

patching-up that I said if we mooted the idea of a new hospital there would be so much outcry that we should never get anything done. Then, when this pavilion system was brought up by Dr. Ferguson, Drs. Brown and Stenhouse both expressed themselves in favour of a new hospital. I thought then something yet might come of it. At all events that was the thought which passed through my mind at the time.

1070. And the result was your protest?—It came immediately afterwards.

1071. At that date you had not suggested to any one about having a new hospital?—No I had not.

1072. You were perfectly satisfied with a patching-up, as it has been termed, of this Hospital, as answering all purposes?—I thought that I had better be satisfied with what I could get.

1073. And you had never expressed yourself in any other way than that you were satisfied?—No.

1074. You say deliberately that your object in that debate was—to use your own expression—“to kick up a row.”—I did not say anything of the sort.

1075. Then what did you do?—In my address I tried to “kick up a row,” but in the debate I tried to smooth matters over.

1076. Did you want to reassure people that the Hospital was not so bad as it had been made out to be?—I do not know that I did that quite.

1077. Then what was your object in trying to smooth things down?—I wanted to get something done. I knew that if the Trustees got their backs up nothing would be done. If you notice the tone of the debate, there was a general trying to smooth things down.

1078. You thought you had set the backs of the Trustees up with your original address?—Just so.

1079. And you were rather sorry for it?—No; I think it was the very best action of my life. I am very proud of that address.

1080. But you expressed regret for it, did you not?—I expressed regret for the tone of the address, but not for the address itself, of which I am very proud.

1081. Then the whole tone of that meeting was in the direction of negating the asperities of your address—of reducing the effect that it had produced?—I found out that it had produced a certain amount of irritation, and therefore I wanted to smooth matters down.

1082. Can any one draw any other inference than that you had to a large extent retracted?—Most decidedly and emphatically no. I am afraid, Mr. Chapman, you have not been very well posted up in this matter. I would like you to look at a letter I wrote to the papers. (Page 57 of scrap-book.)

1083. You had an acrimonious discussion, did you not?—Well, I was somewhat annoyed because individual Trustees made speeches on my address, in which they made some very grave misstatements. In the letter I have called attention to, I wrote: “I will conclude by saying that every fact I have brought forward I am prepared to substantiate to the Trustees, and not a single argument I have used has, so far, been disproved.”

1084. *The Chairman.*] What is the date of that?—That is a letter I wrote to the newspapers on the 4th April, 1889.

1085. You put that letter in to prove that you had not retracted anything?—Exactly; in reply to an article which appeared in the *Daily Times*, in which the writer said that “it must be admitted that Dr. Batchelor ought to have been more cautious in some of his statements, which in several instances appear to have been singularly careless and inaccurate.” I said that I did not cavil with the official memorandum of the Trustees, which I considered moderate in its tone. It contained some inaccuracies, but none of great importance. The opinions of individual Trustees, as evinced by their speeches, were grossly inaccurate; and I said in my letter that it was a case of their individual words against mine. And I went on to say, in effect, that such important issues were involved that they should not be jeopardised by petty, personal quarrels, but I trusted to the Trustees’ sense of fair-play and justice to set me right when they knew the facts. They have not yet done that, by the way, and I am glad of getting an opportunity now of setting myself right.

1086. Now, in one of the letters which you wrote to the papers you expressed yourself in these terms: “The Trustees naturally dwell upon the very many excellent improvements effected under their régime, at the commencement of which, according to Dr. Brown, the Hospital was in an ‘appalling condition,’ and which by the expenditure of a few thousand pounds has been converted into as ‘admirable an institution.’” I, on the other hand, draw attention to some serious radical defects which still exist; and, further, ask the Trustees if the expenditure already incurred has effected such reforms, may not a few thousand pounds more render our Hospital a model for the colony.” There you say that the Dunedin Hospital is an “admirable institution”?—Those words were not used by me.

1087. I beg your pardon. But you say that the Hospital may be made a model for the colony?—Yes, but that is easily explained. I was exceedingly anxious to get something done, and had to be content with half a loaf.

1088. There was a rather acrimonious debate, was there not, when the Trustees discussed your original address?—Yes, they discussed it in my absence, and when I was unable to reply to them. They have never given me an opportunity of replying to them up to the present time. It shows how utterly wrong they were at that time.

1089. In what respect?—Many of them were strongly opposed then to reforms in our nursing system, yet in twelve months they entirely come to our views, and adopt the nursing system long ago recommended by the staff.

1090. I must ask you again how you proposed to allocate this £8,000, which was to put the Hospital in a perfectly good state. You have told us about the turrets: were they to have cost £8,000?—No. I only answered that question from memory, and I did not attach much importance