

RANGITIKEI.

A HOUSE situated at Bull's, near Greatford, was formerly used for a cottage hospital. I learn that this purpose has now been relinquished, any patients being sent to the Wanganui Hospital, to which an annual subscription is paid.

REEFTON.

THE hospital is placed close to the town, in grounds of about one acre, part of which is very neatly kept as a flower-garden, and another part is well cropped with vegetables. The building, which is a wooden one, contains one large and two smaller wards; a kitchen, and the rooms allotted to the Steward and Matron. The wards are light and cheerful. There are sash-windows, ceiling ventilators, Tobin's tubes, and open fireplaces for wood. The walls have a wood dado, and are neatly papered above; they are hung with numerous pictures, which are on wooden stretchers and varnished. The bedsteads, which are iron ones, have straw paillasses and flock mattresses. Each bed has a flock pillow, and another filled with a soft silky flax. A few contain feathers. The bed-clothes are good in quality and perfectly clean. On the floor are strips of cocoanut matting. Bedside table-lockers are provided, and a large table for meals: this has a good American-cloth cover. Cane-bottom and other chairs are in use. The windows have blinds of green holland. Some well-filled book-shelves and a number of newspapers furnish means of amusement. The kitchen has recently been enlarged, and is a very fair one. It contains a good range, of American pattern, with a boiler. The crockery is of good quality. There is here also a large linen-press. Washing-up is performed at a sink outside the door, but under cover. A small outbuilding serves for washhouse and bath-room. There is here a portable copper. Another older building contains workshop and coalhouse. The mortuary stands at a short distance from the hospital, and is sufficient for its purpose. A portion of it has been divided off to serve as a dispensary. There is here a good stock of drugs, kept in excellent order. The surgical instruments are kept in a chest of drawers in one of the Steward's rooms, and seem to be fairly adequate for hospital purposes. No closets adjoin the hospital, but there are two detached ones a little way off. Behind them is a cesspit for the soil, which gives off a very offensive smell. It would be far preferable to fill up this pit, and use pans with dry earth or ashes. The water-supply is from a well, about 13 feet deep. Liquid drainage, from the sink, is conducted away, and runs out upon the land outside the hospital fence. The dispensing is performed by the Steward, who is also the Wardsman and the Secretary; his wife being the Matron and Nurse. Prescriptions are entered by him in a book. All stores are obtained under contract, pass-books being always used, and the accounts properly checked. There is a well-kept cash-book, showing all receipts and expenditure; and an inventory of hospital property is taken every half-year. Payments are carefully collected from the patients. Subscribers of £1 annually are admitted at 15s. a week; non-subscribers paying £1 on admission, and £1 10s. weekly. A manuscript register of the patients is regularly filled up, but no case-book is kept. The Committee visit about once a month, and hold their regular meetings in the town. Beds are now occupied by six men and one girl. I saw them at tea, and conversed with them individually: they all spoke in praise of the arrangements of the hospital. The Medical Officer visits daily, and oftener if required. There is a general appearance throughout the whole establishment of order, cleanliness, and great comfort. The Steward and Matron, Mr. and Mrs. Preshaw, appear to have no assistance in the domestic work; and the condition in which I find the hospital reflects great credit upon their industry and ability.

20th February, 1883.

RIVERTON.

THIS hospital has been visited by me to-day. It is a wooden building (formerly immigrants' barracks), situated on high ground a little way from the town; and contains a ward for each sex, kitchen and washhouse, dispensary, and three small rooms for Steward and Matron. I found that there were six male in-patients and two female. All were proper cases for hospital treatment. There is only one empty bed—namely, in the ward for females. There are two attics in the roof, one of which is occupied by a female servant; the other has been occasionally used for a patient, but is too low and not airy enough for this purpose. It appears to me that increased accommodation is urgently needed. The wards are plainly but comfortably furnished. The old wooden stretcher-beds might with advantage be replaced with more modern ones. Straw or chaff beds and pillows are in use, but I saw one good feather bed and pillow in the women's ward. Besides lockers, comfortable chairs and some books and papers are provided. Dinner was served in my presence, and consisted of good thick broth and meat boiled in it; potatoes, carrots, and turnips were given, and bread, also tea, was supplied to those who wished for it. I took the opportunity of tasting the broth. The kitchen is fitted with two colonial ovens; behind it is a washhouse, used also occasionally as a bath-room. The dispensary is in front of the Steward's rooms, and is well stocked with instruments and drugs procured direct from England. The Steward performs the dispensing. In front of the building is an enclosed verandah containing some plants in pots. Behind the hospital is a detached brick building containing one good-sized room. This is intended for a fever-hospital, but is not furnished; and, fortunately, has not at present been required for use. The mortuary forms part of a detached wooden building, which contains also a lumber-room. There are detached pan-closets, two for each sex. The soil is buried in the kitchen-garden. Liquid sewage runs into the adjacent bay. Rain-water only is used. There is a deep well, but the water is said to be bad. The grounds are utilized, as a small meadow at one end of the hospital, and as a kitchen-garden at the other. This is well stocked with vegetables. Stores are supplied to written orders, and carefully checked. A book is kept in which the in-patients are registered, and there is a diary showing the attendances of the Medical Officer. No inventory of the hospital property exists. Payments at the rate of 10s. per week are exacted from patients where possible. The Committee visit the hospital frequently, and also hold their monthly meetings there. The patients were unanimous in stating that they were kindly and well attended to. The whole establishment I found scrupulously clean, and in excellent order.

2nd February, 1883.