1886.

ZEALAND. NEW

HOSPITALS ZEALAND NEW

(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.

Wellington, 15th March, 1886. Sir,-

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

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, &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. 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-1—H. 9.

where; and the wards and corridors, as well as the warders' and matron's rooms, have never yet been painted or distempered since their erection. The Committee have lacked funds for this purpose, and hope to receive a Government subsidy from last year's vote, when they will at once take the matter in hand. I am glad to note that the marked improvement reported in the condition of this hospital on my last visit of inspection continues, and the whole establishment is maintained in a state of order and cleanliness which it would be difficult to surpass, and which reflects great credit upon the resident officers, Mr. and Mrs. Mackay. There is a profusion of growing flowers in pots and beds, and also of cut blossoms, to be seen about the hospital. In spite of a very dry season the supply of vegetables from the kitchen-garden has been abundant. Dr. Trevor continues his medical services. He is very regular in his attendance, and is very highly spoken of. Arrangements are being made for declaring this hospital a "separate institution" under the new Act.

6th January, 1886.

AUCKLAND.

I have visited the hospital during a portion of each of the undermentioned days—namely, 13th, 19th, 21st, and 23rd October. There are to-day 77 male and 19 female in-patients: total, 96. On the 15th of the present month the total number was 103. The hospital is constructed to accommodate eighty-eight beds only; consequently there is overcrowding and discomfort. It is to be hoped that the newly-elected Committee will lose no time in providing additional wards. The nature of the diseases from which the patients are suffering calls for no special remark. Typhoid fever is not prevalent at present, or the demand for more space might become very serious. One case only, of mild type, is now under treatment. I have taken the opportunity of speaking to every patient; and I received no complaints. The principal wards are kept in excellent order, and afford every possible The same, however, cannot be said of the rooms in the basement allotted to the use of These are sadly in want of paint and general cleansing. They present a cheerless and dirty appearance. The same remark will apply to the kitchen and its offices, which are not worthy of the hospital, and demand better fittings. The small pantry serves also as a store-room for groceries in bulk—a bad arrangement, which should be altered by putting up a partition. For want of proper accommodation a quantity of coals lay on the kitchen-floor. The mortuary, with its trapdoor and tramway, continues a source of offence and danger. I have no doubt all the defects mentioned would have been long since remedied if the Committee had possessed available funds. The other portion of the hospital I found in very good order. The bedding is good, and well attended to. A number of blankets of English manufacture are in store, as also some of colonial make. The latter would be exclusively used were it not that they become very thin when washed, through losing much of their nap. This is a matter of general complaint throughout the colony, and deserves the attention of the manufacturers. The dietary scale is carefully adhered to, and complete record kept of all stores issued and consumed. I am glad to report a considerable diminution in the amount of alcoholic liquors. To-day the following have been issued: Port, 2oz.; sherry, 3oz.; gin, 70z.; brandy, 2½0z.; ale and porter, two pints. There is no variation to report in the number of out-About twenty fresh entries are made weekly under this category. The amount collected for maintenance during the last month was £73 18s. Some defects (structural) require still to be noticed. The disinfecting-chamber has been recently repaired, but will never remain in working condition until proper allowance is made for the expansion of the iron used in and about the furnace. The hot-water tanks lined with lead, which were put in by the Public Works Department, have given much trouble by their leakage, as might have been expected, and have required frequent repairs. One of them has recently been entirely relined with lead. This is not the only instance of the sort in a Government institution; and the use of lead for such a purpose can only be due to ignorance of its properties. Certainly it cannot be from economical motives, as the subsequent damage and repairs cannot fail to be expensive. Noticing a mouldy smell in a lavatory separated by a single door from the women's ward, I was led to examine certain "shoots" down which all refuse from the wards is thrown. These "shoots" open into a small room in the basement adjoining the mortuary. In one was some soiled linen, which is received daily. The other contained a quantity of rags, poultices, sweepings of the floors, and other refuse. A number of mice were running about the room, which is only cleared on alternate days. I very much question the propriety of using a "shoot" at all for such purposes, the sides of which cannot fail to become foul and offensive. If used, the contents should be removed night and morning. I may mention that the better-constructed shoots at the new St. Thomas's Hospital, London, were at once abandoned as dangerous to health.

BLENHEIM.

