various asylums. The judicial duties pertaining to the office of the Master-in-Lunacy are light, and, as there should be a proportionate relation between the emoluments of the office and the results achieved, it is absolutely necessary that rigid economy should be exercised. The care of patients' property is one that is germane to the office of the Curator of Intestate Estates, and could be exercised for a percentage that would not press heavily on the medium or subject of operation. The collection of moneys could be effected by the officers of the various asylums for a small percentage—though a percentage large enough to act as a stimulus to those made responsible for such collections. Under such a system, we think the collections could be largely increased, while the whole cost of collection need not exceed that at present incurred.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

We further urge that a clause should be passed giving this Commission power to frame rules and regulations for the control, management, and general government of lunatic asylums and lunatics throughout the colony, such rules and regulations to have the force of law when sanctioned by the Governor in Council—the Governor in Council to have power to alter, amend, or rescind the same from time to time. It is hardly necessary to say anything in support of this proposal. According to a report furnished to us by the Inspector of Asylums, extensive alterations are required in the present rules and regulations. While it is necessary that such rules and regulations should have the force of law, in order to secure obedience and respect to their provisions, being framed for the domestic government of a benevolent institution, they are not of a character demanding the time and attention of the Legislature. We need say nothing further in support of the request we make to be armed with power to frame a set of bye-laws for the better government of these institutions, except to point out that the granting of such power is general, and by no means new. In the Report of the Commissioners on Irish Asylums 1857-8, the following paragraph appears:—

“ Among the provisions of 1 & 2 Geo. IV, c. 33, the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council were empowered by section 5 ‘to make frame and establish, or upon the suggestion and recommendation of the commissioners for general control and correspondence to adopt and authorize, any rules and regulations for the good conduct and management of district asylums in general or any asylum in particular.’ This most important measure for securing the good government of these institutions appears to have been imperfectly carried out for several years. On the completion of the Armagh district asylum, in 1825, an Order in Council was issued, directing the commissioners to prepare rules and regulations which were to comprise an exact account of the patients, from whence removed, and also a form of admission, and to submit the same to the Privy Council. The task of preparing rules the commissioners appear to have performed, but they deferred submitting them to the Privy Council for their approval until they had been tried by the governors of the asylums. Nothing confirmatory of these rules was passed by the Council, and it was not till 1843 that general rules and regulations for the government of lunatic asylums were formally approved by them.”

THAT THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENTS OF ASYLUMS BE PARAMOUNT.

We have a large body of evidence in favour of so altering the law that the Medical Superintendent of each asylum shall be invested with the power to punish, dismiss, and engage warders, attendants, and servants. On the 24th October, 1861, the following resolution was put and carried in the Assembly:—

“That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the management of the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum and the treatment of the lunatics in the Melbourne gaols; such committee to consist of Mr. Bennett, Mr. O’Shanassy, Mr. W. A. Brodribb, Dr. Hedley, Mr. Heales, Mr. McLellan, Mr. Flint, Mr. Berry, Mr. Weeks, and the mover (Mr. Don), with power to call for persons and papers; three to form a quorum; and that the evidence taken before committees of the Assembly, and ordered to be printed last session, be referred to the said committee—put and resolved in the affirmative.”

Mr. J. S. Johnston and Mr. Gillespie were subsequently added to the committee. On the 14th May, 1862, the committee sent in their Report. Amongst other recommendations, the Report contained the following significant and valuable paragraph on this subject:—

“That the following answers to questions, taken from the Earl of Shaftesbury’s evidence before a select committee of the House of Commons, in the year 1859, not only strengthens the opinion of Dr. Stilwell, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Bowie, and other medical witnesses who disapproved of a uniform scale of diet in the treatment of the insane, but they also point out the inexpediency of allowing non-resident physicians to interfere with the management of lunatic asylums:—‘Considering the most serious and solemn responsibility connected with the governing power in an asylum, the medical superintendent ought to be lord paramount, and be able to order what he pleases for the patients with regard to diet, clothing, and general care, and in the adaptation of their rooms; he should have the nomination of all the attendants, with power to appoint them and to dismiss them—and there ought to be no appeal from him. A visiting physician could only come in occasionally, and if he does come in it is only to interfere with the system. I do not think that a visiting physician would in the least relieve the labours of the medical superintendent, but it would tend very much to impede his course of treatment, and certainly not a little to lighten his responsibility.’”

Following this important and authoritatively endorsed recommendation, we have the emphatic dictum of the Kew Board, that sat in 1876. The value of the recommendation of this body can hardly be over-estimated. The members of the Board were Messrs. Mackay, Crews, and Templeton. They sat for about twelve months, and took a large body of evidence, the major part of which related to the conduct of warders and attendants, and matters of discipline; and in their carefully-prepared Report they say:—“The Board insist on the necessity for making the Medical Superintendent supreme—giving him power to engage and dismiss.”

The Sunbury Board (1883) do not directly make any recommendation on this head, but they indirectly make it very clear what their views are on the point. They say:—

“The official records of their service (the attendants) tell us how some of them drink persistently, ill-treat the patients, disobey orders, and how they are fined, admonished, threatened, and promoted. Failures in life, they are placed and maintained here by their political friends. If a punishment is awarded, the usual official channel of appeal is ignored, and the Minister of the Department directly applied to. The success that has attended these appeals, persistently urged upon successive Ministers, has undermined discipline, and to it chiefly is due the existing spirit of disorganization. The attendants neglect the patients, plot and tell tales about each other, which, unfortunately, sometimes receive attention.”

