

1392. Can you put your fingers on any expression of your agreement on these subjects?—I do not know that I can bring any evidence of these matters having been brought before the medical men themselves, but they will all tell you that they recognised these and other defects.

1393. Such defects as you have described here?—Yes; all of them must have been recognised.

1394. I find that Dr. Grabham, reporting on the 14th May on a visit he paid to the Dunedin Hospital in January, 1886, says: "One of the wards, as usual, I found empty and in process of being cleaned. The others were in their usual good order." You know of the practice of having one ward empty in a sort of rotation, one on the male and one on the female side?—Yes.

1395. I suppose you read the Inspector-General's reports from time to time?—I have read the last two closely.

1396. The Inspector-General is responsible for these matters, is he not?—I suppose he is. At all events, I should think so.

1397. If he found anything grossly wrong he ought to call attention to it?—I should think so.

1398. Have you ever found in his report anything seriously condemnatory of the Dunedin Hospital?—He makes a sort of general tour of the Hospital, but he does not appear to deal with any defects, unless it be structural ones. As to questions like there being a sufficient number of beds in a ward, these ought, I think, to be brought out more prominently. I do not think that his attention could have been directed to the hygienic state of the Hospital, or I am sure he would have spoken more strongly about it.

1399. Do you know whether this practice of emptying wards has been approved by the Trustees?—I suppose it has. It stands to reason that if you have plenty of room it is an excellent thing; but if unfortunately you have not plenty of room, as in the Dunedin Hospital, then it leads to over-crowding, which is an evil.

1400. Professor Macgregor was at one time a member of the medical staff of the Dunedin Hospital, was he not?—I do not remember it. I do not think he had anything to do with the Hospital.

1401. I certainly was under that impression?—I think you are wrong.

1402. It was before you came to this colony?—He never was; Mr. Burns says so.

1403. I want to call your attention to a few passages in the report of Dr. Grabham for 1886. He says, "I have visited this Hospital three times during 1886. My last inspection was made on the 27th January, 1886, when I examined every part of the institution, including the outbuildings and the grounds. Though not originally intended for a hospital, this large and handsome building has, with great skill, been so converted that it serves its purpose reasonably well." That was your opinion at one time, was it not?—No.

1404. But with a little of the taxpayers' money you think it might be improved?—It might be.

1405. "The site is in the centre of the most populous part of the city, and, though it is exceedingly convenient from its accessibility, it is not such a situation as would commend itself for a hospital, being very low-lying and having a swampy subsoil. Everything possible, however, has been done to obviate these disadvantages." Do you agree with that?—What about?

1406. The condemnation of the site?—I would not give an opinion about that.

1407. "The basement has been ventilated and properly floored, so that, instead of being found damp, it is utilised for kitchen and store-accommodation, and contains the boiler- and furnace-room besides. This arrangement, though convenient in some respects, is evidently a great drawback so far as the wards above are concerned. The great and saving feature of the building is the great hall, around which on the ground-floor and first floor the wards and accessory offices are arranged, those on the first floor opening off a projecting corridor." That is one of the features which you condemn the most, is it not?—I do not condemn it. I do not think it is a good feature, because it prevents cross-ventilation. As a matter of fact, there is no cross-ventilation in our Hospital.

1408. "This central space extends from the floor to the roof, and has an area of 120ft. by 51ft. It is suitably furnished with linoleum and matting, which covers the right- and left-hand staircases, and is carried all round the corridor on the first floor. On the ground-floor the right-hand side of the hall is occupied by the secretary's room and the staff room, which is mostly used by the students. On the left-hand side are the operating-room, the staff dining-room, and one room off the dining-room for Mrs. Burton, the matron. The remaining two sides of the central hall are occupied by four large male wards, two on each side, all arranged and furnished in the same way. Ward No. 1 is 54ft. by 24ft. 6in., and 16ft. high. It has two large windows in the end-wall and five windows on the north-west side. In each window there is a movable division, regulated by a supporting arm resting on a nail, besides a flap ventilator at the foot, with perforated-iron sides.

The beds are seventeen in number, all occupied. One of these is a patent folding-bed, with elaborate fittings, patented by Mr. Jowsey, of Timaru; six are ordinary wooden beds, nine are common iron beds, and there is one chair bed used for accident cases. Seven beds have chaff mattresses, the rest are all hair. There is a neat locker, with tray top, for each bed. The head-cards give particulars about the patient and his diet: and a thermic chart shows the changes of the pulse, respiration, skin, tongue, bowels, and urine; also the patient's weight, and the duration of the disease. There is also a card showing the treatment, and the doctor's notes." And it goes on to say: "The whole appearance of the ward is comfortable, and everything is scrupulously clean and neat." Are the wards clean and neat?—They are clean in the ordinary acceptance of the word, but not in a surgical sense.

1409. Do you agree with what Dr. MacGregor says there?—I do not. I will answer you in this way: I think that Dr. MacGregor, in that report, has done the same thing that he has done in other reports: he draws attention to minor defects, but misses the essential ones, such as over-crowding, cubic space, square space, bed-space, &c.

1410. It is an extraordinary thing, is it not, that none of the medical staff ever called attention to these horrors?—I do not blame the staff, they were trying to get reforms effected.