

questions put to you. You should answer the question, and allow your counsel to elicit any information you want brought out by way of cross-examination?—Well, I refuse to give the bare number of my cases.

1358. *The Chairman.*] At the same time, you say that you are prepared to give details?—Yes, I am prepared to go fully into every abdominal case of which I have a record.

1359. Give details of every case you have had?—Yes.

1360. *Mr. Chapman.*] You have complained, amongst other things, of the system of managing the Hospital: of keeping one of the wards empty—one male and one female ward?—Yes.

1361. What is your complaint about that?—My complaint is that, though it may be a good thing in one way, inasmuch as you can air the wards, it is a bad thing in another way. It means that, the accommodation being scanty, the beds in the other wards are always full, or nearly so; and this increases the trouble we have with over-crowding.

1362. What is the usual number of patients in the ward which you attend?—I am sure I do not know.

1363. Can you tell us how many beds there are?—There are sixteen.

1364. I ask you again, What is the usual number of patients?—I cannot tell, but I dare say it is about twelve or thirteen. That is about the average.

1365. Do you think that that is too many?—Do you mean for the beds in their present position?

1366. Yes?—Undoubtedly it is.

1367. Are there too many patients, or too many beds?—Both. That is my main contention: that the Hospital is over-crowded.

1368. Do you say that that is your main contention?—Well, it is one of my contentions.

1369. Was that a matter which you complained of to the Trustees at any time?—Yes; I certainly complained of it to the staff.

1370. When did you do so?—At the meeting when we drew attention to the defective hygienic condition of the Hospital. You will find it referred to then.

1371. Then it was in the month of May, last year, that you complained of it?—I think it was in May.

1372. Up to that time had you ever formulated a complaint on the subject?—No.

1373. Had you yourself complained of it to your colleagues?—I do not know I am sure. We had all done it in a way, because for years we had recognised that the beds were too close together.

1374. When was that?—Ever since I have been connected with the Hospital.

1375. What effect do you attribute to it?—The over-crowding is one of the greatest dangers to a hospital.

1376. And you say that it has been spoken about amongst the staff for years?—Yes; that the beds were too close together.

1377. And that you spoke of as amounting to over-crowding?—Yes. I recognised it as soon as I went to the Hospital.

1378. When was the alteration made of allowing two wards to remain empty?—I do not know.

1379. Is it long back?—I do not know. Mr. Burns knows all about that.

1380. Has it not been a particularly recent thing?—I really do not know.

1381. Surely you have been familiar with the working of the Hospital?—I really do not know. It would only be guesswork were I to attempt to tell you.

1382. Did it ever receive the condemnation or approval of the medical staff?—I do not know that it was ever brought before them. If it were it must have been approved, from the fact that the advantages of having a ward empty have been recognised by the staff.

1383. If it had ever been brought up, you think that it received the approval of the staff. At any rate it had not met with their disapproval?—I never heard that it was brought before the staff. Attention has been drawn to it by Professor MacGregor, but I do not look on him as any authority on hospital matters.

1384. You say that he is not an authority at all?—He is not.

1385. I should like you to tell us what are his shortcomings. At any rate this was a matter that Dr. MacGregor has approved?—Yes; I should not have referred to the matter had it not been drawn from me in cross-examination.

1386. Was Dr. Grabham an authority on hospitals?—No. I do not think that he knew much about hospitals.

1387. When did you come to the conclusion that neither of these gentlemen was an authority on hospital matters?—When I came to read up authorities on the subject I found out that they did not know very much about the thing, and I came to the conclusion that if these gentlemen had understood hospital matters thoroughly they must have drawn attention long before to the condition of the Hospital.

1388. But to which you had never drawn attention yourself?—No.

1389. We may take it, I suppose, that you have learnt something about hospital matters. Do the other medical gentlemen in Dunedin know anything about them?—I do not think that they know too much.

1390. Did the members of the medical staff during the past five years call attention to any of these matters?—I think that we all recognised that the wards were overcrowded and badly ventilated. But as for working out the thing methodically or on scientific principles, no one attempted to do so until Dr. Lindo Ferguson did last May twelvemonths. We also objected to the state of the waterclosets and of the baths. These—what I may call permanent defects—we all recognised.

1391. You were all agreed about these things, you say, though you gave no expression to your opinions?—I am sure of that.