It is only just to Mr. Berry to say that he asserts that he has always punished persons who have so offended.

As we interpret the paragraph quoted from the report of the Sunbury Board, it means that the attendants who thus rebel should be placed under the power and

authority of the person who is made responsible for the good government of the institution under his control; and who, without effective authority and power, can only be a nominal head. To place the matter beyond a doubt, the Board further say:—

“Evidence discloses that, in every lunatic asylum in the colony, there is at the present time a percentage—not so large as at Sunbury—of unsuitable attendants, whom the management find it impossible to displace.”

In another paragraph, the Board write:—

“The Board recommend that future appointments of attendants to this asylum be made from candidates recommended by the medical superintendent as possessing the necessary qualifications, and approved by the Inspector of Asylums. The Board consider that so long as the medical superintendent of this asylum is held responsible for its efficient management, he should be entrusted with greater powers in dealing with the offences of his attendants, subject in all cases to appeal to the Board of Visitors.”

The Board of Visitors for the metropolitan asylums also make a strong recommendation in favour of investing the Medical Superintendent with supreme power over attendants, and the Medical Society of Victoria entertain a similar opinion. Dr. Dick (Inspector of Asylums in Victoria), Dr. Norton Manning (Inspector-General of Asylums for the Insane in New South Wales), Dr. Grabham (Inspector of Hospitals, &c., New Zealand), Dr. Coverdale (Hobart Asylums), Dr. Alex. S. Paterson (Colonial Surgeon, South Australia), Dr. H. C. Barnett (Western Australia), and Dr. Alexander Morrison, of this colony, all speak strongly in favour of making the Medical Superintendent supreme. The Report of the Royal Commission on Lunatic Asylums in Ireland says:—

“The appointment of servants rests, according to the Privy Council Regulations, with the manager, who can fine, suspend, or, with the concurrence of the Board, dismiss them.”

The rule of giving Medical Superintendents entire control over attendants and servants is almost universal in Europe. In New South Wales, New Zealand, and, we believe, in most of the other colonies, power to engage and dismiss attendants is now actually vested in the Medical Superintendents. In a valuable communication addressed to this Commission by Dr. Norton Manning, in reply to certain questions put to him, he says:—

“It has always been the practice in New South Wales to give the medical superintendents full power to engage and to dismiss without appeal all attendants, nurses, and servants; and to nominate the chief attendant, matron, and other subordinate officers; the power of appointing the latter resting with the Colonial Secretary; and I consider such arrangements essential to the good government of an hospital for the insane. No consideration would have induced me to hold office as medical superintendent, if the power of engaging and dismissing attendants had not rested entirely in my hands. I have always advised my medical friends to insist on this as a condition of accepting office in other colonies. And when the new Lunacy Act came into force in this colony, and I became the head of the Lunacy Department, I purposely left the position of the medical superintendents unchanged in this respect, and retained in my own hands only the appointments at the reception house and at such asylums as have not a medical head. In these smaller establishments the superintendents have not the standing, position, or responsibility of the medical superintendents, and might, besides, be open to influences from which the medical superintendents are free; but even in these institutions, I, as a rule, accept the nominations of the officer in charge, feeling that he, as the head of the establishment, is the person most interested in its good government, and most likely to select suitable members of the staff.

“I cannot conceive the good government of a large asylum possible if the appointments and dismissals are made by the Minister, who can have no means of judging of the suitability of candidates, and must of necessity require certain definite charges before he can dismiss. Even when attendants and nurses are selected by medical superintendents of experience, a considerable proportion are found unfit for office by reason of faults of temper and manner, want of tact, or a general unsuitability which it is impossible to formulate as a distinct charge. It is no uncommon thing for a medical superintendent to be obliged to dismiss, or insist on the resignation, of a man who is sober, honest, and generally well-conducted, but who is worse than useless in an asylum ward because he ‘does not get on with the patients.’ It surely is unreasonable to hold a medical superintendent responsible for the condition of an asylum if you do not give him full power over his staff. He has always the excuse that he has unsatisfactory and untrustworthy

attendants and nurses whom he cannot get rid of; whereas such an excuse or reason for mismanagement should be impossible. As to intrusting a medical superintendent with the responsible duty of selecting attendants, he is clearly unfit to take medical and general charge of a large asylum for the insane if he is unfit for this.

“It should, I think, be the duty of the Minister or the Inspector of Asylums to lay down certain rules as to the age, physical and other qualifications of candidates for employment as attendants, nurses, and servants; but this once done, further interference is impolitic.”

Your Commission wish to point out that voluminous as the above evidence is, its value is not to be measured by its numerical force alone. It is all of a representative character. It is the evidence of learned, experienced, and responsible men. The members of the Boards and Committees appointed by the Legislative Assembly and the Government speak with the authority of men whose opinions are fortified by patient research, extended experience, and anxious consideration. Similar deference should be paid to the opinions expressed by the Board of Visitors for the Metropolitan Asylums, the Medical Society of Victoria, and the permanent heads of the asylums for the insane in the other colonies, who have at some trouble, and with great courtesy, given this Commission the benefit of their valued advice on several important questions submitted to them.

