

WELLINGTON HOME FOR THE AGED AND NEEDY.

This is not, strictly speaking, a public institution in the sense that the others are. It was built out of moneys subscribed by benevolent citizens of Wellington, and which were subsidised by the State. The management is in the hands of trustees. All members who contribute £1 are entitled to elect the inmates of the Home. The total cost of the building and furniture was £4,937. It is well designed, and contains comfortable accommodation for thirty persons. At present the inmates number 26. Mr. and Mrs. Dixon act as master and matron, and are assisted by a servant.

The weekly cost per head is 8s. 1½d.

THE OLD MAN'S HOME, NEW PLYMOUTH.

This is a commodious, old, but very substantial building, standing on a piece of good land, about 4 acres in extent, on the outskirts of the town. This contains five or six old men, who get rations and tobacco, and do their own cooking, &c.

The weekly cost is 5s. 4½d.

WANGANUI.

The Wanganui Board pays 9s. per week for the maintenance of eight old men in a boarding-house.

NELSON REFUGE.

This is a large and commodious building, originally used as an immigration barracks. Besides this there is a row of neat cottages, erected by the Renwick Trust, where old persons are lodged free. The number of inmates on the date of my inspection—13th February, 1891—was 22 men and 8 women. The Home is admirably managed by the matron, who is assisted by one servant and washerwoman one day in the week. Dr. Boor looks after the health of the inmates.

MARLBOROUGH AND WEST COAST.

As I have already explained, the Hospitals of Blenheim, Westport, Greymouth, and Hokitika partake largely of the nature of old men's refuges, owing to the fact that no provision has yet been made in these districts for the aged poor.

A piece of land ought to be set apart somewhere in the neighbourhood of Greymouth for a home sufficient to lodge and employ usefully all the aged and needy miners of the West Coast who are now crowding the hospitals.

THE WOOLSTON JUBILEE HOME, CHRISTCHURCH.

This consists of the centre block and one wing of a most elaborate and costly structure, designed to give comfortable single rooms to a large number of inmates. On the date of my last visit it contained 9 men and 22 women, who were all comfortably lodged and cared for at a cost of 8s. 0½d. per head per week. Like the Costley Home, in Auckland, this is built on a small piece of land 6 acres in extent, whereas it ought to have been surrounded with a farm.

ASHBURTON HOME.

This is an old worn-out building, standing on a small triangular section of land on the outskirts of the township. On the day of my inspection—26th January, 1891—it contained 56 old persons, who had good beds, were well fed, and professed themselves comfortable. The institution is in charge of Mr. and Mrs. Fox, assisted by a daughter. One of the old men acts as cook, and another as nurse, each getting a small salary.

The weekly cost is 7s. 1½d. per head.

DUNEDIN BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION.

This institution is situated about two miles from Dunedin, on a section of land about 10 acres in extent, part of which is carefully cultivated as a garden. The original building was very badly planned; but the additional buildings put up of late years are admirably fitted for their purpose. On the 1st day of January last the institution contained 167 adult inmates—131 males and 36 females.

The management of this whole institution is very good. Mr. Solomon, the Chairman of the Board, has always taken a lively interest in all its affairs, and the result is a combination of comfort and economy that deserves very high commendation. I am obliged, however, to condemn absolutely the system of keeping 76 destitute and neglected children in such an institution. They ought not to be brought up, however carefully they may be looked after, in the atmosphere of such a place. The experience of the whole English world condemns the system. They ought to be boarded out under the supervision of the Education Department.

THE INVERCARGILL HOME.

This is a handsome, well-designed brick building, which cost about £3,000. It is admirably managed and very comfortable. The weekly cost is 10s. per head, or, excluding the cost of management, 7s. The inmates were 25 in number. Like all the rest of our benevolent homes, this is built so close to town that a sufficient area of good land could not be got.

DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

I find that this problem of how to deal with our destitute and neglected children has reached a very acute stage. In consequence of the great movement towards economy which of late years has arisen all over the colony, Charitable Aid Boards have begun to look very sharply after their expenditure. Owing to their having no control over the Industrial Schools, while they are obliged