I have this day paid a short visit to the hospital, which I found occupied by thirteen patients, all of the male sex. None of these were confined to bed, or appeared to be suffering from severe accident or illness; on the contrary, several appeared to me to be more fitting inmates of a refuge. It is unnecessary to say anything further in condemnation of the hospital buildings, which will probably be shortly disused; but I must express regret that so much unnecessary delay should have occurred in fixing upon a site for the new structure. I was accompanied to-day by Mr. Dodson, M.H.R., and Mr. Allen, Resident Magistrate, and we were all satisfied with the general good order which prevailed.

15th September, 1885.

CHRISTCHURCH.

On the 30th January, 1886, I went to this hospital and made various inquiries of its resident officers. The Committee being present at the same time, I had the opportunity of conferring with them, and

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advising them concerning certain contemplated additions and alterations to the present buildings. It would appear that a legacy of £1,000 is available for such purposes, to which may be added the Government subsidy of £500. An operating-room, properly arranged and adequately lighted, will be built in a suitable position between two of the new blocks. Certain alterations of the old buildings are under consideration with the view of providing a special ward for children as well as an ophthalmic ward. The want of a detached building for infectious cases will also be kept in view. On the 1st February I completed my inspection of the establishment. There were then sixty-four patients in residence—fifty-one males and thirteen females. Several of the former, belonging to the "refuge" class, were expecting daily to be removed to the Old Men's Home at Ashburton. Every patient had a separate conversation with me, and no complaints were forthcoming. I found, as usual, everything clean and in good order. The wards have a heavy and gloomy appearance, due to the architectural features of the building, the ponderous stoves in their middle, and to some want of taste in decorating the walls with suitable and cheerful tints. The treatment of the floors with "boiled linseed oil" has not been a success as regards appearance. I was glad to find that the hospital is now connected with the main drains of the city. Water-closets have everywhere taken the place of the dry-earth pans, and the creek running round the building has been cleared of its accumulated mud and weeds. This must be regarded as a vast sanitary improvement, aided as it is by a new artesian water-supply, with additional tanks for storage. Water is now superabundant, and runs to waste. The grounds are well kept, and the garden has supplied abundance of fruit and vegetables this season, notwithstanding the drought. Dr. Westenra has recently been appointed Resident Medical Officer. There is also a new matron and a new steward. All give promise of being very efficient of

6th February, 1886.

DUNEDIN.

My half-yearly inspection of the hospital was made on the 14th January, 1886. I have again visited it this day, and had a long conversation with the chairman of the Committee upon questions connected with its future management. Since my last report the number of patients in residence has varied between eighty-seven and 135, which latter number was reached in June last. To-day there are 100 under treatment. Of these, seventy-three are of the male sex and twenty-seven females. Sixteen of the men belong to the "refuge" class. My opinion as to the retaining of these persons in a general hospital is well known; I need only remark here, with much satisfaction, that the Committee are making efforts to transfer them to the care of the Benevolent Institution, and that there is a probability of these efforts being attended with success. One of the wards, as usual, I found empty, and in process of being cleaned. The others were in their usual good order. I noticed that white counterpanes are rapidly superseding the old and unsightly red rugs, and that a portable bath on wheels and three new air-beds have been provided. I learned also that a "litter" and a "horse-ambulance" are on their way out from England for use at this hospital. The patients, with every one of whom I conversed separately, made no complaints to me. In the female wards two probationer nurses are now learning their duties, in addition to the regular staff. For their accommodation, and for the greater comfort of the nurses, a rearrangement of rooms has been effected, and a good bath-room, sitting-room, and other conveniences provided. In the out-patients' department the waiting-room has been enlarged, and an ophthalmic-room built. This latter improvement has enabled the operating-room to be enlarged by throwing into it the space formerly used as a dark room; and the result is very satisfactory. An old store-room has been converted into a dormitory for three warders, but stands in need of better ventilation and protection from the heat of the sun. A disinfecting-box, heated by gas, has been erected in the wooden annex. A high and unsightly fence dividing the garden on the north side of the hospital from the path adjoining the building has been entirely removed. The effect, in improving the view from the rooms on this side, is most satisfactory; and the portion of ground nearest the hospital is in course of conversion into lawn and flower-beds. A most important improvement has been carried out in diverting the whole of the drains from the basement, and running them, outside the buildings, direct into the city sewers. Proper traps have been provided at each inlet to the new drains, and ventilating-tubes reaching above the roof of the hospital. The Committee have under consideration the better protection of the building from fire. The wooden annex, with its connecting corridor, is a constant source of danger to the main building. A hydrant will shortly be placed in the courtyard adjoining, and other measures taken to reduce the risk. It is also contemplated to provide one or more fireescapes for use from the upper story. Nothing has yet been done to provide a special ward for children, which is much needed. I may again point out that the "lying-in ward" is well placed for this use. I strongly object to the existence of a lying-in ward as a portion of a general hospital. If needed at all—which I much doubt—it should be erected elsewhere in the city. The diseases of women can be treated in the ordinary wards; while the experience in midwifery required of medical students should be gained (as in London and elsewhere) at the homes of the poor. Dr. Roberts continues to occupy the position of Resident Medical Officer in a very satisfactory manner. The house steward, Mr. Burns, has recently returned from a tour of inspection of the hospitals in neighbouring colonies. By this means, and by availing himself of all the recent publications relating to such establishments, he has possessed himself of a large fund of valuable information, which is being devoted to the welfare of the Dunedin Hospital. A vast number of improvements carried out during my period of office originated with him, and do him much credit. I learn that since the 1st December, 1885, the sum of £100 has been received on "maintenance" account. The out-patients' shillings produce about £2 10s. monthly.

