

INVERCARGILL.

ON the 8th October I made an inspection of this hospital, and also visited it again on the 9th, with the view of considering the proposed additions and alterations. The Committee were good enough to arrange a special meeting in the town, so that they might discuss the matter with me. Dr. Wardale attended, and submitted some useful suggestions. I am able to report favourably of the condition of the hospital. The grounds have been cleared up since my last visit, and arrangements have been made for painting the exterior of the building and repairing the boundary-fences without delay. Advantage is being taken of a temporary decrease in the number of patients for the purpose of cleaning and purifying the wards, one of which I found empty for this reason. The in-patients now number seventeen only: the average lately has been twenty-two. There are in all twenty-six beds, but some of the rooms are small and scarcely suitable for wards. All the present inmates are proper objects for hospital treatment, for at any rate a short period. No addition or alteration has been made to the buildings. The old asylum portion has been occupied by five or six cases of fever since I was here, and nothing further requires to be said as to its unsuitableness for such a purpose. The patients whom I conversed with appeared to be considerably and skilfully treated. I cannot approve of the practice in vogue here of dispensing with the use of sheets on the beds: the blankets get very dirty in consequence, as I found to be the case in one or two instances; and the plan is not good, from either a sanitary or an economical point of view. I was glad, however, to find that a small supply of sheets had been procured. I have suggested that the paint be removed from the upper row of panes of glass, which are thus obscured in the lower wards: this will improve their cheerfulness without interfering with their privacy. No additions have been made as regards furniture and ornamental objects, and no inventory is regularly kept up. I have made the usual inquiries, and find that maintenance-money is charged where practicable; but, as a rule, the poor only are admitted to the benefits of the hospital. Subscriptions do not here entitle to admission. The out-patients number about thirty-six weekly. The Committee continue to take great interest in the institution, which they visit daily. They have been fortunate in securing the services, as Medical Officer, of Dr. Wardale, formerly of the Clyde Hospital, Dunstan. The town and district of Invercargill are growing rapidly, and some increase of hospital accommodation becomes a necessity. By removing a central chimneystack from a group of four rooms, two wards may be constructed to contain six beds each. The kitchen and its offices require rebuilding without delay; and at the same time, a dining-room, bath-room, two warders' rooms, a larder, and a washhouse should be erected. The Committee have no funds available for these purposes.

9th October, 1883.

KUMARA.

THE hospital was visited by me this day. The buildings, which were in progress, are now completed, but the new ward has never yet been required for use. It contains only the proper cubic space for three beds, and has been quite spoilt by the cutting-off of a portion of it for a warders' room and a store. This I pointed out before it was too late to be altered. The ward is not yet furnished, and would scarcely appear to be required at present. The wardswoman's room is too small, and should be enlarged by including in it an otherwise useless recess in the neighbouring passage. I found six patients in the hospital, all of the male sex. Care is taken to exclude chronic cases whenever practicable. The wards looked bright and cheerful, and beds and bedding were good and beautifully clean. The whole of the establishment shows signs of industry and good order, the domestic work being all done (washing included) by the Wardswoman. The laundry is nothing but a shed, entirely open along one side, and having no fittings but a portable copper. Some improvement is needed here. A garden is being formed round the new building; and vegetables continue to be grown in the kitchen-garden by the Wardsman, who appears but rarely to get any help from the patients in this work. The books are, as usual, well kept, and a proper order-book is now used for obtaining supplies. The out-patients number sixty or seventy yearly, and are seen on any day of the week. Payments by in-patients are seldom made; and those who subscribe to obtain admission often commence to do so after illness has overtaken them. I have no doubt that the hospital is often used by those who could well afford to pay a private medical attendant. Dr. Porter, who has done good work here, has resigned his appointment, being about to leave the district. The whole of the patients I found to be quite contented with their treatment.

I visited this hospital on the evening of the 7th April, 1884, and found everything in its usual good order. Beds were occupied by eight males and one female. They all appeared to be comfortable and well attended to. The kitchen has been enlarged, and much improved, by throwing into it a useless passage, as recommended in my former report. I also noticed that a garden has been formed adjoining the hospital: there is a grass plot and some long flower-beds. This is a great improvement. Dr. Porter has been succeeded by Dr. Monckton as Medical Officer. I learn that the maximum number of patients simultaneously treated has been ten.

11th April, 1884.

LAWRENCE.

A VISIT of inspection was paid by me to the hospital this day. The number of in-patients is just now exceptionally low, and advantage has been taken of the opportunity for cleaning and white-washing the wards. I found beds occupied by eight males and three females. One of the former is a feeble old man, who makes himself very useful in the kitchen. Two of the females could be properly treated as out-patients, did not the fact of their residing sixteen miles from the town render it impracticable to do so. With these qualifications the patients are all proper hospital cases. I spoke to them individually, and found them content and grateful for the treatment they experience.