

619. I will read over the figures, and you will say if you agree with them. Please stop me if I should say anything that is incorrect: Auckland—1888, 9·37; 1889, 8·07: Wellington—1888, 6·35; 1889, 6·01: Christchurch—1888, 7·25; 1889, 7·09: Dunedin—1888, 10·49; 1889, 9·02. Are these figures correct?—Yes, according to my calculations.

620. Do you believe them to be absolutely correct?—Yes. I have checked them over several times in order to have them correct.

621. Tell us, in the first place, whether in your opinion there is anything in the circumstances of the different parts of New Zealand to afford any reason why the death-rate in the Dunedin Hospital should be considerably higher than in other places in the colony?—I do not know of any reason why it should be so. But it is a very difficult question to answer, because I do not know what is the death-rate in the other towns. I, however, have an idea in my own mind that there is very little difference between the death-rate of the different towns in New Zealand.

The Chairman: As a rule, Dunedin is lower than the other towns.

622. *Mr. Solomon*.] By the by, will you show me, in your private memorandum-book, a minute of the Trustees in reply to your paper of the 28th July? There is a table of mortality there—is there not?—Yes; but that table is for the year previous.

623. That is in July, 1889?—Surely it is not so late as that. [After referring to the book] No; it was in April.

624. The final paragraph of the Trustees' reply says, "The Trustees, in conclusion, again acknowledge the invaluable services rendered to the Hospital by the members of the honorary medical staff, past and present; and they readily accord to them a very large share of the credit for the fact that, according to the latest published official returns, the rate of mortality in the Dunedin Hospital is less than in any of the other large hospitals in New Zealand, and less than the average rate for the whole of the colony. The following is the comparative statement of the death-rate in the hospitals of New Zealand for the year 1887, compiled from the last published report of the Inspector-General of Hospitals:—

Hospitals.				Cases.	Deaths.	Percentage.
1. Auckland ...	...	...	...	901	91	10·99
Wellington...	...	...	...	686	62	9·04
Christchurch	...	...	...	621	60	9·66
Dunedin ...	...	...	...	910	76	8·35
2. Napier ...	...	...	...	318	24	7·55
Greymouth...	...	...	...	286	26	11·86
Hokitika ...	...	...	...	293	21	7·17
Timaru ...	...	...	...	225	14	6·02
3. Nine hospitals in Otago with fewer than two hundred cases	...	...	...	861	89	10·33
4. Twenty hospitals in other places in New Zealand having fewer than two hundred cases	...	...	...	1,630	109	6·68
Total for the colony ...				6,681	574	8·59

625. We may take it, I presume, that you read a paper before the Trustees, and that they had a discussion on it?—Yes. [Report of meeting handed in: Ex. xxvi.]

626. And then they passed a resolution that your paper should be referred to the medical staff for report?—Yes. I wish to explain that immediately after I met the Trustees they referred my address to the staff, who met and discussed it. The Trustees subsequently published an official memorandum which contained a considerable number of inaccuracies, which I did not reply to; but otherwise the document was very moderate. It reminded one very much of a theological discussion, in which one man takes one side and another man the other, and they do not come to any agreement at all. Subsequently—that is, the same evening—the Trustees replied individually; but they made an enormous number of misstatements, to which, however, I did not reply.

627. What I wish to make plain is this: was the first resolution which was passed a resolution to the effect that your address should be referred to the Hospital staff for their report?—Yes, that was so.

628. Then came the medical staff's memorandum on your private report, your private report, and Trustees' minute in reply to your address?—Yes.

629. That minute you will find at page 50 of your private memorandum-book. There is a great deal of it; some of it is very unsatisfactory, and some most interesting. The only paragraph to which I wish to draw your attention in the meantime is that in which the Trustees take credit to themselves for having paid a high compliment to the staff. That would have been creditable had it stopped there, but, unfortunately, it did not. They also took credit for the fact that the Hospital had been described in this way: "Its connection with the thriving and vigorous Medical School of Dunedin, gives it, in all the essentials of hospital treatment and management—an unmistakable superiority. There is simply no comparison between it and any other hospital in the colony in this respect." We agree with that—

The Chairman: Do I understand that Dr. Batchelor disagreed with the returns?

Mr. Solomon: I wish to point out that these figures were for 1887.

The Chairman: But are they correct?

Witness: I did not verify them.

630. *Mr. Solomon*: Last year the Trustees took credit to themselves for 1887, when the death-rate for Dunedin was the lowest in New Zealand. Now, at that time the hospital death-rate for 1888 was in existence—whether or not they knew of it—I do not know; but the fact remains that in 1888 the death-rate for Dunedin, instead of being the lowest, was in the percentage number a good many higher than any other town in New Zealand, and has so remained up to the present date. I notice,