But even if your Commission were not fortified by this large mass of collective wisdom, we would urge upon you the desirability of making a tentative experiment in the direction indicated. We had hardly entered upon the task imposed on us by a former representative of the Crown, when we realized two serious difficulties in our way—difficulties that make our duties responsible in the extreme. We saw at a glance that we had to inquire into an establishment that is, to all intents and purposes, a sealed book to the outer world. The asylums are prisons, and the patients are, practically, dumb creatures, for when once men enter the portals of a mad-house their asseverations are treated as the mere babblings of lunatics. It is a notorious and obvious fact that wherever, in such asylums, there is any abuse to hide there is a strong tendency to obscure the truth. The attendants, having one common interest, not unnaturally form guilds and establish a kind of freemasonry in lunacy, one of the first principles of which is secrecy. It became clear to us, therefore, that any inquiry to be successful must be conducted with great circumspection. An investigation commenced in haste might have caused disorganization amongst the attendants, and great perturbation in the minds of half-convalescent patients, without achieving any counterbalancing good. Though several urgent representations were made to us to initiate inquiries into complaints, we resolved, at an early date, to avoid any investigation of a personal nature, unless such inquiry were forced upon us by irresistible pressure—for this reason if for no other: Any cure effected by extraneous and irregular supervision must, of necessity, be of an evanescent character. While a Board or Commission is sitting attendants may be on their best behaviour, but as soon as the public eye of investigation is withdrawn the old abuses creep out from the dark corners. It is very certain that any remedy, to be effectual, must be potent and continuous in its action. What we have pointed out must never be forgotten: asylums are close prisons, and the insane are practically dumb. Some vigilant eye must always be awake in the prison-house itself. Spasmodic investigations, and the exposure of great public scandals, only do temporary good, and with the good they do work an immense amount of mischief. Organic changes are required in the system, and one of the changes most urgently needed, to our way of thinking, is that, in the words of the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Medical Superintendent should be “lord paramount.”

In urging this, we do not wish to put any sham responsibility on the shoulders of these gentlemen. While we wish to give them power, it is our firm conviction that they should be answerable for every defect of management and treatment inside the walls of the asylums under their control. It should not be enough for them to plead ignorance of any abuse, or say of any failure—"I could not help it." We propose that they should be made responsible, as Ministers of the Crown are responsible, or as commanders of armies and ships, are responsible. If they fail, it should be provided that, on being told that their management is not satisfactory by the Chief Secretary, who is responsible to Parliament, they shall resign, with, without, or with only modified compensation, as the nature of their default may justify. Before such responsibility is imposed, each Medical Superintendent should have the option of refusing to accept such onus, and retiring on any allowance to which he may be entitled, but when once the new *régime* is established no excuse, short of absolute freedom from responsibility, direct or indirect, should free a Superintendent from the Nemesis that always follows an unsuccessful general, in whose vocabulary there is only one potent word—"Success." This mode of dealing with the Superintendents is, in our opinion, the only sure way of securing good government within the walls of an establishment where there are no tongues to tell of wrong-doing, except some one or more of those who do the wrong. And we further recommend that the only appeal from the Medical Superintendent (in cases of dismissal only) shall be to the Public Service Board.

INSPECTOR NOT TO BE SUPERINTENDENT.

At the present time, a very objectionable practice is in existence, viz., the Inspector of all the asylums is also Superintendent of the Yarra Bend. Such a system of supervision is wrong in principle. If an Inspector is necessary as a check on the Superintendents, the system is at fault, as it provides no check at the Yarra Bend, where the Superintendent is also his own inspector. There is a further objection. The system tends to make the Inspector regard matters from a Superintendent's point of view, instead of from a higher standard. But, apart from these considerations altogether, we think that if the system of inspection and headship were as perfect as it ought to be, the head of the department would have quite enough to do in carrying out the work of inspection and general supervision without being encumbered with the duties and responsibilities of Superintendent. Dr. Dick himself sees the propriety of the two offices being severed, and, in his Report to this Commission, makes a recommendation to that effect. In carrying out this alteration, we do not think it necessary that any extra expense should be incurred. There are two medical men at Yarra Bend, a staff, in our opinion, quite sufficient to discharge the duties devolving on the medical officers.

THE BOARDING-OUT SYSTEM.

According to a report furnished to us by the Inspector on the 4th June last, the various asylums throughout the colony were overcrowded to the extent of 69. This estimate is based on an average allowance of 605 cubic feet of dormitory space to all classes of patients, an estimate which, in the opinion of Dr. Dick and the best authorities at home, is low. We are driven, therefore, to the conclusion that one of three alternatives must be adopted at once. Either this overcrowding must be got rid of by the enlargement of the present establishments, by the erection of a new asylum, or the adoption of the boarding-out system. We prefer to recommend for

Your Excellency's adoption the last-named alternative, for the following reasons:—
Dr. Dick says—

“I find that the Kew Asylum, for buildings, fittings, boundary walls, fencing, and laying on services of gas and water, cost £198,334; Ararat, £128,222; and Beechworth, £166,403; a total for the three establishments of £492,959; and as they accommodate 1,688 patients, the cost per bed was £292, exclusive of land. This outlay, valued at 7 per cent., amounts to £34,507 per annum, a sum equal to 7s. 10d. per week, added to the maintenance rate of each patient, which, in 1883, was 10s. 11¼d. It will be observed that the country asylums were much more costly than the metropolitan establishments—Kew cost £220 per bed; Ararat, £421 per bed; and Beechworth, £343 per bed.”

