

6522. *Mr. Chapman.*] Was there any smoothing of the boards by planing them down at all?—No.

6523. *The Chairman.*] Was it last year that the boards were planed?—No; it was a long time ago—four or five years.

6524. Was it an expensive process?—No. I think there was a carpenter employed for four or five days. The nails were all hammered in. There was no difficulty about doing it; I mean in No. 4 ward. But there would be a difficulty in No. 3 ward, because the boards are all worn very considerably in places. I may say that this system of filling up the cracks in the floors was suggested to me by reading a book written by a doctor—I forget his name—who suggested some improvements in old hospitals. The idea which I got from the book I found to be of great utility, and Dr. Grabham highly approved of it when he saw it. The plan was not carried out in the upper wards, because the crevices we found not to be so large as in the other wards. I found that it could be done very well in No. 7 ward.

6525. *Mr. Chapman.*] I want you now to describe to the Commissioners the plan you now adopt of cleaning the wards. I mean your system of “fallowing” wards. For a time, I understand, you fallowed only one ward. How long has the plan of fallowing two wards been in existence?—About eighteen months, I think.

6526. Fallowing one ward has been in existence much longer—in Dr. Grabham’s time, was it not?—Yes. In 1879 or 1880.

6527. Under the present system of fallowing two wards, how long is a ward in use—in commission as it were—before it is thrown out?—That will depend on circumstances. But there is an annual cleaning.

6528. Which involves the throwing-out of each ward?—Yes.

6529. So that every ward has one turn of fallowing in a year?—Yes; and if we find any very bad cases in a ward, and it is thought advisable to make a change, we would go through the same process with that ward, fumigating it in the first instance.

6530. *The Chairman.*] I want you to describe exactly what the process is. First the ward is emptied of patients and beds. As to the beds, Dr. Copland has already told us that they are repainted. Is that all that is done?—It may not be the invariable practice, but it is generally done. They are taken outside and allowed to remain there until the ward is again ready for use.

6531. They are exposed during that time to the atmosphere, and are generally repainted?—Yes. The wooden beds and bed-boxes are also taken out, exposed, and then varnished. All the ward furniture which is capable of being removed outside is taken out.

6532. And the bedding?—Is all specially examined at this time, and if there are any defects they are attended to.

6533. Are any measures taken to disinfect the bedding?—Not unless there is some special necessity for doing so. If there are any bad cases the beds are disinfected. That is always done.

6534. After a very bad case the bed is taken down and disinfected?—Yes; and the bed-clothes are taken to the laundry and washed.

6535. After the ward has been cleared in that way, what is done to it?—Well, sometimes it is fumigated by burning sulphur, but that is not always done. We have allowed the practice of fumigation to lapse if there have been no bad cases.

6536. What quantity of sulphur do you use on these fumigating occasions?—Between 2lb. and 3lb.

6537. That is burnt at one time?—Yes.

6538. Everything being closed up, of course?—Yes.

6539. What happens after the fumigation?—All the windows are open.

6540. What next?—We generally go on with the cleaning.

6541. And what is the process of cleaning: do you first take the floors?—We do not commence with the floors.

6542. What do you commence with?—We generally commence with the ceilings, which are washed down or scraped, but that is not invariably done. Sometimes one or two years may elapse before that is done.

6543. But in the course of one or two years the ceilings are always scraped?—Yes, and washed.

6544. What is the process of scraping?—With deck-scrapers. If there are any loose particles on the walls they are scraped off, and the walls are carefully scraped down.

6545. After scraping the ceilings, what is put on to colour it?—We wash them with white-wash.

6546. Do you do the walls at the same time?—Yes; the ceilings first, and the walls afterwards.

6547. *Mr. Chapman.*] You whitewash the walls too?—There is some ultramarine blue put into the colouring so as to give it a French-grey appearance.

6548. *The Chairman.*] What is your whitewash made up of?—A little size and ultramarine blue.

6549. And whiting?—Yes.

6550. *Mr. Chapman.*] You put in the size to make it hold?—Yes.

6551. *The Chairman.*] Does the whitewash smell at all?—It does for a day or two.

6552. What kind of size is it you use—prepared painters’?—Concentrated size.

6553. *Mr. Chapman.*] What is done with the dado?—It is copal-varnished each year.

6554. Is it scraped down too?—No.

6555. To what height does the dado run; is it 6ft.?—Hardly that: between 4ft. and 5ft.

6556. Then you take the floors: are they next, or the closets?—We examine the closets to see if there are any flaws in them.