

4824. Have you seen that done in many of the hospitals you have mentioned?—It is arrived at to a considerable extent in Edinburgh. The wards were kept in an equable temperature both summer and winter. The amount of air taken through the heating pipes could be easily adjusted; and an equable temperature like that is of very great importance indeed.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1890.

DR. FRANCIS OGSTON, sworn and examined.

*Witness:* I should like to say, before giving my evidence, that I have taken no side in this matter. I have carefully guarded myself against being a partisan on either one side or the other, and I am desirous of that explanation being made. I have made a communication to that effect to both Mr. Solomon and Mr. Chapman.

4825. *Mr. White.*] What is your name?—Francis Ogston.

4826. Are you a duly-registered medical practitioner for New Zealand?—Yes.

4827. What are your medical titles?—I am a Doctor of Medicine and a Master of Surgery.

4828. Of what University?—Aberdeen.

4829. How long have you been in practice?—For eighteen years.

4830. In Scotland?—Yes, and here.

4831. How long have you been in Dunedin?—A little over four years.

4832. You are a lecturer in the University of Otago, are you not?—I am.

4833. Lecturer on what?—Medical Jurisprudence and Hygiene.

4834. What experience have you had of hospitals generally in other countries?—I have studied in various centres—at Prague, Vienna, and Paris. I have also seen the Edinburgh and Glasgow Hospitals, and one or two in Germany, and nearly all the London hospitals.

4835. Are you a member of the Honorary Medical Staff of the Dunedin Hospital?—Yes; I have been a member since January last.

4836. What is your opinion as to the site of the Hospital?—I consider the site to be as bad as it can be. Part of the ground was, I understand, a swamp at one time, which was filled up with all sorts of rubbish. One part of the ground was higher than the rest of it.

4837. Then, as to the surroundings of the Hospital?—I should say they are as bad as they could be. Dunedin, though one of the largest towns of the colony, is said to be one of the most unhealthy. The drainage around the Hospital is very bad. There are four drains surrounding the institution, one on each side, which require to be periodically cleaned out, as they are not properly made.

4838. Do you say the site was originally a swamp? You do not say that from your own knowledge?—No, not from my own knowledge. The south side of it is below the level of the street.

4839. *The Chairman.*] And the basement of the Hospital is below that again, I believe?—I believe so. As I say, the Hospital is surrounded by drains, one on each side.

4840. *Mr. White.*] Have you seen a plan of the drainage of the town?—Yes, I have; and I have seen that the drains are in that position. The drains in the low ground, I observed, were not level, as the ground has not been properly sloped; therefore they do not empty themselves properly, and require to be cleaned out every now and again by the removal of sludge. I saw a quantity of sludge taken out of one of the drains in February last, and it was of a most filthy description.

4841. Was it taken from the sewers?—Yes. At that time I had a man in the Hospital who was suffering from drain-poisoning. He had been cleaning out this very drain.

4842. Where was he cleaning out the drain?—In Frederick Street, at the north end, and very close to the Hospital. The man suffered from sewer-gas poisoning. After he came into the Hospital the air of the ward in which he was placed was contaminated for a whole day, the smell from him pervading the whole ward.

4843. *The Chairman.*] Was that dangerous to the other patients in the ward?—It must have been.

4844. *Mr. White.*] What is done with the sludge from these drains?—It is carted to Pelichet Bay, I believe.

4845. *The Chairman.*] Is it disinfected in any way?—No. It is simply dumped down into the harbour, behind the reclaimed ground, near the present harbour wall, which is being filled up in this way.

4846. And that sludge would contain matter coming directly from the Hospital, would it not?—Yes, it would. The drains, I consider, simply form an elongated cesspool. The outfall is down Frederick Street and Hanover Street.

4847. The levels, in your opinion, are wrong?—Yes, they are.

4848. Where do the drains emerge?—At the foot of Frederick and Hanover Streets.

4849. Do all these drains join into one?—So far as I can learn they do, by cross drains.

4850. At what distance from the Hospital do they empty into the bay?—About a quarter of a mile.

4851. *Mr. White.*] There are some seven drains in all which enter into the Upper Harbour, are there not?—I cannot say.

4852. *The Chairman.*] Have these anything to do with the Hospital?—That might come under the surroundings of the site. I may say that I regard the Upper Harbour as nothing but an open cesspool; in fact, the whole of our air comes up from the bay, consequently we have what I might call a perpetual atmosphere of germs, especially in the part of the city where the Hospital is. So bad is the nuisance that, as a matter of fact, the residents of Ravensbourne and Pelichet Bay have often complained about the nuisance which comes from the foreshore.