It will be seen, therefore, according to this statement, that each patient costs the country 18s. 9¼d. per week, exclusive of the value of the land occupied by the asylums throughout the colony, and the amount of money contributed by paying patients.* Taking it for granted that patients could be boarded out, your Commission are of opinion that a very great monetary saving could be effected. We are assured by Dr. Dick, the Inspector, that there are 518 persons who could be boarded out in the asylums at the present time. “During the last six years, the total of the yearly additions to the population of the asylums amounted to 451, equal to an annual average increase of 75 persons, a basis on which the requirements of the future may be computed. If the increase proceeds in this proportion, additional accommodation will be needed for about 450 patients in the course of five years.” As one of two courses must be inevitably adopted—the extension of present asylum accommodation, or the adoption of the boarding-out system—we have no hesitation in recommending the latter for adoption, not only because it is the more economical of the two, but because it more nearly conforms to those principles best calculated to conduce to the welfare of the semi-convalescent or harmless patients. The system has been highly successful in Belgium and Great Britain. A most casual inspection of the best regulated mad-house in the world would convince any one that asylum life must be abnormal, and, therefore, very injurious. The asylum should only be resorted to as a dire necessity, and as the lesser of two evils. As soon as patients can be removed from prison walls with safety to themselves and the public—and even where there is only a small percentage of risk—they should be placed under conditions where the surroundings are natural, placid, and free. Of course, the system can only be applied to certain classes of cases, viz., harmless patients or persons on the way to recovery. To semi-convalescent patients the system would be invaluable, as it is well known that at certain stages *absence* from an asylum promotes recovery, as there is a class known as “asylum-made” lunatics.

We would also propose that provision should be made to enable the Superintendents to refuse admittance to all subjects of a class unsuitable for asylum treatment.

The evidence in support of this mode of dealing with patients of the harmless class is as follows:—

The Select Committee of 1861 did not make a direct suggestion on this head. Very little was then known of the merits of the system of boarding out. But they made a recommendation which, in effect, would be tantamount to the proposal. They urge—“That temporary accommodation be provided for, or a small sum of money allowed to, cured patients until they are enabled to obtain situations or return to their friends.”

The Kew Board made a direct recommendation on the point. They suggest—“That the system of boarding out patients be adopted.”

* This estimate does not include the cost of the Yarra Bend and Sunbury Asylums.

Under date September 16, 1881, Dr. Paley (the then Inspector of Lunatic Asylums) wrote:—"I quite realize the desirability of so altering the Lunacy Act as to admit of asylum patients being boarded out, and shall be very glad if effect be given to my repeated recommendations on this point."

Nothing could be more emphatic or convincing than the following extract, taken from Dr. Dick's report for the year 1882. He says:—

"At the end of the year, 1,636 males and 1,292 females remained in the various lunatic asylums, or a total of 2,928. Accommodation is provided for 1,674 men and 1,254 women, that is for 2,928 patients; the number above quoted as remaining at the end of 1882. It is thus apparent that the asylum accommodation is just about exhausted. In view of this emergency, means must be devised to avert the overcrowding, with its attendant evils, which must otherwise ensue. For several years past, Dr. Paley, in his reports, has given special prominence to the question. In 1881, he repeats former suggestions in these terms:—(1.) To make special provision for criminal lunatics. (2.) To provide separate buildings for the young idiots. (3.) To provide additional single-room accommodation at Yarra Bend. (4.) Detached hospital buildings and two cottages at the Ararat Asylum; and (5.) To alter the existing law in the direction of permitting patients to be absent on trial, so as to admit of payments being made to persons for taking care of their insane friends and relatives under a proper system of supervision.'

"In these views I generally concur. * * * * * In connexion with this difficulty, the boarding-out system, by which is to be understood the placing of a certain class under the care of friends or strangers, who shall receive a weekly allowance of money as compensation, is worthy of serious consideration. That this mode of dealing with patients would be attended with many advantages to themselves as well as to the State there is good reason to believe. It is to be remembered, also, that a modification of this plan is already in existence in the form of probation leave. During the past year, as many as 551 patients were out of the asylums on trial, and there has been an average during the year of about 230 constantly absent, under the provisions of section 60 of the Act. The following return gives detailed information as to the number of patients on probation:—

"Total number of patients out on leave during 1882:—Males, 238; females, 313; total, 551.

"Total number discharged: Males, 94; females, 114; total, 208.

"Returned to asylums on expiration of leave: Males, 48; females, 96; total, 144.

"Remaining on leave on the 31st December: Males, 96; females, 123; total, 219.

"Total: Males, 238; females, 313—551.