16th January, 1886.

GREYTOWN.

I inspected this hospital on the evening of the 2nd March, 1886, finding only one patient under treatment—namely, a female suffering from ulcerated leg. On inquiry, I learned that five patients were occupying beds simultaneously some months ago. These were sufferers from typhoid fever. During the past twelve months about thirty in-patients have been admitted. Since my last inspection a new warder and matron have been appointed; and the very clean and orderly condition in which I found the whole of the hospital buildings and premises testifies to their efficiency and industry. I still adhere to my previously-expressed opinion that this hospital, however well it may be conducted, could well be dispensed with.

3rd March, 1886.

INVERCARGILL.

THE hospital here was inspected by me on the 20th January, 1886, and I was conducted through every part of the establishment by Dr. Lowe, the Resident Medical Officer. At present there are only seventeen patients occupying beds-viz., thirteen males and four females. Several of these belong to the incurable class, and one of the women is being separately treated in the detached lodge, as she is suffering from typhoid fever. The largest number of beds occupied simultaneously since my last visit was thirty. The wards, and, in fact, the whole establishment, is in its usual good order, but the male wards downstairs have a dingy and dull appearance. This is due to their situation, and to the smallness of the windows, which should reach almost to the ceiling. The walls would be better for plastering and painting, did funds permit. I am not unmindful of the improvements which have been continuously effected in this hospital during the past three years, and of the very successful efforts of the Committee in raising funds locally for such purposes; nor would I say anything to discourage them: but the poverty-stricken appearance of these wards is very striking to one who has just visited other hospitals better planned and constructed. When any further enlargement of the building takes place—which cannot be at a very distant date—it is to be hoped that a large and airy modern ward will be added. I am of opinion that the beds are too numerous in the present small wards, especially when patients suffering from phthisis occupy several of them. It is pleasing to find the old detached fever ward (I had almost written fever nest) gone at last, and a good brick building to replace it rapidly approaching completion. This will contain two wards, for three beds each, with a nurse's room between them. There is also a small special ward and a bath-room. I see no provision for washing up the crockery, &c., used for meals, which should certainly be done on the spot. The cooking may without danger be performed in the general kitchen. There is no other structural or other alteration to remark upon. The books are properly kept. The out-patients' register shows a large attendance almost daily under this category. It is difficult to understand how they can all be in "indigent" circumstances; but I find that nearly all of them bring recommendations from the Committee, who continue to devote a great deal of time and attention to the welfare of this hospital.

LAWRENCE.

