

patients have been under care at one time during the past year. No females have been admitted. Mr. and Mrs. Bowden have been appointed Steward and Matron since my last visit. It is only just to them to say that the hospital has in no wise suffered from the change; on the contrary, it is maintained in a most praiseworthy condition of order and cleanliness throughout. The garden is well cropped with vegetables, and one pig is kept. The only assistance given to the Matron is the service of a woman, three days in each fortnight, to assist in washing and scrubbing. I noticed a good stock of blankets and bed-linen, but there is a deficiency of shirts and other personal clothing for the patients. Complaints were made of the inferior joints of meat supplied, and of its poor quality. The meat is supplied under a contract, which will expire in March, 1885. The prices are 2d. and 2½d. for mutton and 3½d for beef. I have reason to think that there is good foundation for these complaints. The former contractor gave entire satisfaction. The Committee will doubtless give this important matter their attention.

January 1st, 1885.

QUEENSTOWN.

THE hospital at Frankton contains to-day nine male patients and one of the female sex. One or two are suffering from chronic ailments, the rest having met with severe accidents, or awaiting surgical operations. The average number of patients under treatment during the past year is between ten and eleven. Seventeen have been resident simultaneously. A large mining district is served by this institution, in which much local interest is taken. Subscriptions and maintenance-payments are carefully collected. The amount received last month being £26 2s. I saw all the patients separately, and found them very grateful. Dr. Douglas, the Medical Officer, is held in high esteem. Making allowance for the old and dilapidated state of the buildings, I found all in good order and very clean. Since my last visit a new ward for females has been erected. It is intended that this shall eventually form one block of an entirely new hospital. The ward is intended for six beds, but is large enough for eight. It contains two small rooms at one end, which will serve for a nurse's accommodation and a private ward. At the other end are bathrooms and closets, divided from the ward by semi-circular and somewhat intricate intercepting lobbies. The walls of the ward will have a wood dado, with plaster above, and a wood ceiling. This kind of construction is unnecessarily expensive. If plaster is to be used at all it should have been continued down to the floor-line. No doubt the ward will be an excellent one; but I have advised the committee that it will not be prudent to follow the prepared plan for completing the hospital in the same style of building. Nor do I think the proposed disposition of the wards a good one for so excellent and extensive a site, and so favourable a climate. It appears to me, also, that the working of such an establishment would necessitate a large staff of nurses or servants; and the central, or administrative, block does not furnish adequate accommodation. I have therefore prepared an alternative sketch, which meets with the full approval of the committee and the Medical Officer, and which, in addition, to being more economical, both in construction and working, will permit of the gradual completion of the hospital, and the utilization meanwhile of the older portions of the building. As matters now stand, the new ward will be almost useless. I therefore recommend the erection forthwith of the central block, for which a grant of money should be made by Government. When this is done, the small cottage, now occupied by the doctor, will be available for treating isolated patients.

December 6th, 1884.

REEFTON.

I VISITED this hospital on Monday, December 22nd, 1884. Mr Preshaw, the secretary and steward, was present, and gave me all necessary information. There were only three patients resident, all being the male sex. I learn, however, that three others were very recently discharged, and that eight have been under treatment together upon one occasion. The three to whom I spoke, told me that they were perfectly satisfied. For order, smartness, and comfortable appearance this hospital takes rank as one of the best in the colony. The bedding is particularly good, and a profusion of pictures and other objects of interest adorns the wards. I notice with approval that a "push," over every bed, communicates with an electric bell in the steward's room. A new woven-wire mattress, and other things of useful character have been procured. Out of doors, I saw a new pan-closet lately erected for the use of female patients. The pathway from the road to the hospital has also been neatly fenced on both sides. The gardens, both for flowers and for vegetables, are in most creditable order. The dispensary at present is placed in a portion of the mortuary, divided off by a partition. The situation is not a convenient one, and no accommodation is provided there for out-patients. It appears to me that the central and oldest portion of the hospital should be rebuilt, with the view of remedying these defects and also to provide better accommodation for the steward and matron. I find the books well kept, and financial matters carefully looked after. The amount of donations and subscriptions average £300 a year; entertainments produce £120 more; and church collections some £20. About £120 annually is paid for maintenance by in-patients. No chronic cases are now in the hospital. Death appears to have been busy here with this class of late. No cases of fever have required treatment this year. The hospital evidently is carefully worked, and its managers are deserving of encouragement in their labors.

December 22nd, 1884.