

1878.
NEW ZEALAND.

CHARITABLE AID

(CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE VINCENT COUNTY COUNCIL RELATIVE TO).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Ballance, with the leave of the House.

No. 1.

MR. C. T. BATKIN to the CHAIRMAN of the COUNTY COUNCIL of VINCENT.

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Treasury, Wellington, 14th March, 1878.

Referring to section 13 of "The Financial Arrangements Act, 1876," requiring that all subsidies payable to counties and boroughs shall be subject to *pro rata* deductions for the maintenance of hospitals and charitable institutions, and to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary's circular of the 5th instant, No. 4, in which it is proposed that, in cases where the maintenance and control of these institutions is taken over by the municipalities or counties, a grant of pound for pound on the amount of all paid-up subscriptions will be made, and no deductions on account of these services will be made from subsidies: I have the honor, by direction of the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, to inform you that, as it is held that the Treasury is bound by law to make these deductions, it is proposed, in paying the remaining moiety of the subsidies payable under the Financial Arrangements Act for the current year, to continue the practice of deductions as heretofore, on the understanding that, in all cases where the county or borough shall, before the 30th June next, assent to the proposals of the Government and take upon itself the control and maintenance of its hospitals and charitable institutions, an amount equivalent to the sum deducted from the subsidy paid for the half-year ending on the above date shall be repaid to the county or borough, together with the special grant of pound for pound above referred to.

I have, &c.,

C. T. BATKIN,
Secretary to the Treasury.

To the Chairman of the County Council of Vincent.

No. 2.

The Hon. MR. BALLANCE to the CHAIRMAN of the COUNTY COUNCIL of VINCENT.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 15th March, 1878.

The Government on taking office found that the hospitals and charitable institutions throughout the colony were being managed upon no fixed principle or system, and that it was absolutely necessary to place them on a more satisfactory footing.

Up to the end of December, and till the new Financial Arrangements Bill took effect, it was impossible to change the existing state of things, but from that date the principle Government have endeavoured to bring into operation is one which is at once comprehensible, uniform, and practical.

In the larger towns Government have hitherto maintained a most unsatisfactory control, and paid the expenditure; recovering it, however, from the subsidies payable to the boroughs and adjacent counties. In the outlying localities and at Hokitika a grant in aid, differing in some instances, but commonly 20s. for 20s. of subscriptions, has been given, the hospital being managed by a committee appointed by the subscribers.

A proposal has been made to the Municipalities of the larger towns to place the hospitals and charitable aid under the direct control and management of the Borough Councils, and to subsidize them to the extent of 20s. for every 20s. of paid-up subscriptions and of moneys contributed from the borough fund, and to make no deductions whatever from the subsidies; and the Government propose to offer similar terms to County Councils, if they will undertake to manage hospitals in country districts, many of the patients admitted being resident outside the boroughs.

One question would remain for adjustment between the County and Borough Councils, namely, that of their respective shares of the cost of managing hospitals in boroughs. This might probably be adjusted by a charge being made by Corporations upon the counties of a *pro rata* sum per head for county patients and paupers; and if this or any other mode which shall be found satisfactory of removing what appears to be an unfair charge upon the borough funds can be arranged between the Councils, a more equitable system of contribution would be established than the present one of deductions from the subsidies payable to each local body.