

1902.
NEW ZEALAND.

HOSPITALS AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS OF THE COLONY

(REPORT ON THE), BY THE ASSISTANT INSPECTOR OF HOSPITALS.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The ASSISTANT INSPECTOR of HOSPITALS and CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS to the Hon. the MINISTER of EDUCATION.

5th July, 1902.

THE total cost of administration of charitable aid in 1901 was £79,873; this year, 1902, it is £88,848, an increase of £8,975. It is satisfactory to note that outdoor relief has decreased by £3,247, and that, out of the total increase of £12,222 for indoor relief, £9,100 has been spent for building purposes.

The North Canterbury Charitable Aid Board has provided a new and much-needed Home at Ashburton; the Taranaki Charitable Aid Board has also built a new Home, and burnt the insani- tary building that did duty as an Old Men's Home for many years. The Southland Charitable Aid Board has made considerable outlay on the buildings at Lorne Farm.

The amount distributed in outdoor relief in 1899 (the year the Old-age Pension Act came into force) was £50,850; in 1901, £42,181; and in the year ending 31st March, 1902, it shows a decrease to £37,453.

In Auckland and Christchurch the Charitable Aid Board of the district is entirely responsible for the administration of charitable aid. In Wellington and Dunedin the Charitable Aid Board of the district merely acts as the vehicle to collect and convey the funds required by two separate institutions, the Wellington Benevolent Trustees, and the Otago Benevolent Institution. Neither the District Board nor the Government have any control over the expenditure of these subsidiary bodies, nor over their methods of administration. During the last few years a change has taken place in the administration of the Wellington Benevolent Trustees, and their expenditure on outdoor relief has been reduced from £5,664 in 1899 to £3,380 in 1902.

The Otago Benevolent Institution in Dunedin shows no sign of progress. Rations are still dealt with by the old contract system. The Visiting Relief Officer in Dunedin is also the Master of the Caversham Home, and in the Caversham Home are some two hundred old men to be looked after. The expenditure of the Otago Benevolent Institution on outdoor relief in 1900 was £5,715; in 1901, £5,831; and in 1902, £5,625.

Christchurch and Wanganui have women members on the District Charitable Aid Board, and in Wellington Mrs. Allen was elected a Benevolent Trustee at the last election.

In the Costley Home (Auckland) on the 7th February there were 137 men and 45 women. There has been a change of administration here. Mr. and Mrs. Moss, after some years of faithful and good service as Master and Matron, left last July, and one cannot but observe a distinct falling-off in the general management of the Home. The women's side is clean, but absolutely comfortless, notwithstanding that I have mentioned this more than once to Chairman and Secretary. The cleanliness on the men's side is not satisfactory, especially in regard to the lavatories. The laundry and appliances are quite inadequate to undertake satisfactorily the Hospital washing, and friction between the officials of the Hospital and of the Home is the result. The Costley Home is managed with economy, yet, at the same time, it is but a comfortless refuge for old age. The cost per head for maintenance is 7s. 4½d. per week.

The Caversham Home (Dunedin) on the 2nd May had 203 men and 61 women. Here also the desire for economy prevails over good management. Mr. and Mrs. Mee do their best, but it is not possible that the Master of the Home can properly supervise the wellbeing of 203 old men, sixty or seventy of them in bed, and do Visiting Officer's work at same time. Mrs. Mee has a nurse (no salary) to help her with confinements and the sick women; Mr. Mee has no assistant. The infirm, paralytic, and bedridden old men are looked after (one cannot call it "nursed") by other inmates. It is the state of things that existed in the English workhouses some thirty or forty years ago. The cost per head for maintenance is 6s. a week.

The Ashburton old men have been transferred to new quarters, a carefully arranged and commodious building, and the old men should be very comfortable there under the kindly care of Mr. and Mrs. Morrissey. Perhaps the Board may see its way to providing a ward for vagrant and destitute women. The Jubilee Home, Christchurch, is the most really homelike institution for the aged in New Zealand: single rooms, married couples' quarters, and the management are all