This hospital was visited on the 15th January, 1886. There were resident at this date eleven male patients and four female; total, fifteen. One of these, an old man, belongs to the "refuge" class, but makes himself useful about the outside premises. As many as twenty-two beds have been occupied upon one occasion since my last inspection. My visit was a very unexpected one, but I found all in good order. Changes have been made in the staff since my last report, which was, in some respects, an unfavourable one. Mr. and Mrs. Duffy, the new steward and matron, have brought matters into much better order-all untidiness has disappeared, and everything is neat and I noticed a number of additional articles of furniture and ornament which have been placed in the wards, such as screens, looking-glasses, boxes for stores, and pictures (unframed). There were also many glasses containing cut flowers. White counterpanes have been introduced, and are kept scrupulously clean. A filter has also been provided, and a safe, in which the milk is kept cool and fresh. Much, however, remains to be done before the large ward for males can be considered furnished. The bedsteads are ricketty and out of date, while the forms provided as seats are not suitable for invalids, who should have the use of comfortable chairs and couches. Iron bedsteads with woven-wire mattrasses are now obtainable at small cost, and "mechanical beds," affording much relief both to patient and nurse, are also to be had. That patented by Mr. Jowsey, of Timaru, is especially to be commended for its simplicity and variety of purposes. There is a good stock of hed and other linen in the store-room, which, for convenience of keeping a variety of goods, has been partitioned into two parts. The supply of water from the underground tank has not failed during the present drought; but it would be very desirable to lay on a supply from the town mains, available for flushing urinals and for other important uses. With the exception of a night-warder, the steward and matron have no assistants, and they perform the whole of the domestic work and the Under such circumstances, the condition I found the hospital in is the best evidence of their ability and industry. Dr. Withers, the Medical Officer, resides in a newly-built detached house on the premises, and continues to render excellent service. I had the opportunity of consulting with him as to some cases of serious nature now under his care. A case-book (rara avis) is here kept and duly entered up. The register provided by Government has fallen into disuse, but should not be neglected further.

MASTERTON.

My annual inspection of this hospital was made on the 16th February, 1886, when I found two male patients only occupying beds; another will be admitted to-day. Both cases under treatment are of serious character, one having sustained a fracture of the spine, and requiring constant attention, which is cheerfully rendered. A number of additions and improvements have been made since my last report. The entrance-hall and passage have been papered and varnished, the steward's sitting-room and bed-room papered, seven new hair-mattrasses have been purchased, a good easy-chair presented, and three mechanical bedsteads procured. In the dispensary is a new portable hot-air or vapour bath; and a number of other useful additions are noticeable. An additional piece of ground behind the hospital has been fenced in and cultivated, and a large coal-shed erected. Mr. and Mrs. Bulpitt, the steward and matron, continue in charge, their service now reckoning some seven years' duration. I was much concerned to learn that some probability exists of their resigning their appointments, for I do not hesitate to assert that the utmost difficulty would be found in suitably replacing them. The hospital work is to them a "labour of love;" and the condition of the building, garden, and grounds is maintained in a way which might well serve as a model for other hospitals. To sum up in very few words, I could detect no fault. With the chairman of the Committee, Mr. Boddington, I had a long conversation. He takes much interest in all that concerns the welfare of the hospital, of which he is, not unnaturally, very proud.

16th February, 1886.

NELSON.

On the 8th December, 1885, I paid a visit of inspection to this hospital, and went over the whole of the premises with Dr. Boor, the Resident Medical Officer. I found sixteen male and four female patients under treatment as in-patients: one or two of these belong to the "chronic" class, the rest being proper cases for hospital treatment. The largest number of patients since my last visit at any one time has been twenty-one. The large ward at the back is reserved for infectious cases, and is now empty; it was recently occupied by two sufferers from diphtheria. I have very little to remark as to the hospital generally, which has always presented to me an appearance of homeliness and comfort. The wards are large and well-ventilated, and the bedding is good and scrupulously clean. In the matter of furniture, there is not that appearance of luxury to be seen in other colonial hospitals, and which is often due to private gifts and individual efforts rather than to expenditure of public money. No doubt, under the new Act the subscribers will take more interest in their local institutions than has hitherto been shown. Some minor improvements have lately been carried out, such as the refitting of the men's lavatory. A plan is also under consideration for diverting the drainage of the laundry and urinals from a neighbour's premises (recently brought into occupation), and conveying it into a proper sewer in the high road. It will be necessary, with. this object in view, to erect a new laundry in a more elevated position; but the expense need not be large. The present arrangements for giving a hot bath are both primitive and inconvenient, the bath-room being at some distance from the wards, and the furnace in a detached building. is plenty of room for a bath near the ward lavatory; and I beg to suggest that one of the modern contrivances for heating it by means of gas be adopted. If successful—of which I have no doubt the same arrangement may be carried out in all of the three wards. I recommend that the hospital be at once connected with the Telephone Exchange in the city: no special arrangements are at all necessary for this purpose. The Nelson Hospital is exceptionally fortunate in retaining the services of a medical officer who possesses the entire confidence of his Committee, his patients, and the public generally.