"It would appear reasonable to infer that where so large a number of patients were removed through apparently disinterested motives, the practice might be greatly extended through strangers if an inducement were offered in the shape of moderate remuneration. As bearing on the question, the following facts are taken from the Scotch Commissioners' Report for 1881:—"The total number of insane in Scotland under care on the 1st January, 1882, was 10,355. Of these, 1,684, or 16 per cent., were boarded out in private dwellings. Two classes are so placed: 1st, those not requiring asylum treatment, but whose relatives are not able to support them; 2nd, those who have been inmates of asylums, but whose condition having become chronic and harmless no longer calls for asylum treatment. All patients boarded out do not come under the cognizance of the Commissioners. Supervision is only exercised where it is thought essential to guard against abuses, and is extended to the following classes:—1st, all paupers (of whom there were 1,568); 2nd, patients with confirmed mental disorders who are kept for profit; 3rd, patients who, having been insane beyond a year, are confined against their wishes, restrained, coerced, or who are suspected of being treated with harshness or cruelty. The common character of the patients boarded out is freedom from dangerous or indecent propensities.

"Among the reasons advanced for providing for pauper lunatics in private dwelling are—first, that at present asylum treatment is frequently resorted to unnecessarily; and, second, that there are many patients in pauper asylums who do not, either for the safety of the public, or for their own protection, or for their sufficient care, require further detention in asylums. The use of asylums as hospitals for the treatment of any form of nervous disorder associated with mental enfeeblement, or a home for aged persons whose faculties are failing, is strongly deprecated. The boarding-out system is advocated as promoting health, happiness, freedom, usefulness, and as affording opportunities for remunerative occupation, and so reducing the cost of maintenance. Boarding out with strangers is said to be the distinctive treatment of the Scotch Lunacy administration. The preference is given to strangers, because their contract can be annulled and patients transferred to other care in case of necessity. The capabilities of the system, which have been steadily advancing for the last twenty years, are represented as being practically unlimited. The presence of lunatics is not found to be offensive to the public in the village of Gartmore, where 30 patients are provided for in this way. None of the villagers have ever complained. The average weekly alimentary allowance is about 5s. 3d., as against 10s. 2½d. in the parochial, private, and district asylums, and 7s. 7d. in the lunatic wards of the poor-houses. The alimentary allowance to relatives is less than to strangers. The reports of the Commissioners on the condition of these patients is almost one uniformly favorable.

“In undertaking the experiment of boarding out we must be prepared to meet with difficulties. The class of patients described as suitable abound in our asylums, but it has yet to be seen whether houses could be found for them in any considerable numbers. Families to whom a small sum of money allowance would be an object of sufficient importance may be few in number. Moreover, we are at a disadvantage as compared with Scotland in the absence of parochial boards and other convenient means of administering the system. Still the benefits to be expected are so important that I think no effort should be spared to give it a fair trial.”

On the 30th May, 1883, Dr. Dick, Inspector of Lunatic Asylums, wrote as follows to the Chief Secretary:—

“In connexion with that portion of my report for the year 1882, recommending the “boarding-out system,” it has occurred to me that space on a considerable scale for the accommodation of quiet, harmless patients might probably be available in many of the country benevolent asylums and hospitals, and in the Immigrants’ Home. Should you concur with this view, I suggest that inquiry be instituted in order to ascertain to what extent there is such accommodation, and how far the committees of these establishments would be inclined to co-operate in such a plan.

“This system would correspond with that of boarding out pauper lunatics in poor-houses, which is extensively adopted at home.

“It would be attended with important advantages, as it is probable that a large number of patients could be removed from the asylums and placed in this way, and their care and supervision effectively and cheaply be provided for.”

Under date 26th October, 1883, Dr. Dick wrote to the Chief Secretary, saying that a great difficulty existed with regard to the disposal of convalescent patients, who were destitute of means, and without friends. At the present time, he said, they were handed over to the police (in the majority of cases), and committed to gaol as vagrants, and he suggested that arrangements should be made with the benevolent asylum authorities to receive such discharged patients.

The Board of Visitors for the Metropolitan Asylums for the Insane are entirely in accord with the present Inspector, his immediate predecessor, and other authorities on the subject. In their report to this Commission, the Board write as follows:—
“That the Act should be altered so that suitable patients should be boarded out, or the friends of patients assisted in keeping them at their own houses, the Board having ascertained that in many parts of the country there are people who have plenty of food and suitable accommodation who would be very glad to receive a small sum of money for taking charge of lunatics. We have ascertained that this system has been very successful in Scotland, where it is highly approved of.”

The Medical Society of Victoria also endorse the project.

Dr. Balls-Headley, and several other members of the medical profession, apart altogether from the medical societies, approve of the plan of boarding out harmless patients under well-guarded regulations.

Here, as in another part of our Report, we point out that the great bulk of the above-quoted evidence is of a specially valuable character. The testimony is not to be valued by the mere number of witnesses. The deponents are representative men of experience, holding responsible positions. The recommendation of the Kew Board is the result of a long and patient inquiry. The testimony of the Board of Visitors for the Metropolitan Asylums, and that of the Medical Society of Victoria, is only a little less valuable. The opinions of Dr. Paley and Dr. Dick are weighty, authoritative, and reliable.

