

1456. Struck you that it was overcrowded, and smelt very badly?—Undoubtedly.

1457. And these things have then been going on for fourteen years?—I think it is about twelve years since I became connected with the Hospital.

1458. Well then, twelve years?—Yes, undoubtedly.

1459. May we take it that these things were known to your colleagues of the medical staff? I do not know.

1460. Had they any more than the very slight knowledge possessed by Dr. MacGregor?—I do not suppose that they had very much more knowledge than he.

1461. Did your colleagues on the staff complain of the Hospital being overcrowded and smelling very badly?—Yes, they have been constantly complaining.

1462. All these twelve years, you say?—Yes, off and on. I have heard them complain constantly.

1463. May we take it that the medical staff were wholly discontented with the state of the Hospital?—You see a great many of us got accustomed at last to the state of affairs. I know I did myself to some extent. But it was after I had seen other hospitals that I was struck with our Hospital being such a terribly bad place. One grows accustomed to one's home, so to speak.

1464. After seeing other hospitals where?—In the Australian Colonies, and seeing the Wellington and Christchurch Hospitals. It was then that I arrived at the conclusion that some action—pretty strong action—should be taken, and I took it.

1465. At what date are you speaking of in regard to Wellington Hospital?—I think I was there either at the end of January or early in February, 1889.

1466. Who was in charge there then?—Dr. Truby King.

1467. Do you know how long he had been in charge there?—Not very long, I fancy.

1468. Are these hospitals that you visited model ones?—I did not say that they are model ones. They have been up for some years.

1469. I think you used the word yourself?—Compared with Dunedin Hospital they are certainly.

1470. Did you find any overcrowding or any smells in the Wellington Hospital?—Certainly not. There was nothing of either kind when I visited it.

1471. How long were you there?—About one and a half hours.

1472. And a visit of one and a half hours to that Hospital disgusted you intensely with our Hospital?—Yes. I was struck very much by the contrast.

1473. I will now read you an extract from Dr. Grabham's report for 1886:—"A most important improvement has been carried out in diverting the whole of the drains from the basement, and running them outside the buildings direct into the city sewers."—Direct into the city sewers! That is a rather funny thing.

1474. That is to say, it was not run into a cesspit. That was a matter which struck you so little that it apparently did not rest in your memory?—Yes. But I quite admit that it is an improvement.

1475. Dr. Grabham goes on to say: "Nothing has yet been done to provide a special ward for children, which is much needed." Did the staff agree with that?—Yes, they do.

1476. Did the staff concur?—I do not think they were very strong about the children's ward.

1477. Did you concur?—I did not oppose it particularly.

1478. Was it agreed to, after discussion among the staff?—I have already told you that I do not think we were very strong on it.

1479. You thought other things were more necessary?—I did.

1480. Did you specify to the staff what you considered to be more necessary at that time?

1481. *The Chairman.*] What time was that?—Four or five years ago. I think there is a minute of the staff about that children's ward.

*The Chairman:* I wish to point out that what we have to do is to inquire into the present state of the Hospital. I do not think it is necessary to go into the past state of the Hospital, which is a little outside the scope of our inquiry.

*Mr. Chapman:* I desire to test the value of Dr. Batchelor's opinions.

1482. *Mr. Chapman.*] What was the state of the Hospital in 1883?—It was very bad.

1483. And it "has been getting steadily worse ever since"?—I should like to be quite sure about that. I am rather doubtful about that statement. I do not think I ever made such a statement.

1484. I see your words were: "There certainly has been no improvement worth mentioning"?—I certainly did say that.

1485. When the medical staff were recommending a ward for children, what matters had you insisted on as being more important?—I really do not know. It is a long time to think back. But the recommendation which I proposed as being more important than any other was an improvement in the nursing. I felt very strongly on that matter. I never saw wardsmen before I came here.

1486. *Mr. Solomon.*] You succeeded in carrying that out?—It has not been done yet, but the Trustees have agreed to do it.

*Mr. White:* Why, it was agreed to four years ago, but we could not do it for want of funds.

1487. *Mr. Chapman.*] Dr. Grabham goes on to say: "The diseases of women can be treated in the ordinary wards, while the experience in midwifery required of medical students should be gained (as in London and elsewhere) at the homes of the poor."—How long ago was that?

1488. In 1886.—I should say that Dr. Grabham knew nothing about gynecology.

1489. Do you read these reports as they come out?—I have read them for the last two years, but I do not remember having them before that.

1490. Did you read the particular report in which that expression occurs?—No, I did not. I never heard it before.