12th December, 1885.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

THERE are this day under treatment in the hospital ten males and two females, one of the latter, a little girl suffering from severe burns, being nursed by her grandmother. Several of the men belong to the "refuge" class; but, as pointed out in other reports, no establishment exists for their reception in this part of the colony. The steward and matron having left, the hospital is in the care of temporary officers; but all is to-day (Sunday) in very good order and very clean. No complaints of any kind reached me. The two principal wards have been rendered more cheerful by gifts of nicelyframed pictures and a large number of well-bound and readable books, which are placed on shelves so as to be readily accessible to the patients. I would suggest that a portion of the rough and unsightly floors be covered with linoleum, which would save labour in scrubbing and improve the sanitary condition of the wards. Some new bedsteads and bedding are badly wanted, the straw paillasses being old, hard, and musty-smelling. The Committee would find it economical to purchase iron bedsteads fitted with woven-wire mattrasses, and without any wooden framework. These, if not obtainable in the colony, are readily procured from England, and, with a two-inch hair mattrass, are cheaper than any other form of bedstead and bedding; being, moreover, healthy and practically indestructible. The women's ward is very hot, being exposed to the full force of the sun's rays, and badly requires a verandah. In the kitchen the colonial oven is out of order, and should be replaced by a proper range, which would supply hot water to the baths. The single rooms, forming part of the old asylum, are quite obsolete, and should be pulled down as unsuitable for wards.

21st February, 1886.

OAMARU.

My periodical inspection of this hospital took place to-day. I found nine in-patients under treatment, eight of whom were of the male sex; and all, without exception, were proper hospital cases. That they are well and kindly treated there can be no doubt: I received no complaint from any

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one. I am glad to notice some material improvements since my last visit. The room occupied by a warder—now dispensed with—has been made into a linen- and store-room, for which it is very well suited. The old linen-room has been converted into an excellent bath-room, supplied with both hot and cold water, and very conveniently placed for the use of female patients. The new kitchen-range furnishes the hot water here and also on the male side of the hospital, and works efficiently. The scullery has been divided by a partition, so as to form a store-room for groceries and other supplies. In the wards I noticed some new paillasses, and a large folding-screen presented by a lady. Some painting is badly wanted, the ward-doors looking shabby in this respect. Although nothing is lacking for the patients' comfort, yet an amount of untidiness is apparent, as has been noticed in previous reports. The floor of the large male ward is discoloured beyond the remedy of scrubbing. I recommend that the central part be covered with linoleum floor-cloth, and that the portions between and under the beds be darkly stained and waxed or varnished. The fever hospital has not been used for a considerable time; it requires cleaning and dusting. The grass surrounding it should also be cut. I have made particular inquiries respecting the quantities of meat and other articles consumed. The supply of the former is liberal; but, considering the fact that the contract is not for "best joints" only, I do not find any evidence of extravagance in the order-book which I examined. The hospital is well looked after by the Committee, and Dr. Garland's services as Visiting Medical Officer are highly spoken of.

8th January, 1886.

PATEA.

The establishment here called the "hospital" is scarcely worthy of the name, possessing as it does few of the comforts or appliances necessary for the proper treatment of the sick. Fortunately this class is not a numerous one, for three out of the four patients whom I found resident to-day would be fit inmates of a refuge. No such establishment exists, however, in the district. The rooms and belongings are kept very clean, and the best is certainly made by the warder of the poor means at his command; but there is a general appearance of abject poverty. The building has never yet been finished—the upper floor has not been lined, and admits the rain; the outside badly requires painting; sacks take the place of carpets, and the blankets and pillow-cases are worn into numerous holes. The front room, occupied by the four male patients, has been made more sightly and less draughty by papering its walls. This, and the provision of a portable zinc bath, are the only improvements which I have to note. The patients appear to be well looked after, and their dietary satisfactory.

20th February, 1886.

PICTON.

