

his doctor, or his employer, could designate to which hospital he wished to be taken by the police ambulance. In the event of the patient making no selection, and no one being with him to do this for him, the driver would take him to the nearest hospital. This rule had given perfect satisfaction.

When the committee met Mayor Hocken and discussed the matter with him several interesting pieces of information came out. In the first place, there were present at the meeting of the Police Commissioners only the Mayor, and Col. Denison, Judge Winchester being out of the city. The other piece of information was that it was the Mayor who raised the question at the meeting of the Commissioners. The committee were unable to secure a perusal of the order passed by the Commissioners, or to ascertain whether or not some one from the General Hospital had inspired the Mayor to act as he had.

He said to the committee that he thought Col. Grasset, the Chief of Police, had taken too extreme a view of the order. He said he did not think it was intended to interfere with those who could pay for their ward in a hospital. The Mayor, however, gave the committee to understand that the order would stand in so far as city order emergency cases are concerned. This concession is some gain, but it is far from a satisfactory solution of the difficulty.

There are several things that should be borne in mind:

1. When there was only one hospital, the General, all such cases were taken to it. But as each new hospital was established it obtained the privilege of receiving city order patients and caring for them. This has never been questioned.

2. The patient, or some one for the patient, has always had the right to say to which hospital the patient should be taken. This has been regarded as a right of the citizen that could not and should not be interfered with.

3. The police ambulance is a public conveyance for the use of the public. It is supplied by the citizen body and maintained out of the general city revenue. It is placed under the control of the Police Commissioners, but might just as well be under the control of the Property Committee, or the Assessment Commissioner.

Now the deduction must be drawn that if the Police Commissioners have the power to compel an accident case to be removed to any given institution, against the wish of the injured person or his friends, then they have power to determine to what institution all city order patients must go. We deny this power. The Police Commissioners have power to regulate traffic on the street, they have power to make a charge for the public ambulance, they have control over the ambulance as to