While giving the foregoing as a fair sample of much evidence of a similar character that might be quoted in favour of the boarding-out system, it would not be candid to ignore the other side of the argument. The case for those who object to

the system is most ably stated by Dr. Norton Manning, Inspector of New South Wales Asylums, in a communication addressed to this Commission by that gentleman. He says:—

“The payment to strangers for taking to their own homes, and maintaining and caring for, insane people therein, to which the term “boarding out” is applied, has only been successful to any large extent at Gheel, in Belgium, under conditions which can scarcely be reproduced here, and at Kennaway and other places in Scotland. The requisities appear to be a poor population of the cotter class, an agricultural district, and frequent supervision, not only by the parochial authorities but by skilled inspectors. The supervision is the more necessary because the tie binding the patient to his caretaker is purely a monetary one, and, except in very exceptional cases, can never be anything more. The feeling of affection which grows up between a boarded-out child and its foster parents is never likely to exist between an adult lunatic, often of objectionable habits, and his caretaker. These requisities are as yet unattainable in these colonies, and boarding out must therefore for some time to come be a very exceptional mode of providing for insane people. It is only certain cases which are at all fitted for this mode of cure. All acute and demonstrative or dangerous cases, all women during youth or the child-bearing period, and all cases inclined to wander from home, must be excluded. Apart from the fact that very few persons, whilst wages continue at present standard, would be inclined to take charge of lunatics at rates which it would at all pay the Government to give, the scanty population, the peculiar dangers of bush life, and the absolute impossibility of effective supervision, are directly antagonistic to any effective adoption of this system.”

“The payment of subsidies to relatives, either as supplementary to their own means or as the full cost of maintenance of their insane relations living with them, is, I think, altogether another matter. Here there is something beyond a pecuniary tie, and there is therefore less necessity for supervision. There is reason to believe that a limited number of insane persons—very limited as yet by reason of conditions peculiar to the insane and to these colonies—can in this way be provided for, and this arrangement should, I think, be tried. The greatest care will, however, be necessary, both in the selection of fit cases and to prevent imposition, and, so far as my experience has yet gone, the sums asked, and stated to be necessary for maintenance, are beyond the rates for which patients can be kept in asylums, even allowing a liberal interest on the expenditure for buildings, by way of rent, in addition to the asylum maintenance rate.”

These acutely stated objections are, to a very large extent, met by Dr. Dick's report for the year 1882. If the two are placed in juxtaposition, it will be seen that the one answers the other. But let us briefly glance at and answer Dr. Manning's objections. He says: “The requisites are ‘poor population’ and ‘agricultural districts,’ as in Belgium and Scotland.” We have both “requisites” here, as testified by the Board of Visitors. He urges that the tie is a purely monetary one. So it is in Scotland and Belgium, where the system is an admitted success. The residuum of Dr. Manning's objections amounts to this—There would be a danger of boarded-out patients being lost in the bush, and that it would be difficult to exercise proper supervision. This is purely a matter for precaution and arrangement. Care should be taken not to send patients liable to lose themselves into a part of the country thickly timbered, and those requiring frequent supervision should not be sent to places where such supervision cannot be exercised. Dr. Manning seems to think that selectors, farmers, and others are too well to do to be troubled with semi-convalescent wards. If that be so, a test will prove the argument, but there is nothing in the doubt about success that should bar us from making the experiment, for experiment alone will prove this part of the subject. We quite agree with Dr. Dick in saying, “In undertaking the experiment of boarding out, we must be prepared to meet with difficulties. *Patients of the class described as suitable abound in our asylums*, but it has yet to be seen whether homes could be found for them in any considerable numbers. Families to whom a small money allowance would be an object of sufficient importance may be few in number. Moreover, we are at a disadvantage as compared with Scotland in the absence of parochial boards and other convenient means of administering the system. Still the benefits to be expected are so important that I think no effort should be spared to give it a fair trial.”

There are reasons of a solemn and vital character above and beyond all that has yet been enumerated why as few persons as possible should be kept under lock and key, and why those who are detained should be kept as short a time as possible, consistent with the public safety. Insanity is a calamity, and not a crime; and if, by reason of the consequential evils liable to result from the disorder, it becomes necessary to deprive a subject of his liberty, the deprivation should not endure for one hour longer than is absolutely necessary in the interests of the person afflicted or the public at large. Apart from the fact that persons arrested as lunatics are deprived of their liberty, they become the assigned servants of the attendants in the asylums, to whose caprices and exhibitions of ill-will they are liable, if not absolutely subject. The secret abuses of lunatic prisons—for prisons they are—are universal. These evils, from the very nature of things, must always continue, the only cure being to check and minimize them as much as possible. The Superintendents themselves do not and cannot know half that goes on in a large establishment. For these, and other equally cogent reasons, we think every effort should be made to reduce the number of persons “detained” in asylums to the lowest possible limits. And even the question of expense should not be allowed to stand in the way of carrying out a system that has, according to some of the best authorities, many advantages over the “close system,” as asylum management is called. But we feel confident that, instead of increasing the expenditure under this head, the adoption of the boarding-out system will result in effecting a large saving. We quite agree with Dr. Dick when he says, “The class of patients described as suitable abound in our asylums.” This class, we believe, as we have before stated, could be boarded out at a much lower rate than it costs the State to maintain such persons in the asylums. We are further of opinion that in cases where the authorities are willing to pay an alimentary allowance for the maintenance of idiots, imbeciles, and the harmless insane, that the relatives of such persons—those coming within the legal degree of affinity, as defined by the Lunacy Statute—should be compelled to keep such persons in their own homes, for while it is unavoidably necessary that the State should pay for the maintenance of persons so afflicted where their relatives cannot afford to keep them, they (the relatives) should not be relieved from the duty of bestowing that care and attention on their relatives demanded by ties of kinship.