This evening I paid a visit to the hospital. There are ten in-patients under treatment—nine males and one female. Several of the men would be more properly provided for in a refuge. As usual, I found every part of the establishment scrupulously clean and in the best possible order. Some small improvements have been made since my last visit, such as placing linoleum floor-cloth upon the kitchen-floor, and fencing in the estate. The steward and matron appear to me very well qualified for their position, and deserving of encouragement.

15th September, 1885.

RIVERTON.

I inspected this hospital on the 19th January, 1886. There were three male and one female inpatients under treatment; but none of the cases were of a serious nature. A fortnight ago ten beds were occupied, and in October last as many as fourteen. The fever ward has not been required for its special use, but has been tenanted by ordinary patients when the other rooms have been full. No structural alterations have been made since my last report; but additions to the hospital are contemplated. The institution is to be a "separate" one under the Charitable Aid Act. I think the multiplication of large hospitals is a matter for regret. A cottage hospital in connection with the Invercargill establishment should have sufficed to meet the wants of the district. I found everything in good order and very clean. Some additional furniture and appliances have been procured, such as two iron bedsteads with mattrasses, and a good water-bed. Dr. Young has been succeeded by Dr. Nelson as Visiting Medical Officer.

THAMES.

On the 30th October, 1885, I made a thorough inspection of this hospital, its surroundings, and the Old Men's Refuge. I found comparatively few beds in occupation, the patients numbering thirteen males and one female. During this month twelve have been admitted; the average for each calendar month reaching nearly twenty. Although my visit was paid at an early hour, I found everything, without exception, in excellent order, the atmosphere of the wards being perfectly free from bad odour or "stuffiness." A good deal has been done here since my last visit. The new surgical ward is in constant occupation, and is furnished with twelve iron bedsteads, provided with woven-wire stretchers. These were made by Hinckley and Co., of Auckland, at a cost of £3 each. They are very comfortable, and will doubtless prove serviceable. With some minor improvements in the patterns and details of these bedsteads, it would no longer be necessary to go outside the colony to procure what are required for our asylums and hospitals. Between the bedsteads are neat lockers; some comfortable chairs, a pembroke table, commode, and chiffonière completing the furniture. There are venetian blinds to the windows, and good linoleum on the floor in the centre of the ward. When the walls have been painted and decorated with pictures this ward will have a very cheerful and even handsome appearance. The new operating-room is also very good in its way—well lighted

with windows and gaslights, and provided with a good operating-table and a water-supply. In this room the surgical instruments are kept, amongst which I noticed a new "steam spray-producer." Here, also, the out-patients are seen daily, and their number would seem to indicate that all cannot be proper objects of charitable aid, although each has to bring a "recommendation" from a subscriber, unless suffering from an accident, when no "order" is necessary. Fourteen out-patients were dealt with on the 29th, and sometimes twenty are seen in one day. The hospital washing is now done at the refuge by a woman permanently employed for that purpose. Any spare time which she may have is filled up in mending clothes or assisting in the nursing. This change is a beneficial one, and more economical than the old plan of "putting out" the washing. The kitchen, offices, closets, and the gardens are beautifully kept, and I have no fault whatever to find with anything in the hospital. No fever cases are under treatment here; and the fever hospital at Parawai has been empty for the last eighteen months. I have therefore not deemed it necessary to inspect it upon this occasion.

31st October, 1885.

TIMARU.

I have this day inspected the Timaru Hospital, which I found occupied by twenty-three in-patients, one or two of whom are old residents, of the "chronic" class. It is scarcely necessary to remark that everything was in the best possible order. Indeed, the ward occupied by males, in point of appearance, comfort, furnishing, decoration, and perfect ventilation, far surpasses any other in the colony. I much wish that those who are interested in other hospitals could see this ward, and take it as a model for imitation. The other wards of this hospital are not less cared for, but their architectural arrangements are neither so cheerful nor so perfect. Articles of invalid furniture are in use which for excellence of workmanship and luxurious finish could not be surpassed. There are invalid-couches, wheeled chairs, reading-easels, bedside-tables, and walking-machines for the paralyzed; also screens of modern design, and bath-chairs, upon which money has been lavished; but the whole of that money, reaching the amount of £120, was collected by the unaided efforts of Mrs. Jowsey, the matron, who has thus conferred a great and lasting benefit upon the hospital; for the articles are so substantial that they will not readily wear out. Mr. Jowsey, the steward, is also the inventor of a mechanical bed which in a multiplicity of ways contributes to the comfort of the invalid, and should find an extended use in the colonial hospitals. I have no other alterations to remark upon as regards the hospital buildings; but extensive improvements have been effected in the ornamental grounds with the aid of prison-labour. Many wants remain to be supplied. The old mortuary has not been replaced. There is no operating-room, nor, in fact, any room in the hospital which is properly lighted for this use; which is a very serious drawback. No consultingroom exists other than the dispensary; while the out-patients must wait their turn in a cold passage with concrete floor. The nurses also badly need a common sitting-room. They have only the ward-kitchens for their use, and here fires are necessary for various purposes. With the thermometer approaching 100° in the shade, as was the case yesterday, these kitchens are not proper sitting-rooms.

