

56. You suggested that the company officer should know each day where and how his men are?—Yes; I understand that it is an axiom in the Army that an officer should be in constant personal relationship with his men, and my idea is that the Medical Officer should be equally in touch with his men. At the same time it is quite possible for any man who sets himself out to do so to deceive the Medical Officer, even if he has the measles.

57. Did you inspect the Berhampore Hospital at any time?—No, sir, I have not made any inspection of Berhampore, though I have been out there. I went out with the Minister once.

58. *The Chairman.*] Was that designed by the Public Health Department or by the medical authorities connected with the military?—No; at the outbreak of the war certain cases arose on the “Waimana,” one of the ships going to England. I was asked by Colonel Will to deal with those cases. I knew as a Health Officer that the Wellington Hospital Board did not like to take these cases, and I rang up the Mayor and asked him if he could allow the Berhampore Hospital to be used, and he said “Yes.”

59. It was built as a fever hospital?—Yes, originally for plague patients, I think; but according to my recollection it was used by the returned troopers from South Africa as well. In regard to these “Waimana” cases, Dr. McGavin, P.M.O., decided they must go to the Wellington Hospital, into what is known as the tin shed. The next day Colonel Will rang me up again asking for some more cases to be taken. I said I was prepared to take the whole of these cases in hand and arrange for their accommodation, but I declined to have anything to do with the matter if six or seven different medical men were dealing with it. Dr. Purdy afterwards informed me that Dr. McGavin had nothing to do with it. I declined to have anything to do with the matter unless I received definite instructions that I was to be in control.

60. You were anxious to step in and assist?—Yes, and do everything I could that was necessary.

61. This correspondence also refers to the fact that the tents have been on the same ground all the time?—The tents should be removed frequently. They should be taken down whenever it is possible to let the sun in. If the tent has a floor, it should be taken down and the floor exposed to the sun. If possible, also, the floor itself should be removed so as to let the ground have the sun. If there is no floor-boarding, the tents certainly should be removed. I think the writer is quite right in saying that the tents at Home are removed.

62. We are only assuming as a general principle that that has not been done?—I do not say that it has not been done. I was out there on one occasion when the tents were being pulled down and exposed to the sunlight, and in the evening they were re-erected.

63. You have read the statement made by Mr. Bates before the Commission?—Yes, sir.

64. Have you any observations you would like to make with regard to it?—Yes. I am not aware what experience Mr. Bates has had in regard to the open-air treatment of the sick. It is the experience of sanatoria doctors that patients suffering from consumption, under open-air conditions in buildings almost similar in design to these hutments, do not suffer from catarrh or influenza. Medical superintendents of such institutions are in the habit of tracing catarrh or influenza or colds to a visitor, and they dread visitors for that reason, more especially in winter. It is also a fact that competent medical authorities advise that pneumonia cases be nursed under open-air conditions, and in Wellington I think I am right in saying they have been nursed on the veranda of the Wellington Hospital under Dr. Hardwick Smith. So that I deny that “the chilling of the bodies of the inmates would create liability to all the consequences of checked perspiration, and respiratory troubles would be prevalent, especially in cold and damp weather.” Patients under open-air conditions do not suffer more from respiratory troubles than others. In fact, if that were so the whole open-air treatment for consumption would be on an absolutely unsound basis, and it is not.

65. I suppose it is in pursuance of that theory that we often find children put to sleep in tents in the open at night?—Yes. A large number of people at the present day, if they happen to have a French door opening on to a veranda, sleep with it open so that they are practically in a temperature equivalent to that outside, and they find themselves in good health thereby. Then, I do not know what time of the day the thermometer tests were made, and I do not know under what conditions they were made.

66. *Mr. Ferguson.*] He does not say he got any tests at all in his evidence: he says he hopes to secure them?—Then I would like to know when he did make any tests.

*The Chairman:* Did you make any tests, Mr. Bates, and get any records?

*Mr. Bates:* I took the thermometers with me, and I have a file dealing with the matter. I took the thermometers with me but did not take any tests.

*Witness:* Then I assume the conclusions are not made upon any tests?

67. *The Chairman.*] No, they must be upon general principles?—Then it is pointed out that the hutments would be exceedingly hot in the daytime with bright sunshine. I am anxious to know under what circumstances it is possible for soldiers under quick training to be allowed to remain for any length of time lolling about in the hutments. I think it would be impossible; they could only be there during the night-time.

68. And perhaps at meal-time?—The question of whether the meals are to be continued to be taken in the hutments is a matter receiving the attention of the Defence Department. He further states, “and at night, under anti-cyclonic conditions especially, excessively cold.” It is beyond me to really understand how the temperature of these hutments can possibly be lower than the surrounding temperature. Certainly I should like to have a definite test made to see if it is possible to have the temperature inside lower than the temperature outside.

69. It is said that is due to the galvanized iron?—I understand so. Then he stated, “If the roof were only protected with a non-conductor the sides would set up a series of conduction currents.”