

1945. You are also, I think, connected with the Medical School at the University?—I am Lecturer on Ophthalmic Surgery.

1946. Now, have you formed, as the result of your experience in the Dunedin Hospital, any opinion as to whether at the present time its sanitary condition is satisfactory or otherwise?—I do not think the sanitary condition of the Hospital has been satisfactory ever since I knew it first.

1947. I think you prepared that report of the staff that was submitted to the Trustees, did you not. It deals with the condition of the Hospital?—Yes, I may say I did prepare that; but perhaps I should explain how it was that it came to be my draft.

1948. Yes, certainly.—According to my recollection the Trustees wrote to the staff before this report was prepared, and asked us to say definitely what faults we found with the building in its then condition; and asked us to also say in what way we considered the building could be improved or modified to make it more satisfactory. We had a meeting of the medical staff, and, as far as I can recollect, there was a deal of talking and but little done; and after the meeting, when it was adjourned—I think on my suggestion—it was resolved that the individual members of the staff should jot down the different improvements which they considered necessary, and that then the matter should be knocked into shape at some subsequent meeting of the staff, and forwarded as a report to the Trustees. I afterwards measured the wards of the Hospital, and went into the question of cubic and superficial space and ventilation, and put down certain notes, which I presented at the subsequent meeting of the staff; and having read this, Dr. Coughtrey proposed that it should be printed in order that the staff should have an opportunity of studying it quietly, and seeing in how far they agreed with my conclusions. At a third meeting my report, which had been merely read before the staff as a sort of skeleton from which to form a basis for discussion, and from which a report was ultimately to be evolved, was in itself adopted as the final report.

1949. *The Chairman.*] The draft was actually adopted as the report?—Yes, the draft is the report you have before you at present. The only alteration is the inclusion of the final paragraph, which I think was Dr. Coughtrey's addition. That was a statement to the effect that on the main conclusions in the concluding paragraphs they were unanimous.

1950. *Mr. Solomon.*] And as to details?—Well, the report was merely handed in to form the basis of a future discussion.

1951. *The Chairman.*] It was sent to the Trustees in printed form?—Dr. Roberts can tell you that; I think it was.

1952. Was it signed by members of the staff?—I fancy that Dr. Coughtrey's addition at the foot—that the report was unanimous—was sufficient. I think it was merely sent in by Dr. Roberts as secretary, and a copy of the minute was sent with it.

1953. *Mr. Solomon.*] Now, in years gone by—say, five or six years—has there been any unanimity among the profession connected with the Hospital, as to the fact of its being satisfactory from a sanitary point of view, or otherwise? Is it only your opinion, or is it the opinion of others as well as yourself? Dr. Batchelor says it is his, Dr. Roberts says it is his, and you say it is yours. Have you heard similar expressions from other members of the staff?—I think that pretty well ever since I have been on the staff there has been a feeling, so far as I am aware, among all members of the staff that the Hospital was not as perfect as it might be.

1954. We have heard, what we did not understand before, that there are differences of opinion occasionally among medical men?—Occasionally, yes.

1955. Now, we will not speak of a perfect hospital. I suppose it would be difficult, however much money was spent, to procure such an hospital that some fastidious member of the profession would not find fault with?—I do not know that it necessarily means a very large sum to build an hospital that would be thoroughly in accord with modern views. I do not know that it costs more to build a sanitary hospital—as far as we can build a sanitary hospital—than it costs to build an insanitary one.

1956. I quite understand you. But I want to go a little further, to get your opinion. You say it has been pretty well agreed for years past among the members of the staff that the Hospital is not as perfect as it might be?—That is so.

1957. At the present time, tell me if, in your opinion—leave out the question of perfection—this Hospital can be considered to be satisfactory, or even fairly satisfactory?—It cannot be considered as either, in my opinion.

1958. *The Chairman.*] Not as it is now?—That is what I mean.

1959. *Mr. Solomon.*] I will not go into details with the imperfections in the Hospital, but will put the question *in globo*: are the defects in the Hospital of such a character that they can, with safety to the patients, be allowed to remain?—I think the risks the patients run are increased by the insanitary condition of the Hospital.

1960. Is that a risk to life?—Yes, it is a risk to life.

1961. What about their length of stay in the Hospital? Is it lessened or increased by the condition of the Hospital?—I am satisfied that my patients are very much longer under treatment than similar cases outside.

1962. And to what do you attribute that?—A good many of them have relapses through exposure to draughts. Sometimes wounds do not heal kindly, in the same way that they do outside.

1963. Why do you say so?—You have already heard that it is impossible to speak with absolute certainty on a thing of that kind, but in several cases I have been driven to attribute it to what in my student days I called "hospitalism."

1964. That is, cases of a hospital not healthy?—That is so.

1965. And, as an illustration, are the risks that a patient runs in this Hospital slight or appreciable, from the defective condition?—I think they are appreciable, though it is a kind of thing one cannot measure. Perhaps to use the word "appreciable" is a contradiction in terms, because they cannot be measured. I think they are material, at any rate.