7th January, 1886.

WAIPUKURAU.

THE hospital was visited by me to-day, when I inspected every portion and made a number of inquiries. I also spoke to each of the patients, who now number sixteen, all being of the male sex. Many of them are sufferers from severe accidents, and three have recently undergone amputation of a limb. The largest number of patients—viz., nineteen—was reached about a fortnight since. It is necessary at present to place six of the more convalescent patients in the detached fever ward, which fortunately is not now, nor ever has been, required for its special use. Should an infectious case demand admission, the hospital would be placed in a serious difficulty for want of more accommodation. I am glad, therefore, to learn that the Committee will shortly consider the question of erecting an additional ward. With the increased work of nursing no corresponding change has been made in the staff, which must at times find difficulty in giving the patients all the attention demanded. Two chronic cases have recently been removed to the refuge at Napier. The only patient now belonging to this category is an aged and feeble man, not very long resident. As has always been the case with this hospital, I found everything in the best possible order. I must, however, draw attention to the walls of the wards, which are badly in want of paint or distemper. The kitchen, also, would be the better for a coat of varnish, which it has never yet had, and also for the removal of the partition which converts part of it into a store-room. In connection with the proposed additional ward, it is to be hoped that a more cheerful sitting-room for convalescents will be provided. The present one is gloomy in the extreme, and might well be converted into a store, thereby releasing a suitable room for a servants' bed-room. I noticed a number of new books and periodicals, supplied since my last visit. A supply of hand-grenades, for extinguishing incipient fires, has also lately been provided. The dry season has given trouble in the kitchen-garden here as elsewhere, and has caused a failure in the water-supply, which is entirely dependent on rainfall. Some additional tanks would prevent a recurrence of this latter difficulty. No one visiting this hospital can fail to see that it is under good management, and that the high reputation which it enjoys is well founded.

17th February, 1886.

WELLINGTON.

The hospital is to-day very full. There are 68 male and 23 female patients under treatment: total, 91. My time being limited to-day, I have only visited the wards, leaving the remainder of the buildings and premises for inspection upon another occasion. The wards I found in their usual good order, but the staff of nurses short-handed. It appears that three of their number are incapacitated for duty by illness. The Lady Superintendent is also confined to her bed from the effects of a severe

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fall, and is not likely to be at her duties again for some time to come. Dr. Kenny, who is at present in charge of the hospital, appears to be very kind and attentive to his patients. His duties must just now be onerous, as he appears to have a large number of out-patients to treat, in addition to his other work. I find that the new apparatus for the supply of hot water to the establishment gives satisfaction. Additional rooms for the nursing-staff are badly required. It is not unreasonable to attribute the prevalent illness to the insanitary rooms which the nurses now occupy. One of these rooms has a large plunge-bath beneath the floor, and was offensive (at the time of my visit) with the smell from adjoining urinals and earth-closets, which pervaded the whole of the back corridor. These offices were recently remodelled and much improved; but they are badly placed, and it appears impossible, with the wind in a certain direction, to prevent bad odours from entering the corridor. At the earliest possible opportunity proper water-closets should be provided, and connected with the town sewers.

