

(No. 146.)



1884.

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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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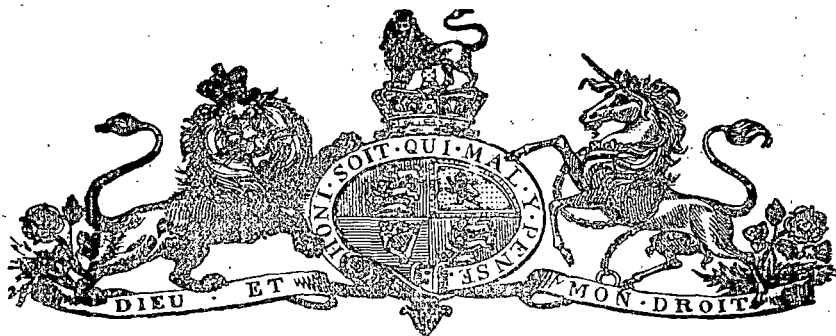
**HOSPITAL FOR INSANE, NEW NORFOLK :**

**CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO PRIVATE FEES.**

*Return to Order, Legislative Council, July 17, 1884. (Mr. Crowther.)*

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Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, August 1, and ordered by the Council to be printed, September 23, 1884.



*Chief Secretary's Office, Hobart, 2nd January, 1884.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to forward for your perusal a communication received from Dr. Huston, having reference to certain statements contained in the Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to enquire into the internal and general management of the Hospital for the Insane, New Norfolk.

With reference to the explanation given by Dr. Huston as to the circumstances under which he attended a patient in the Hospital in his capacity as a private medical practitioner at the request of the friends of such patient, the Government are of opinion that while there could be no objection to the occasional visits of a private practitioner with the view of ascertaining the mental and physical state of an inmate when so requested by the friends of the patient, any professional attendance, other than that of the paid medical staff of the Institution, involving the determination of questions affecting the medical treatment of such patient, is very undesirable; but, at the same time, it is a question more especially for the consideration of the Commissioners, in whom the law vests the management and control of the Institution.

The Government, however, deem such objection of far greater weight in cases where the medical practitioner is himself one of the body of Commissioners; and they consider the relative positions of a private medical adviser to a patient, and a Commissioner of the Hospital, so incompatible, that they trust immediate steps will be taken by the Commissioners to prevent a continuance of such an objectionable relation.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

WM. MOORE.

*The President of the Commissioners of the  
Hospital for the Insane, New Norfolk.*

*New Norfolk, 21st December, 1883.*

SIR,

OBSERVING from reports in the *Mercury* that the Hon. W. L. Crowther has been pleased to single me out and endeavour to cast odium on me in several matters as a Commissioner of the New Norfolk Hospital, I desire respectfully to be permitted to explain one or two points in reference thereto.

First, not having, as Coroner, held an inquest on a patient (Mrs. Lindsay) who was found dead in her bed.

I was informed by Dr. Macfarlane that Mrs. Lindsay had been under treatment for heart disease, and that he was perfectly satisfied as to the cause of death, and which the *post mortem* examination verified. I therefore exercised my discretion and declined, seeing no reason for it, holding an inquest.

Secondly, I am charged, being a Commissioner, with receiving fees for visiting a patient in the Hospital.

I was requested to see the patient (Mr. Lewis) before he was placed in the Hospital, and it was by my advice that he was sent there, which was done on the certificates of Doctors Crowther and Smart, also one from myself. After his admission I was requested by his family, through Mr. John Roberts, to visit him professionally as a private practitioner, Dr. Macfarlane having concurred, and Mr. Roberts made an arrangement with me for such professional visits.

I am, Sir, as you are aware, established here as a private practitioner, and I have yet to learn that being a Commissioner of the Hospital precludes my receiving remuneration for my services, as I am not, as was suggested in the Legislative Council, an "Honorary Medical Officer" to the institution, such a position and that of a Commissioner being totally different.

Trusting this explanation will throw a different light on the subjects referred to, and enclosing a letter from Mr. Neil Lewis in confirmation of my statements,

I have, &c.

G. F. HUSTON.

*The Honorable the Chief Secretary, Hobart.*

*Hobart, 20th December, 1883.*

MY DEAR SIR,

IN reply to your request, I have to state that when my brother David was taken ill I determined, after consulting friends, to seek your professional advice; and, subsequently, when it was thought advisable to remove my afflicted brother to New Norfolk, I at once, in conjunction with my brother Thomas, and my nephews David and Richard Lewis, came to the conclusion that your able services should be secured for my brother. You were then asked if you would kindly attend him daily as his private medical attendant, and we were glad to receive your consent to do so.

I have, &c.

NEIL LEWIS.

*Dr. G. F. HUSTON, New Norfolk.*

*Chief Secretary's Office, Hobart, 15th January, 1884.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, forwarding a Resolution of the Commissioners of the Hospital for Insane, New Norfolk, expressing their opinion that, under the sanction of the Commissioners, a medical practitioner, whether he be a Commissioner or not, may be permitted to consult with the Surgeon-Superintendent in the case of any patient when so requested by the relatives of such patient, but that the regular attendance of any private practitioner upon a patient would be most objectionable.

In reply, I desire again to express my very decided opinion that it is most undesirable any Commissioner being a medical man should professionally visit any patient in the Hospital, as I cannot but consider his position as a Commissioner, and at the same time a medical adviser, either in consultation with the Surgeon-Superintendent or otherwise, to be utterly incompatible.

I have &c.

WM. MOORE.

*The President of the Commissioners,  
Hospital for the Insane, New Norfolk.*

[Resolution above referred to.]

*EXTRACT from the Minutes of the Proceedings of the Commissioners at a Special Meeting held at the Hospital for the Insane, New Norfolk, 7th January, 1884.*

RESOLUTION.—"That, whilst the Commissioners acknowledge the undoubted right of the relatives of patients to call in any legally qualified medical practitioner, whether he be a Commissioner or not to consult, under the sanction of the Commissioners, with the Surgeon-Superintendent in the case of any such patient, they are decidedly of opinion that the regular attendance of any private practitioner upon a patient in this Institution would be objectionable, and should be strictly forbidden."