

This Hospital has a chronic feud with the South Canterbury Charitable Aid Board, and gives a very instructive illustration of the working of the existing law. In South Canterbury, owing to the amount of money from the Land Fund available for local purposes at a certain stage of the provincial history, the ideas of the people were large. Splendid buildings for hospital purposes were erected at Timaru, sufficient for the whole of the district for years to come. Even yet they are never anything like full. At every visit I find splendid wards quite empty of patients. Not content with this, fine hospitals were erected also at Waimate and Ashburton. The members of the Charitable Aid Board are also Trustees of the Timaru Hospital, which is not a separate institution, while the Waimate Hospital is. The Timaru Board, having sufficient room, and to spare, for the whole district, grasp at every opportunity to shut up or starve the Waimate institution as unnecessary. The Waimate people for years raised voluntarily the £100 required of separate institutions until last year, when they were £43 short, and this year they are £49 short. The Timaru Board, who voluntarily raise nothing for their own Hospital, because the law does not require it, take advantage of the shortcoming of their neighbours to try to close their Hospital. They cannot legally do it, because the Act provides no penalty for failure on the part of any existing separate institution to continue to raise the full £100 by voluntary subscription. Here reason and injustice are so mixed up that it passes the wit of man to find a solution. The Waimate people want to be made into a separate hospital district, and thus add one more to the already excessive number of our independent local bodies. In my opinion, this would be a mischievous and retrograde step. It would be much better to carry on with as much mutual forbearance as possible until such time as the promised Local Government Consolidation Bill makes it possible to deal with the whole question in a comprehensive fashion. Apart from this burning question, which keeps the district in a perpetual turmoil, the Waimate Hospital is a thoroughly satisfactory institution, and deserves the public confidence to a very high degree.

WAIPAWA HOSPITAL.

Number of patients on 31st March, 1891	...	...	...	8
Admitted during the year	...	...	...	209
Total under treatment				217
Discharged	...	...	...	183
Died	...	...	...	17
Remaining on 31st March, 1892				17

Sex.—196 males, 21 females.

Localities from which Patients came.—Kaikora and coast, 21; Waipukurau, 9; Bush, 92; Makaretu, 13; Woodville, 17; Porangahau and Wainui, 25; Waipawa, 10; Te Aute, 10; Pahiatua, 9; Hastings, 4; Wellington, 3; Gisborne, 1; Napier, 1; Palmerston North, 1; Sydney, 1.

Nationality.—Colonial born, 52; English, 49; Scotch, 29; Irish, 47; Scandinavian, 18; Australian, 6; Maoris, 4; Russian, 3; American, 4; German, 2; French, 1; Swiss, 1; Portuguese, 1.

Religion.—Church of England, 99; Roman Catholic, 43; Presbyterian, 45; Lutheran, 24; Wesleyan, 6.

Total collective days' stay in hospital, 5,843; individual average days' stay, 27. Daily average cost per head, 4s. 7½d.; less patients' payments, 4s. 2½d.

Outdoor Patients.—None.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

<i>Revenue.</i>				<i>Expenditure.</i>			
		£	s. d.			£	s. d.
From Government	...	559	6 3	Rations	...	422	10 7
Local bodies	...	400	0 0	Wines, spirits, ale, &c.	...	18	6 6
Subscriptions and donations	...	182	3 8	Surgery and dispensary	...	11	9 9
Patients' payments	...	120	0 6	Fuel and light	...	91	13 4
Other sources	...	70	15 0	Bedding and clothing	...	54	17 10
Balance from last year	...	112	3 8	Furniture, earthenware, and repairs	...	39	5 4
				Washing and laundry	...	13	0 0
				Salaries and wages	...	571	2 10
				Funerals	...	48	6 0
				Printing, advertising, postage, and stationery	...	18	1 6
				Interest	...	0	17 8
				Insurance	...	21	0 0
				Other expenses	...	51	17 6
Total	...	£1,444	9 1	Total	...	£1,362	8 10

I have nothing to report about this institution but that, as usual, it is in every respect one of the best managed hospitals in the colony.