

2654. We are told that in the Dunedin Hospital every year about a thousand patients are passed through. Do you seriously mean to say that if the Hospital was in a proper condition, not a hundred of that number but only seventy would die annually?—Yes.

2655. So that, in other words, the unsatisfactory condition of our Hospital accounts for thirty deaths in a year?—According to that reasoning it would.

2656. I suppose you have thought it over?—Yes.

2657. And you do not say it rashly?—No; I have considered the matter.

2658. Now, do you agree with Dr. Batchelor's first complaint—that there are defects in the sanitary condition of the Hospital?—Yes.

2659. Do you agree with his second complaint—that these defects are of so serious a character as to be a source of grave danger to the inmates, and call for immediate remedy?—Yes.

2660. Dr. Batchelor wishes me to ask you whether, in gynecological cases, it is safe for an inexperienced surgeon to examine a patient and pass a sound?—Certainly not an inexperienced surgeon.

2661. What is the danger of that?—In what case?

2662. In cases of ovariectomy?—Certainly not; he might do a great deal of mischief if he were to rupture the tube. It might mean the life of the patient.

2663. *The Chairman.*] Would it be possible to hold a consultation in a case of that kind without permitting the others to examine the patient? I mean, would a consultation without examination be of any value?—It is possible to hold a consultation, but it would be out of the question to allow a great number of persons to examine the patient. Of course, the patient has to be examined.

2664. *Mr. Chapman.*] A consultation does not mean that every man has a separate try?—If they do not so they must depend on what is placed before them on hearsay.

2665. He must depend on an experienced man?—He must go entirely by his opinion, so he may as well not be there.

2666. You have visited all these hospitals in Australia?—Yes.

2667. Have you studied their death-rates?—No.

2668. Can you tell me the death-rate of any one of these superior hospitals?—No.

2669. Do you know whether the death-rate over there is higher than in Dunedin?—I do not know.

2670. Take Melbourne for instance?—Well, it may be higher, if you take climatic influence into account.

2671. Take the relative death-rates in districts. Do you know what are the relative death-rates in Australia?—No.

2672. Then, we may take it that that is a subject you have not specially studied?—Yes.

2673. And if you compare the death-rate in New Zealand and the Old Country, can you come to the conclusion that it is higher here?—Yes.

2674. It is not singular to Dunedin, is it?—Dunedin stands about highest on the list.

2675. For what?—For death-rate.

2676. Among the hospitals in the colony?—The hospitals in New Zealand—that is, taking the four centres.

2677. Do you know about your own district?—It is the healthiest in New Zealand.

2678. Have you looked into the death-rate in Invercargill?—Yes.

2679. And what is it there?—It is far too high.

2680. What year were you connected with the Invercargill Hospital?—About three years ago I left it. I was connected with it for four years.

2681. Then, that would be about the beginning of 1884 or 1885?—From 1883 to 1887.

2682. Now, listen to these figures. I do not say you had anything to do with them. In 1885 the death-rate was 5·3. That is reasonable?—Yes.

2683. In 1886, it was 8·7?—Yes.

2684. And in 1887 it was 15·06?—I think there must be some mistake there.

2685. I will not vouch for the figures; they have been handed to me. There is an honorary medical staff in the Invercargill Hospital, is there not?—There never has been an honorary medical staff connected with the Hospital, only a consulting staff.

2686. In 1888 the death-rate was 10·9, and in 1889 it was 9·5?—You must take into consideration that Invercargill has one of the worst-built hospitals in New Zealand.

2687. But it was no worse in 1885?—It has been improved.

2688. And the death-rate increased in consequence?—It has gone down again.

2689. It has a detached fever ward?—Yes; but that is only for the last two years.

2690. Have you given any special attention to the question of hospital construction and management?—Not as to its management, but wherever I have been I have paid attention to construction.

2691. By the way, where did you receive your medical education?—In Edinburgh.

2692. How long have you been in practice?—Eight years.

2693. Did you hold any position in Edinburgh?—No. I held a position in West Cumberland Asylum for several months.

2694. Have you compared Dunedin with Auckland?—I think the death-rate here is a little higher than in Auckland.

2695. Have you compared it with Christchurch?—It is higher than Christchurch.

2696. But comparing the Hospital with Auckland, do you say Auckland is thoroughly bad?—No, not so very bad.

2697. Not so bad as Dunedin?—Certainly not.

2698. Then, you say Dunedin is worst?—It is the worst of the four hospitals.