

1886.

## NEW ZEALAND.

## HOSPITALS IN NEW ZEALAND

(REPORT ON), BY DR. GRABHAM, INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF HOSPITALS AND ASYLUMS.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

The INSPECTOR of HOSPITALS to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Wellington, 15th March, 1886.

I have the honour to present the following report for the year 1885:—

The number of hospitals remains unaltered. None have been added or closed.

Alterations and additions to existing buildings have been few. At Invercargill a small detached fever hospital has been erected to replace an old structure condemned in my former reports as unfit for further use. An additional room for out-patients has been provided at Dunedin. The alterations elsewhere may be regarded in the character of repairs.

As to the condition in which I have found the various establishments upon my visits of inspection, I may remark that I have seldom had to find fault. The comfort and well-being of the patients everywhere receives proper attention at the hands of the resident officers and committees of management; and I have been glad to notice in many places a growing interest taken by the residents in their local hospital, as evidenced by frequent visits, and gifts of flowers, furniture, and ornamental objects.

The Charitable Aid Bill passed last session is only yet upon its trial, and it is too early to speak as to its working. I regret to observe, however, that under its provisions the whole of the superfluous hospitals are likely to be maintained at the public expense as “separate institutions.” The residents in large districts, situated far away from any existing hospital, having hitherto taken care of their sick and injured in private dwellings, are very naturally aggrieved at being called upon to contribute to the maintenance of a hospital too far off to be of any material value to them. The result will certainly be a demand for the erection in such outlying districts of local hospitals. Thus the new legislation will increase rather than diminish the number of establishments. Some difficulty is already showing itself where a medical school exists in connection with a hospital. Here certain cases are admitted for operation by specialists, or for illustrating diseases to the students, the patients being often brought from distant places, and in some instances without much hope of benefit. The ratepayers very naturally object to contribute to the cost of a medical school.

I have no doubt that under the new Act some check will be put upon the use of hospitals by improper objects of charity, and upon the bestowal of gratuitous treatment upon those who are able to pay a more or less adequate sum for their maintenance.

My visits during the year 1885 numbered 27, and would have been more numerous but for impaired health, which prohibited my making long journeys by coach.

My work as Inspector of Hospitals being finished, I look back with great satisfaction upon the contrast which is noticeable between the present state of the hospitals and their condition three and a half years ago. It has all along been evident to me that the officials in charge of these institutions were both ready and willing to learn anything which I could teach them as the result of an experience of twenty-five years in the management of large establishments at Home. Everywhere I have been courteously received, my criticisms taken in good part, and acted upon without delay; and it is my proud boast that I have never had an angry word with either officer or patient.

I have, &amp;c.,

GEORGE WALLINGTON GRABHAM,  
M.D. Lond., M.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., L.S.A.,  
Inspector of Hospitals.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

## ASHBURTON.

THERE are to-day seven patients under treatment in this hospital, all of the male sex. Most of them are convalescent, but all have been obviously proper cases for admission. Since my last visit twelve beds have been simultaneously occupied, and one or two cases of typhoid fever have been treated in the private wards. The detached fever wards are not in a condition to be used, badly needing repairs, to which I have previously drawn attention. A considerable portion of the ceiling has fallen, and the dampness of one of the walls is lamentable. Repairs are needed else-