

3530. Do you agree with this: "As, practically, there are only two walls available for beds, one of which in each ward is broken up by the chimney-breast and a doorway, the beds are necessarily placed too close to each other for either the health or comfort of the patients"?—Yes, I think that is true.

3631. So that in the Dunedin Hospital at the present time the beds are placed too close together for the health or comfort of the patients? And you say that that is a true statement?—It is, provided always that the facts are correct.

3632. Are they correct or not?—I do not know.

3633. Yet we find you, a member of the staff, taking part in the consideration of that report, and now saying that you do not know whether the report was correct or not? I will read you the minute of the staff bearing upon the matter:—"Dr. Lindo Ferguson read a paper, and showed a plan prepared by him containing suggestions whereby the present hygienic defects in the ward-construction of the Hospital might be amended. The late hour prevented any discussion thereon, which was postponed till next meeting. Dr. Ferguson was thanked for the trouble he had taken in the matter, and the secretary was directed to convey the following resolution to the Trustees:—"That the honorary medical staff are engaged considering and preparing a report dealing with the present defects in the hygienic condition of the Hospital, and embodying suggestions by which these may be obviated." At that meeting I notice that Dr. Gordon Macdonald was present. At the next meeting, when Dr. Gordon Macdonald was not present, this resolution was passed: "Dr. L. Ferguson's suggestions for remedying the existing hygienic defects came up for discussion. Those present were unanimous as to the main contentions therein contained, but some difference of opinion prevailed as to the details of their being carried out. The Secretary was requested to see such members of the staff as were absent from the meeting, and—if they were unanimous as to the main contentions—also to forward copies of the suggestions to the Trustees, and to add a paragraph to the effect that they were unanimous as to the main contentions, but were not entirely agreed as to the methods of carrying them out."—As I thought, I was not present when the report was adopted. Perhaps you will now see your way, Mr. Solomon, to withdraw the hard strictures that you have passed upon me.

3634. I did not make any strictures, but I withdraw anything which may have offended you. Then you were not a party to that report?—I was not.

3635. Was it ever brought to your attention?—Yes.

3636. Did anybody ask you for your assent, in writing, to it?—No.

3637. Did you ever disapprove of it in writing?—No.

3638. Do you disapprove of it?—I do.

3639. Did you express any disapproval?—There was no use disapproving. The fact is, there are two parties on the staff—a University party and a non-University party, and what the University party want they carry with a high hand.

3640. Now, it is said there are two parties on the Hospital staff—a University party and a non-University party—and that if one party wants one thing the other party vote against it. Can you tell us the members of these parties?—No, I cannot.

3641. Are you of the University party?—No.

3642. Are you of the non-University party?—Yes.

3643. Is Dr. Coughtrey?—He is not attached to the University.

3644. Is Dr. Jeffcoat?—No.

3645. Is Dr. Maunsell?—Yes.

3646. And Dr. Batchelor, Dr. Roberts, and Dr. Lindo Ferguson are also lecturers there?—Yes; and I may say that whatever these men say is law, and whatever the other men say is not law.

3647. Yes; whatever these men say, Dr. Coughtrey, Dr. Jeffcoat, Dr. Macdonald, and Dr. Stenhouse say the opposite?—No; they do not say anything, they remain silent.

3648. Have they a majority?—They had at one time, but apparently they have not now.

3649. Well, is it not a fact that, from the time Dr. Lindo Ferguson's report was brought up, you four have been in vigorous opposition to Dr. Batchelor?—That is not true; it is a lie.

3650. You are a member of the opposing party, at any rate?—There is no opposing party to hospital reform.

3651. Well, of the non-University party?—Yes; or at any rate, they say so.

3652. Do you not know what Dr. Stenhouse is?—I never asked him. Let him answer for himself; I have quite enough to do to answer for myself.

3653. Do you not know that a report was sent in by the medical staff?—No.

3654. Did you approve of the recommendations in this report? Were you a party to it, or were you not?—That was the University-party's business.

3655. But it is a report by the medical staff?—It is a report by Dr. Lindo Ferguson.

3656. Do you not know that when it was sent in to the Trustees it was sent in as the report of the medical staff?—No.

3657. *The Chairman.*] Did you ever receive a copy of the resolution of the staff?—No.

3658. *Mr. Solomon.*] Whether you were a party or not, do you agree with this statement: "The beds are necessarily placed too close together for either the health or the comfort of the patients"?—That, of course, will depend on the cubic space.

3659. Never mind about the cubic space. Do you agree that the beds in the Dunedin Hospital, as they are at the present day, are necessarily placed too close together for either the health or comfort of the patients?—It is possible enough, but it is not a matter of how close the beds are together if there is proper cubic space.

3660. Now, a thorough system of ventilation is essential to the life of patients in a Hospital?—Yes.