ENDOWMENTS, LAND GRANTS, ETC.

One part of our Commission authorizes us to consider “the policy of continuing large metropolitan institutions.” We have debated this part of the policy at some length, and have arrived at the conclusion that it is not wise to maintain so many large charitable institutions in and near the very heart of Melbourne. The extraordinary growth of the metropolis at the expense of the whole colony—the population of Melbourne being about a third of that of Victoria—has been attributed to a steady and long-continued system of centralization. Without stopping to inquire how far this may be true, we beg to point out that a wholesome system of decentralisation may be commenced with regard to the lunatic asylums—we say nothing of kindred institutions such as the Benevolent Asylum, &c. According to the Inspector’s annual report for the year 1883, the daily number of patients resident at Kew and Yarra Bend was 1,597. This number, with attendants—216—forms a perfect township. Were it possible to transfer these two establishments into the country on some line of railway, we have no doubt that large advantages would accrue. The establishment would exist on cheap land, and, with good management, the cost of maintenance might

be considerably reduced. But that would not be the only advantage. The growth of Melbourne and suburbs is extending in all directions by leaps and bounds. House rent is high, and the rate at which new buildings are being erected shows that at a not very remote period every available building site within a large radius will be built upon. The reasons for this are geographical to a very large extent; and, if we are not mistaken, the population of Melbourne will always be abnormally large, as compared with the general population of the colony. A glance at the map shows that Melbourne is not only the principal seaport, but the only seaport worth naming for the whole colony. Such being the case, traffic must radiate from Melbourne to all parts of the colony, and converge from all parts of the colony to Melbourne—not distributing itself, as in most other countries, to various ports. Bearing this in mind, and remembering that it is not wise to cultivate too great a head at the expense of the trunk, we think that a system of decentralisation should be commenced as soon as possible, and carried out with all convenient speed. One mode of doing this would be that of removing the two asylums at Yarra Bend and Kew into some country district connected with the general railway system of the colony. There is no reason why a large township of insane people should be kept in Melbourne, monopolising 800 acres of land—land that, at an early date, will be of enormous value. But we are restrained from making any present recommendation as to the removal of the two metropolitan asylums for purely economical reasons. Yet we think it should be laid down as a principle that these two asylums shall not be enlarged or extended, and that they shall be removed at as early a date as possible consistent with a due regard to economy. The Kew Asylum alone cost about £200,000, and no body of prudent men would advocate the demolition of such a building until it had endured for at least the greater portion of the term it was estimated to last. But the time is not very remote when the site it now occupies will be urgently required for the natural enlargement of the suburbs of Melbourne. The argument also holds good with regard to the Yarra Bend Asylum, though in a less degree. The buildings there have cost large sums of public money from time to time, and the establishment should not be removed until necessity demands it. In the meantime, while the two asylums are serving public purposes, and events are ripening for their entire removal, there is a large area of land at Kew and Yarra Bend that might be utilized in a manner not hitherto contemplated.

Experience is teaching us every day that the duties of Government—in England as well as here—are increasing very fast, and that, if the Legislature is to perform its proper functions, and devote itself to the consideration of fundamental principles and the remodelling of the machinery of the State as time may teach to be necessary, the Central Government must divest itself of all kinds of domestic and routine administration. This has been done in part. Local self-government has been successfully established. The Harbour Trust has been created, and the Railways have been handed over to three Commissioners. We are inclined to think that a similar line of policy will have to be pursued with regard to the charitable institutions of the colony, and especially the asylums for the insane. But we do not propose to deal with that matter in this Report, though we do not hesitate to foreshadow it as a very probable recommendation to be made at some future time. Our immediate object is to point out that, if the asylums for the insane are ever to be handed over to the care of Lunacy Commissioners, as in England, it would be wise to endow these institutions with a sure and certain revenue, for one of the most fruitful sources of neglect and evil is the want of money at the proper time. We propose that all lands set apart for asylums for the insane be permanently reserved as an endowment towards the maintenance of such

institutions, and that all lands not required for the health, recreation, or employment of the inmates be leased, and the moneys accruing therefrom be applied to defray the cost of building and maintaining such asylums throughout the colony.

Adopting this policy, there are about 500 or 600 acres at Kew and Yarra Bend that might be let on lease for (say) twenty-five years, after reserving a sufficient area for each asylum.* Let it be supposed that we adopt a settled policy to remove the two asylums in twenty-five years. By that time the leases of the 500 or 600 acres will have fallen in. We shall then have a magnificent estate of about 800 acres of metropolitan land to operate on as a source of revenue. Its value will be something enormous, and far in excess of that at present prevailing.

