

There is nothing fresh to report about the Home for the Aged Needy, Wellington; Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie are very kind to the old people. The Nelson and Timaru Old Men's Homes continue to be carried on in the same satisfactory way. Of the Oamaru Home there is nothing fresh to report. The Thames and Whangarei Homes are both managed very satisfactorily.

For many years I have endeavoured to persuade the Board to remove the Napier Old Men's Home on to a good piece of land in the country. In the time of Mr. Ballance they could have had the former Immigration Barracks, where the soil was good, and the buildings could easily have been made suitable; but, for some reason or other, the Board could not be induced to take advantage of this opportunity. The present site, as I have often pointed out, is far too limited in size; but its undoubtedly cheerful and beautiful situation seems to have weighed with the majority of the Board, so that nothing has hitherto been done but to patch up the insect-infected wood and the present building is kept as clean as may be.

The Samaritan Home, Christchurch, still has its doors open for women of the vagrant and destitute class, and about twenty old men; it also gives shelter and tendance in maternity cases. Christchurch has more refuges, homes, and recipients of aid in some form or other than most towns. Whether this does not intensify the poverty by leading the poor to apply for help at the very first breath of trouble, instead of putting their shoulders to the wheel and courageously preserving their independence, is an open question. Any way, it may be noted that, notwithstanding the multiplicity of Church and charitable agencies, outdoor relief is distributed in Christchurch to a very much larger extent than in other towns.

The Linwood Refuge, Christchurch, and the Alexandra Home, Wellington, are doing kindly work on behalf of young mothers. The good influence of Mrs. Scott, the President of the Refuge, is felt long after the girls and babies have left the institution. The Alexandra Home is cleaner and brighter than formerly, but there is crying need for further improvement in the drying-room and laundry.

The Levin Memorial Cottage Home is a model institution of its kind; the twenty-five little girls are thoroughly well "mothered" by Miss Ockenden. The Convalescent Home, Wellington, has lost its admirable Matron, Mrs. Rutter; her successor is Miss Oakley, and she will doubtless carry on the policy of economy combined with comfort and kindness that has hitherto made this Home an example of wise management.

A considerable difference is shown in the amount spent on "rations" and on "wines and spirits" in hospitals of about the same size. Take Timaru, Thames, Napier, Invercargill, and Wanganui:—

Hospital.	Rations.	Wines and Spirits.	Total Collective Days' Stay in the Hospital.
	£	£	
Timaru	825	75	12,574
Thames	490	4	13,951
Napier	1,067	23	13,954
Invercargill	820	19	13,578
Wanganui... ..	932	82	14,006

The hospitals on the West Coast must be classed by themselves, and considered as two-thirds homes for old men and only one-third as legitimate hospital cases:—

Hospital.	Rations.	Wines and Spirits.
	£	£
Hokitika	795	55
Greymouth	997	77
Westport	617	55

The item "wines and spirits" for Auckland Hospital amounts to £314 for the year; Christchurch Hospital, £61; Dunedin Hospital, £186; Wellington Hospital, £173.

As a whole our hospitals are very creditable institutions, and year by year it becomes less necessary to find fault.

The Nurses Registration Act has now been in force for a year and a half, and is working smoothly. There are 320 names of nurses on the register. Twenty-nine nurses entered as candidates for the examination held in May last, and twenty-seven of these passed and are duly registered. Such an Act is necessary owing to the advance of scientific surgery and progress of medical knowledge. It protects medical men, and also the public, from the increasing number of unqualified women who pose as nurses, and who too often prove a real danger in critical illness and in operations. It is interesting to note that within the last few months five of the American States—North Carolina, New York, Illinois, Virginia, and New Jersey—have followed the lead of this colony, and passed Acts for the State registration of duly qualified nurses. The Nurses Registration Act of New Zealand uses no compulsion, except that of enlightened self-interest on the part of the nurses themselves, and it is becoming daily more apparent that by the silent pressure of this law the nursing profession of New Zealand will be effectively organized. The whole working of it has been intrusted to Mrs. Grace Neil, and the tact and skill by which she has carried-out all the