

1895.
NEW ZEALAND.

HOSPITALS AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS
OF THE COLONY

(REPORT ON THE), BY THE INSPECTOR OF HOSPITALS.

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

The INSPECTOR OF HOSPITALS and CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS to the Hon. the MINISTER of
EDUCATION.

SIR,—

I have the honour to lay before you the following report on the hospitals and charitable institutions of the colony for the year ending the 31st March, 1895:—

The total expenditure on hospitals for last year was £91,168 14s. 11d., against £87,060 19s. 7d. for previous year—an increase of £4,107 15s. 4d. Deducting the cost of new buildings and additions, the expenditure was £79,031 4s. 6d., as compared with a similar expenditure for the previous year of £75,258 16s. 2d.—an increase of £3,772 8s. 4d.

There was an increase of 579 in the number of patients treated last year, with a decrease of 1½d. per head in the average daily cost.

PATIENTS' PAYMENTS.

		1891-92.		1892-93.		1893-94.		1894-95.	
		Patients.	Receipts.	Patients.	Receipts.	Patients.	Receipts.	Patients.	Receipts.
Auckland	1,048	£ 1,435	1,154	£ 2,051	1,188	£ 2,587	1,202	£ 2,560
Christchurch	1,172	723	1,199	674	1,349	507	1,439	420
Dunedin	912	888	979	815	1,131	987	1,125	1,026
Wellington	1,105	1,242	1,095	1,693	1,261	995	1,374	955

The average amount per head received for maintenance of patients last year was: Auckland, £2 2s. 7d.; Christchurch, 5s. 10d.; Dunedin, 18s. 3d.; Wellington, 13s. 11d.

The total expenditure last year for charitable aid was £86,555 8s. 6d., as against £76,616 14s. 9d. for the previous year—an increase of £9,938 13s. 9d. Of this increase £5,300 may be put down on account of the special efforts made for the relief of the unemployed in Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. Owing to the continued depression, I expect a very great increase under this head for the current year. Indeed, it has become a matter of much anxiety how we can wean the local bodies from this way of increasing the charitable-aid vote. The total expenditure on hospitals and charitable aid was £177,724 3s. 5d., as compared with £163,677 14s. 4d. for the previous year, being an increase of £14,046 9s. 1d.

PRESENT ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY IN NEW ZEALAND.

Considered historically, this problem, so far as New Zealand is concerned, I have frequently referred to. In my report for 1892 I explained its evolution from provincial times, in order to make clear how inextricably its solution is bound up with the consolidation of local government. I have long held the opinion that to reform our hospital and charitable-aid system it is first necessary to reform our whole system of local government. "From time to time after the abolition of the provinces new local bodies, armed with rating and borrowing powers, were created as necessity arose, so that in 1885, when Parliament found itself obliged to face the question of charitable institutions and hospitals, two great dangers had to be guarded against—too many local bodies and the killing of voluntary charity. The excessive multiplication of local bodies was fast becoming an intolerable evil; and yet it was a vital necessity that our charitable institutions and hospitals should be locally administered. The law passed in that year, with some amendments introduced in 1886, has been in operation ever since; and all the experience which has been gained in the working of it has served to cast a strong light on the evils and the dangers which surround this problem. The Act attempted first of all to give effect to the prime necessity for local power based on local taxation. This has been successfully achieved. . . . While, however, this great advance has been