

instruments, books, contracts, diet-scales, &c., and found that everything is carefully looked after by the Committee. I heard accidentally of one patient who had just left the hospital, and made bitter complaints of his treatment; but on paying him a visit he professed satisfaction with all that had been done to him. His only source of dissatisfaction was that, being very ill (phthisical), he could not eat the food provided, and they refused to let him send for sausages, which he could not eat if he got them.

31st August, 1886.

#### NEW PLYMOUTH.

THE New Plymouth Hospital stands on a piece of rough, hilly ground about four acres in extent, within easy reach of the centre of the town. The land is almost in its natural state, but recently a few residents have collected a sum of £36, which is to be expended in improving the grounds. The Chairman informs me that it is contemplated to include in the cost of the new hospital the cost of properly laying off the surroundings, so that it will no longer be left in its hitherto neglected condition. The existing building is the outcome of a long series of disjointed additions and improvements. The nucleus round which the present heterogeneous structure has taken shape consisted of portions of the old asylum, to which additions have been made from time to time. Recently considerable improvements have been effected. The two main wards have been refurnished, and have a wonderfully comfortable and cosy appearance. Most of the beds are good, and nearly all the bedding is new, and of good quality. Privacy is secured, where necessary, by means of very neat folding and other screens. There is also a good clock in each of the male wards, and a fine American organ, the gift of some benevolent ladies, in the female ward. At the rear of the female ward a scullery, water-closet, and bath with hot and cold water laid on have been put up, and all are carefully trapped. A small concrete yard has also been laid down, which is a great convenience in the working of the kitchen and its accessories. The kitchen has been furnished with a new high-pressure range and boiler at a cost of £50, and is kept remarkably clean. There were in all thirteen patients at the time of my visit—nine males and four females. I conversed with them all separately, and found none had any complaints to make: one difficulty was mentioned, but I satisfied myself and them that it was inevitable in the circumstances. I was present during the dinner-hour, and found it all that could be desired. There is also a reasonable amount of variety in the dietary. I advised that soup should be given more frequently for the future. The care and attention devoted to his duties by Dr. O'Carroll were very evident from my examination of two cases of severe accident, which I found to have been very carefully and skilfully treated. All stores are got by contract, and I found them all of good quality, though some of the items, as, for instance, tea and candles, were rather dear. The dispensary is not very neatly kept: the shelves present rather a heterogeneous collection of bottles variously labelled. There is an elaborate case of surgical instruments; but on examination I found the quality inferior. The drugs are purchased in the town. An excellent supply of readable books and papers is provided by local contributions. The staff consists of Dr. O'Carroll, who receives £200 per annum (Dr. Gibbs and Dr. Leatham are honorary officers); Miss Blackley, the matron, who receives £100; an assistant nurse, who gets £55; and one male attendant at £112. Besides these there is a cook, and washerwoman who comes four days a week. The change to female nurses seems to have resulted in a great improvement, and I was favourably impressed with the style in which they did their work. I found the hospital books proper, as well as those kept by the Secretary, to be all in good order; and I made an examination into the details of the expenditure for the past year. The governing body are careful and attentive: two members especially, Messrs. Richmond and Elliott, who reside in the town, are frequent in their visits. I am glad also to be able to say that considerable interest is being taken in the institution by the ladies of the town. I hope that when the new hospital is built local energy will insist on making it in all its details and surroundings a credit to the town. The religious wants of the patients are attended to by the clergy of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches.

29th and 30th September, 1886.

#### PATEA.

THIS hospital stands, high and windy, on a hill overlooking a bend in the river. The fences are dilapidated, the ground uncared-for, and no attempt is made at growing shelter. A few young plants of *Pinus insignis* are stuck in the turf, and are, of course, all dead or dying. A small sandy corner is enclosed in a fashion to serve as a garden; it looks more like a fowl-yard. The building is of two stories, the upper unfinished. On the ground-floor there are two male and one female ward, all very untidily kept, and very badly furnished. The beds are mostly iron, of old military pattern; some are mere rough wooden structures, with canvas stretchers. The mattresses are of flax and straw, without any palliasses, and the blankets are of poor quality. The rest of the furniture is of the meagrest description. There were three male patients, two of them chronic cases, and one suffering from cancer, notwithstanding a recent operation for its removal. There were eleven patients treated since the beginning of the year, and no deaths. The whole institution, so far as I can see, is run by a young girl, the daughter of the steward, who, so far as I can see, does little or nothing himself. He was absent during most of my visit, but returned before I left. When I pointed out to him the wretched state of the house and grounds he seemed to think it was all right, and carried himself as if he had no responsibility in the matter. The dispensary is a wretched room, containing four sides of an old medicine-chest standing on a rough chest of drawers. The supply of drugs and instruments is very poor. The store contains fourteen very poor new blankets, a few towels, sheets, and quilts. As regards sanitary arrangements, they are of the most primitive kind. The rain-water is collected in tanks, which are so placed that the overflow runs under the building: the well is used