

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 officers.

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 fire-escapes 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.