policy of the Charitable-aid Boards in our chief centres. They have expended huge sums of money in spite of my protests on sites utterly inadequate in point of extent; and in the case of the Costley Home where there is neither water-supply nor drainage. The Wellington Board propose to spend the money they have saved by careful management, on extending the Ohiro Home which stands on a barren ridge of about four acres, and this in spite of the certainty that the whole building must shortly be abandoned; to make matters worse, the land is not theirs. The Ashburton Home (Christchurch) and the Ohiro Road Home (Wellington) have each less than one hundred inmates. Both Mr. and Mrs. Morissy and Mr. and Mrs. Purvis do everything in their power to make these Homes bright, cheerful, and comfortable. The Ashburton Home is an old building, and shortly to be replaced on a fresh site. I earnestly hope that when this Home is shifted it will be placed on a piece of good land not less than 20 acres in extent — if possible, 50 acres. The Jubilee Home (Christchurch) deserves mention for its homeliness and good management under Miss Higgins. At the Invercargill Home, in spite of remonstrances, the Board keep young children with old people. At last visit there were fourteen children in the institution. In one dormitory were five boys under twelve, sleeping with old, infirm men. The cost of the existing charitable-aid building and land in Invercargill was £4,500, and the Board have been doing their best to get it sold as unfit for original purpose, although only built a few years ago. The Southland Home Farm is prospering under Mr. and Mrs. Cusworthy. The farm is 57 acres in extent, 26 of these being under cultivation, 5 acres garden. They supply their own milk, butter, bacon, vegetables, and even have enough of latter to sell in town. They seem a happy, cheerful household, all workers, and there is a healthy spirit in the place. It is a painful experience to visit the Napier Old Men's Home. If some kindly disposed and intelligent residents of Napier visited the infirmary ward and let the public know about the building and conditions prevailing, there would soon be an agitation for a more suitable refuge for the old and infirm of the Hawke's Bay District. It is pleasant to be able to record a distinct improvement in the Alexandra Home, Wellington. Fresh air, fresh paint, new beds and linoleum, together with a lavatory and neat wardrobes for clothes of mother and child, mark a line of progress in cleanliness and comfort. There were twelve mothers and five infants on day of visit, and their general appearance satisfactory. When the committee can afford further outlay, the drying-room calls for attention. Mrs. Ritter keeps the Convalescent Home (Wellington) up to its accustomed standard of comfort and economical management, and Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie are kindly with the old folk at the Home for the Aged Needy. May Cottage (Auckland) is quite unsuitable for maternity work. With the money that has been bequeathed to the charity, the girls' laundry earnings, and the direct Government grant, more suitable quarters ought to be provided. In the Samaritan Home (Christchurch) on 19th April there were nineteen old men, sixteen old women, nine girls, and three infants. A commendable spirit of industry is evident in the Home. By means of poultry-keeping, vegetable-growing, chair-mending, coir- and cloth-mat making, book-binding, and paper-bag making the inmates are able to help substantially in maintenance and pass their time more profitably than in the vacant and mischievous idleness prevalent too often in our Homes, especially on the male side.

The great need connected with all our Charitable Aid Board Homes in New Zealand is for a central receiving-home where the incurable, helpless, and bedridden men and women could be drafted and placed under the charge of hospital-trained nurses, and no longer left to the ignorant and oftentime cruel tendance of a fellow-inmate. Probably one such institution in either Island would be sufficient for the present to include all bedridden cases from the various Homes.

Our Hospital System.

The last few years have brought a great change in the organization of our hospitals. Formerly our hospitals were for the most part served by a mixed staff of male and female nurses. Gradually this has been altered, so that now in almost all our hospitals, large as well as small, the nursing staff consists of female nurses only, male nurses being still retained to help in the care of such cases as are unsuitable for females.

This revolution has been part of a world-wide movement. For the first period of the nineteenth century the novelist has generalised the type in "Sairey Gamp." In too many instances professional nurses were of this pattern—ignorant, untrained, and self-indulgent. After the Crimean war the reforms instituted by Florence Nightingale caught hold of the national imagination, and she was presented with a sum of £52,000, which she devoted to the forming of a training-school for nurses, where self-denial, devotion, and discipline should rule. For a long time numbers of well-educated women, filled with the enthusiasm of humanity, devoted themselves to the noble career thus opened for them, and from their ranks matrons and other officers of English hospitals were drawn, until now, at the opening of the present century, we find the business of nursing has become a distinct profession.

As now organized the nursing profession has gradually been placed on quite another basis — the market value of labour — *i.e.*, contract. This inevitable development has brought a great many wide-reaching implications in its train, and it has been apparent to me for a long time that the State must interfere to regulate this now important organization. Under the impulse of Florence Nightingale a new career was opened up for the pent-up energies and aspirations of women in England, and the dreary uselessness of so many young women's lives, as drawn for us by Jane Austen and Anthony Trollope, drove many to earnestly struggle for a more wholesome ideal of individual activity. The establishment of the earlier training-schools, the extension of university teaching to women, and their admission to the medical schools caused a great movement among many who were yearning for such opportunities. This early enthusiasm has long faded into the light of common day. Our girls have now no let or hindrance in entering the fields of competitive labour. In this country, young women, many