

1411. But the staff were people who were always on the spot, while Dr. MacGregor was only here about twice a year?—Well, I blame myself as one of the staff, and I have done so from the first.

1412. I suppose you were afraid about “kicking up a row,” as you have termed it?—I blame myself in common with the staff for not having called attention to these defects with sufficient prominence. That was the gist of my remarks in one of my earliest speeches. I blamed the staff and myself, as a member of it, for not having pressed home the necessity for these reforms, and I say so still. I think that we should have brought them prominently before Dr. MacGregor.

1413. The Inspector further says: “Flowers are plentifully supplied to all the wards. Ventilation is secured by openings in the walls a little below the ceiling—one opens into the chimney-shaft, covered with a perforated-iron plate, and two open into the large central hall. One of the large wards is always kept vacant for purification, and I hope that this will be continued. The bath-room, lavatory, and closet are separated from the ward simply by a painted and grained partition. This is perhaps the greatest blemish in the Hospital, and unfortunately it is incurable.” By the by, speaking about baths, have you made any complaints about the baths—that they may have had a tendency to carry septic disease from one patient to another?—No.

1414. What was your objection to the baths?—I objected to the steam getting into the general ward.

1415. But you did not object to the baths as being a medium of transferring the germs of disease?—I think that was an original theory of Mr. Solomon’s.

1416. Now I wish to call your attention to Rule 78 of the Hospital By-laws, which says: “The honorary staff shall, immediately after their election, form a medical committee, and elect one of their number chairman, and one secretary. They shall consider the medical, surgical, and hygienic subjects connected with the Hospital, and forward their recommendations to the Trustees in writing through their secretary.” You say that they have not performed their duty?—I say that we have tried to effect reforms gradually. We commenced with the resolutions about the nursing, this matter having been brought forward several years ago by Dr. Colquhoun; but the Trustees took in hand the operating-room first.

1417. Then the nursing was a secondary matter; until then it was not even thought worth mentioning?—I beg to differ from you entirely. We felt that it would be no good to attempt to do too much at once. At all events, that was the view I took of it.

THURSDAY, 28th August, 1890.

Dr. BATCHELOR’S cross-examination continued.

*Witness*: The Chairman asked me to prepare a copy of my records of abdominal operations and results, and I have done so. [Document handed in: Ex. xxiv.]

*Mr. Chapman*: It would perhaps be convenient to put in the copy of the by-laws. [Copy of by-laws put in: Ex. xxv.]

*Witness*: With regard to the by-laws, I may say that to the best of my belief I have never had a copy of them in my possession. I do not think I need to trouble my head about them. I try to do my duty by my patients, and I do not care a scrap about the by-laws, which I have not read.

1418. *Mr. Chapman*.] Was not a copy of the by-laws sent to you when you were appointed?—Not so far as I am aware, though I may be mistaken. I do not think they were in existence when I was appointed.

1419. Here is a description of the building, in Dr. MacGregor’s first report on the Hospital: “I gave every patient an opportunity of making any complaint to me privately, and, instead of complaining, all were unanimous in praising the treatment they received.”—Is that for the medical treatment, or what?

1420. I am just reading from the report?—I certainly think they should be very grateful for the medical treatment they received, and that they are attended to very carefully now.

1421. But not for the other treatment?—Certainly not; they know nothing about it.

1422. Then, if the patients have made no complaints about their treatment, does not that show their appreciation of it?—They do not know anything better. They do not understand hygiene or the many points of hospital management. If they had ever been in a better hospital they would have made many complaints.

1423. I will read you another passage from Dr. MacGregor’s report: “This Hospital stands pre-eminent in the colony for the admirable completeness of its arrangements for the medical and surgical treatment of the patients.”—I quite agree with Dr. MacGregor in what he says there. He wishes to bring out the advantages of the Medical School—that is evidently what he is trying to do there.

1424. Does he make any reference to the Medical School?—At any rate, that is how I read it.

1425. He goes on to say, “Although the building is inferior to several of the other hospitals, from the fact that it was not designed originally for its present purpose, yet the advantage it possesses, from its connection with the thriving and vigorous Medical School of Dunedin, gives it all the essentials of hospital treatment and management and unmistakable superiority”?—Quite so. Undoubtedly it is the Medical School that gives it that superiority it does, in spite of terrible defects of hygiene and other conditions.

1426. But I call your attention to the fact that Dr. MacGregor says, “There is simply no comparison between it and any other hospital in the colony in that respect”?—That is in regard to medical attendance—at all events that is how I read it.