

It will be necessary, of course, to satisfy the Colonial Secretary, as hitherto, as to the amount of the voluntary subscriptions, but Government do not desire to interfere in any way with the local management of these institutions.

I have, &c.,

J. BALLANCE.

The Chairman of the Council, County of Vincent.

No. 3.

Mr. VINCENT PYKE to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Vincent County Council, Clyde, 24th June, 1878.

Referring to your circular letter No. 7, dated 15th March, and also to the circular of the Hon. Colonial Treasurer, No. 378, dated 14th March, respecting the future management of hospitals, &c., I have now the honor to inform you that the matter having been very carefully considered by the Vincent County Council, and conferences thereupon held with the Borough Councils of Clyde and Cromwell, and the Municipal Corporation of Alexandra, the whole of the local governing bodies above-mentioned have jointly and mutually agreed to the following propositions:—

“1. That the County Council shall undertake the control and management of the Dunstan and Cromwell Hospitals in accordance with the terms set forth in the Colonial Secretary's letter of 15th March.

“2. That the existing local Committees shall continue to collect voluntary subscriptions, and to manage the affairs of the said hospitals as at present.

“3. That in the event of such voluntary subscriptions being (with the Government subsidy thereupon) insufficient to defray the cost and expenses of the hospitals, the deficit shall be contributed by the county and boroughs *pro rata* in proportion to the values of rateable properties (as shown by the next previous valuation of such properties) in the county and boroughs.”

It has also been agreed to subdivide the county into two hospital districts, but as this is a matter of internal arrangement it is unnecessary to trouble the Government with details.

It must be understood very distinctly by the Government that this offer on the part of the county and boroughs there-within is made in good faith that all counties and boroughs in New Zealand will be placed on the same footing, and that the hospitals in the larger and more wealthy cities will not be maintained entirely by public revenues.

With regard to patients from this county or the boroughs who may find their way to any other district hospital—and equally with regard to patients from other districts who may find their way to our hospitals—I would suggest that a period of time should be fixed as a test of residence, and that the actual charge of maintaining such patients should be borne by the district to which they belong. This would be a matter of account between the various hospitals, and if the whole country were formed into hospital districts for these purposes it would greatly tend to simplify matters.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT PYKE,

Chairman.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

No. 4.

Mr. G. S. COOPER to Mr. VINCENT PYKE.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 11th July, 1878.

I have the honor, by direction of the Colonial Secretary, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, A. 65-688, of the 24th ultimo, informing him that the Vincent County Council have, in conjunction with the Borough Councils of Clyde and Cromwell and the Municipal Corporation of Alexandra, agreed to undertake the control and management of the Dunstan and Cromwell Hospitals, upon the distinct understanding that “this offer is made in good faith that all counties and boroughs in New Zealand will be placed on the same footing, and that the hospitals in the larger and more wealthy cities will not be maintained entirely by public revenues.”

With regard to the undertaking asked for, Colonel Whitmore instructs me to say that, in the present transition state of matters relating to charitable institutions generally, it is impossible for the Government to give a positive pledge as asked for. The policy you have indicated is that of the Government, and everything will be done to bring about an uniform system throughout the colony as early as possible.

It is the general tendency of the policy of the Government to decentralize the administration of the institutions in question as far as possible, leaving the localities to determine the regulations under which they will carry it out.

That being so, the Government must leave to the local bodies concerned to decide as to the proportion of contributions from each, in the event of the subsidies and subscriptions proving insufficient, as well as the question of residence.

Should it become necessary to have recourse to legislation for the purpose of laying down principles of the kind just alluded to, your valuable suggestions shall receive from the Government the consideration which they seem to merit.

I have, &c.,

The Chairman of the Council, County of Vincent, Clyde.

G. S. COOPER.