At the present time, at a very moderate computation, the value of the two sites—Kew and Yarra Bend—is £300,000. We have arrived at this conclusion by the assistance of two well-known valuers in the city, and have also received an estimate of the value of the land at Yarra Bend from the Surveyor-General, than whom no better authority can be obtained. The Surveyor-General values the Yarra Bend site at about £200,000. A gentleman connected with an auctioneering firm has also given an estimate of its value, though a much lower one than that given by the Surveyor-General. But he explained that he based his calculation on the present auctioneering value of the land, supposing it were put up in its rough state and sold in large blocks to buyers for speculative purposes. He adds—“But, in view of the rapidly increasing population settling on the adjacent lands, with the prospect of an immediate railway and tram-cars running in the district, the prospective value would be much higher.” We have preferred to accept the estimate of the Surveyor-General, and feel confident that he is within the mark when he states that, if the site were surveyed and properly plotted out into quarter-acre blocks, it would realize £200,000. Deducting one-third of this sum for a reserve for the asylum, we have £133,333 6s. 8d. as the value of the site that remains for disposal. The estimate given for the land at Kew, leaving out about 150 acres as a reserve for the asylum, is from £140,000 to £160,000. In round numbers, the value of the two sites may be taken at £300,000—that is, the two sites left available after deducting liberal reserves for the present asylums. We need not speculate on what an estate at Kew and Yarra Bend, 800 acres in extent, would be worth in 25 years hence. But we are quite safe in saying that, if it were judiciously administered, the revenue would go a very long way towards the maintenance of the various asylums throughout the colony. However, we do not propose to ask Your Excellency to take any decided steps regarding this subject at present, but we throw out the above suggestions in order that they may attract public attention and secure the consideration of the members of the Legislature.

CONCLUSION.

In concluding this, our First Progress Report, we wish to say that a great deal of our time was taken up at the outset in collecting information, and ascertaining what had been done up to the time when the late Acting Governor, Sir William Stawell, issued letters patent constituting this Commission. Having surveyed the field of our labours, and plotted out the plan of our future operations, we expect to make more rapid progress in the future. We may inform Your Excellency that, while we do not desire to curtail the expenditure of any money that may be required for the

* The Kew Asylum buildings and boundary walls occupy only 21 acres, and the Yarra Bend boundary walls inclose 26 acres.

This would mean, either that our percentage of insane is exceptionally high, or that our standard of measuring mental aberration is extremely rigid.

We believe that our standard of measuring madness is excessively severe; that we have people under lock and key who are merely eccentric, and that we have others who should never have been admitted to, and should not be retained in, the asylums. The Inspector also leans to this view with regard to the latter class. In his last annual report, he says—"In estimating the significance of this comparison, it is to be remembered that we have at present no effectual means of preventing the admission into our asylums of unsuitable patients. In England many of our inmates would be cared for in workhouses, benevolent asylums, or amongst their relatives. In New South Wales a reception-house has been established, and it constitutes an effectual barrier to indiscriminate admission into the asylums." Apart from the above evidence, we have a considerable amount of testimony available that leads us to the opinion that the authorities of our asylums, in very many instances, are grossly imposed upon. We will give a well sustained example. The Visiting Committee of the Ararat Asylum, in reply to our request, have furnished us with a report, in which the following paragraph occurs:—"We think greater facilities might also exist for the discharge of convalescent patients, when they have friends who are able, though perhaps unwilling, to receive them into their homes. We are led to make this remark from a case in point in our own asylum. The patient, a married woman, seems to us at least rational enough to be in her own home, and we believe the Medical Superintendent would discharge her if her husband—a respectable man, we are told—a stone-mason and contractor, would receive her. There are evidently family disagreements; she appears to be a jealous, and is perhaps a bad-tempered, woman, and would doubtless make home miserable; but that alone is not a sufficient reason for her detention in a lunatic asylum."

The subject of classification has received our attention, but we have not yet had time to deal with it in an effective manner. But we have made up our minds that it is a reproach to this community that persons guilty of no offence, but merely afflicted with mental disease, should be confined and compelled to associate with people belonging to the criminal classes, and we shall address ourselves, at the earliest possible date, to the rectification of this and other glaring abuses of the present system.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

- (1.) That the office of the Master-in-Lunacy as at present constituted be abolished.
- (2.) That the judicial functions of the Master-in-Lunacy be conferred by the Attorney-General on some competent officer.
- (3.) That the maintenance moneys be collected by the clerks in the various asylums, under the direction of the Medical Superintendents.
- (4.) That the care of trust moneys and property belonging to lunatics be handed over to the Curator of Intestate Estates.
- (5.) That the Medical Superintendents be invested with supreme control in the asylums under their management, with power to engage and dismiss all attendants, nurses, and servants, and to nominate the chief attendant, matron, and other officers,

the power of appointing the latter resting with the Chief Secretary, who shall also appoint and dismiss all superintendents and deputy superintendents.

(6.) That officers dismissed by the Chief Secretary shall have the right to demand an inquiry by the Public Service Board, and that attendants, nurses, and servants dismissed by the Medical Superintendents shall also have the right of appeal to the Public Service Board; and the said Board shall, when the members thereof see fit, order any appellant to deposit a sum equivalent to the cost of the inquiry asked for.

(7.) That the Inspector shall not be Superintendent of any asylum.

(8.) That the boarding-out system be adopted under rules and regulations to be framed by this Commission and sanctioned by the Governor in Council, who shall have power to alter, amend, or rescind the same from time to time.

(9.) That power be given to Medical Superintendents to refuse admission to persons they may regard as unfit subjects for treatment in a lunatic asylum.

E. L. ZOY, Chairman,
 R. D. REID,
 C. M. OFFICER,
 D. M. DAVIES,
 D. C. STERRY,
 C. R. BLACKETT,
 R. E. JACOMB,
 HENRY BELL.

E. C. MARTIN, Secretary.