30th September, 1885. This afternoon I have been occupied with my periodical inspection of the hospital. The patients resident number eighty—namely, sixty-one males and nineteen females. There are now a number of empty beds; whereas a few weeks ago difficulty was experienced in providing the necessary accommodation for eases of urgency. To-day is one of the three days in each week devoted to outpatients, of whom I saw about twenty in attendance. This number is about the usual one. A large number of the convalescent and other patients were enjoying the beautiful day by sitting or walking in the grounds, which are kept in very good order. To these patients, as well as to those confined to their beds, I addressed various inquiries as to their comfort and treatment, obtaining in every case satisfactory replies. The fever hospital has been occupied until this afternoon by an erysipelas patient (male). A few days ago a female patient, judged to be suffering from infectious disease, was also there, and occupied of necessity the nurse's room, there being only one ward in this building. The nurse in charge had to sleep on the floor of the entrance-lobby. Here is another proof of the want of a small ward for females, which I have formerly recommended to be added to the building. The whole of the wards I found in excellent order and beautifully clean. If no new articles of furniture or ornament were noticeable, it was because there was no need for them, the wards being already very completely provided with such things. Cut flowers continue to be liberally supplied by lady visitors. The earth-closets entered from the back corridor were certainly not free from offensive smell, and they will continue a source of trouble and annoyance until replaced by proper water-closets. The construction of the main drain in the adjacent public road will shortly render this practicable. The bath-rooms are poorly fitted, and are used as receptacles for soiled linen. This is an objectionable practice, though perhaps unavoidable while the laundry is occupied as a refuge for old women; but I noticed a great want of tidiness, more particularly in those bath-rooms behind Nos. 1, 3, and 4 wards. Old shoes, boards, bottles, rags, and other articles should find a more appropriate home; while a broken thermometer in one, and a "maximum and minimum" greenhouse thermometer in another, were useless for ascertaining the temperature of a bath. The kitchen-range appears to work in a very unsatisfactory manner. The ovens are so slow in their action as to spoil the appearance and tenderness of the meat, while the hot-water The ovens are so supply from the range-boiler is at present a complete failure. This defect ought to be within easy remedy. The general supply of hot water from the large boilers elsewhere continues very satisfactory. In the small kitchens attached to each ward the ranges have been replaced by "register stoves," with a gas arrangement above for heating or boiling water or other fluids. The result is very good. The consumption of alcoholic stimulants, though still very high this last month, is considerably less than was the case in the previous one. My opinion upon this matter is already so well known that I need say no more in this place upon the subject. A great many changes have occurred in the hospital resident staff since my last report. Miss Marsden, the Lady Superintendent, being unable to continue in office through the results of a severe fall, has been succeeded by Mrs. Hermansen as matron. Mr. Rountree is now the steward, and Mr. Good the dispenser. Dr. Hassall, as Resident Medical Officer, will, in my opinion, do excellent service in promoting the efficiency and popularity of the institution. 3rd March, 1886.

WANGANUI.

There are this day twenty patients occupying beds in the hospital, of whom seventeen are males and three females. The total number of beds is twenty-six, which includes those in the so-called fever wards. On more than one occasion there have been so many applicants for admission that arrangements have been made with a boarding-house to receive some of the convalescent or slighter cases, at a charge per head of £1 per week. As many as five patients have been thus simultaneously boarded out—an arrangement neither desirable nor economical. The increased number of patients requiring attention has necessitated the engagement of an additional nurse and also of a cook. I notice a number of patients here who do not require hospital treatment. Old cases of paralysis and chronic ulcers of the leg might appropriately find a home in a refuge; but no such establishment exists upon this coast. There are a few minor improvements noticeable since my last visit to this hospital. The attics have been papered, and a cupboard enlarged so as to make a warder's bedroom. A new bath-room has been fitted up near the kitchen, and a meat-safe provided. A number of iron bedsteads have also been purchased. The hospital is kept clean and in good order; but it is a building discreditable alike to the town and district which it serves. Any system of enlarging it—which I learn is not improbable—is strongly to be condemned, unless such enlargement be a large and modern ward, planned so as to constitute an integral part of a future entirely new establishment. The site is sufficiently large for such a purpose, and its position unobjectionable; but it might be found more profitable to sell it for building-sites, and to erect the hospital elsewhere, as previously suggested in my reports.

19th February, 1886.

Table showing the Ages of Patients in the various Hospitals throughout the Colony during the Year 1885.

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TABLE showing the Accommodation and Amount of Relief afforded in the various Hospitals in the Colony during the Year 1885.

Authorized Communication							Ассош	Accommodation.						Patient	oopuI) s	Patients (Indoor) in 1885,						<u>~</u>	Relief,		
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