

hot-water tanks, lined with lead, are frequently under repair, and will eventually become unserviceable, after causing much mischief to ceilings. Some of the bath-room ceilings are being destroyed by leakage from valves and waste-pipes, the former unprovided with safes, and the latter having joints made of putty instead of solder." It is to the last statement, about the joints, that I wish particularly to call your attention. Is that statement of Dr. Grabham's correct?—No, it is not.

1682. Were the joints made with putty?—No.

1683. What were they made of?—Solder.

1684. If they had been made of putty you must have felt the effects, must you not, directly you entered the building?—Yes.

1685. In what way?—By the smell.

1686. As a matter of fact, then, that statement is not true?—No, it is not.

1687. Was there any foundation of truth in it?—Not the slightest.

1688. Do you know what gave rise to that statement?—I have heard what gave rise to it.

1689. Perhaps you will kindly state to the Commissioners what you know about it?—What I heard was this: that after the job was entirely finished a carpenter put a chisel into one of the pipes, and, there being no plumber there to solder the hole he had made, he (the carpenter) put some cement—not putty—in it. Some officers of the asylum saw him do this, and from that circumstance that whole report arose.

1690. *The Chairman.*] Can you point out what part of the building this pipe was in?—I cannot. I never saw the pipe.

1691. Were you or your men engaged in making repairs after this was found out?—Oh, yes! we are employed at the asylum now in making any repairs.

1692. If there were any alterations or repairs to be made in the system of putting in the pipes your men would be employed to do it?—Yes.

1693. As a matter of fact you have not had to reconstruct any portion of it—that is to say, you have not had to pull out any of the pipes?—None of the pipes have been pulled out, though some of them may have been repaired.

1694. From previous faulty work?—No: from the pipes being choked, perhaps; but I am not aware of any pipes being taken out and replaced.

1695. If there had been any extensive repairs made since the building was finished the plumbing would have been done by your men?—Yes. There has been some alteration in the hot-water system—some copper put in instead of lead. That is the only alteration of any extent I know of that has been done in the building.

1696. *Mr. Gore.*] Is there a large quantity of these soil-pipes in this building?—Yes.

1697. Can you say how many hundreds of feet?—I cannot say from memory.

1698. But there is a very large quantity?—Yes.

1699. You would have known of your knowledge, I suppose, if it had been a fact that the joints were made of putty?—Yes. There never were any putty joints.

1700. The pipes have never had to be taken up?—Never.

1701. *The Chairman.*] Are they the same soil-pipes?—Yes.

*Mr. Gore:* They are heavy pipes. I may say that I have called this witness because I desired to show the absurdity of this statement of Dr. Grabham; and I infer from this that many other statements, which are equally absurd, will be made. I think Mr. Blair himself has replied to this matter completely. I have never had the opportunity of showing that it was completely unfounded.

1702. *Mr. Gore.*] With regard to the hot-water cisterns being lined with lead, did you recommend copper?—Yes, I recommended copper in the first instance.

1703. Did you give a price for the copper?—I do not think so. I believe that I gave a verbal estimate. I was asked as to the probable cost of the copper, and I said it would be about so much. It was abandoned on the score of expense.

1704. In putting up this hot-water business you had to do a great deal with Dr. Neill, did you not?—Yes.

1705. Principally with Dr. Neill?—Yes.

1706. It was outside the contract?—Yes.

1707. *The Chairman.*] The present hot-water apparatus has been put in since the building was completed?—Yes.

*Mr. Blair:* Mr. Gore wishes the Commission to infer from these allegations that charges were made on hearsay. He will excuse my saying that I never bring witnesses forward with that intention. The charges now made rest on a very different footing.

*Mr. Gore:* But there have been so many reports through the papers.

*Mr. Blair:* Perhaps it will settle this difficulty if Mr. Gore will read from my report what I said on this subject.

*The Chairman:* I do not think that this matter has anything to do with the present inquiry.

*Mr. Blair:* I should like you to understand that these allegations made against the building were repudiated by myself. I backed up Mr. Gore and Mr. Lawson when I thought they were right, and will do so again with the greatest pleasure; but, because I do so, it must not be held that I am backing them up in all cases.

*Mr. Gore:* I acknowledged a little ago that Mr. Blair himself refuted Dr. Grabham's statement.

1708. *Mr. Skinner:* Did you carry out the whole of the plumbing at the asylum?—We did most of the internal plumbing, but I had nothing to do with the roof.

1709. You had nothing to do with the eaves or downpiping?—Nothing at all.

JOHN GILSTON DICK sworn and examined.

1710. *Mr. Gore:* You were foreman at Seacliff for some time, were you not?—Yes, I was.

1711. Did you put in any portion of the concrete foundation there?—I did.