

77. Now, do you suggest that if any severe case of influenza were introduced into the camp, even if the hutments were made of wood, it would not have spread as it has spread in this camp?—That depends how far it is infectious.

78. Well, take a severe case of influenza?—That is very doubtful. It would not, I believe, have grown to any such great extent, because influenza is caused and fostered to a certain extent by unfavourable conditions.

79. Influenza is an acutely infectious disease?—It has been.

80. Would you say it is not now?—I would not say it is not.

81. What is it?—It is an infectious disease.

82. And one which rapidly spreads; and you told the Commission that you think it would not have spread so rapidly if the building had been made of wood instead of iron?—I do, certainly. The ground it has to fall on is the question. If the ground is prepared for that by the lowering of the vital powers of the men by cold air, then that influenza will take root. [Witness quoted from Thomas on "Ventilation," page 12, "A frigid atmosphere from above has a most deleterious action upon the breathing-organs, giving rise to chill, inflammation of the lungs, and bronchitis. The effects are the same as when one descends into a cold crypt or dungeon, only that the person sleeping has far less vitality to resist the action of the sudden inrush of frigid air."]

83. Did you hear Dr. Frengley give evidence yesterday?—No, I did not.

84. Well, he told us of an instance of the rapid spread of influenza in a school, a brick building, wherein he said the conditions were entirely sanitary and everything up to date. Have you a theory to account for that?—No; it would be in an acutely infectious form.

85. And it may spread rapidly under any conditions?—Apparently.

86. And in any building?—But more so in an unfavourable building. Dr. Frengley mentioned "fall fever" in America—the name that typhoid fever gets—to prove weather was the cause, and I would like to refer the Commissioners to page 212 of Dr. Ward's book on "Climate." Typhoid is more common in the country than in sanitary cities, and arises from bad smells, polluted water, &c.—not directly from the season. Now, with regard to preparing the men for war—making them fit for the hardships they will have to undergo—that does not justify us in putting them through dangerous hardships to prepare them for it, because we are weakening their constitutions and powers of resistance to disease. The last night that the Fifth Reinforcements slept at the camp one blanket was taken from each man.

87. *The Chairman.*] Did you see it?—I saw the blankets taken away at the camp.

88. And they had to sleep with one blanket less that night?—Yes—two blankets instead of three.

89. *Mr. Ferguson.*] Were the men paraded with blankets?—Yes, and had to hand one in.

90. Did you see that?—Yes. That in the case of a man not used to hardship would, on a very cold night, probably give him pneumonia, which would develop in from twenty-four to thirty-six hours.

91. *Dr. Martin.*] Did they sleep in the camp that night?—Yes, in tents. That was the Fifth Reinforcements. Putting men suddenly in conditions like that is not preparing them for warfare.

92. *Mr. Ferguson.*] Is there anything else of your own knowledge that you saw yourself that was wrong?—I did not come to this inquiry in a hostile manner to complain.

93. *The Chairman.*] We asked you to come to give us some information about the weather, and we are quite conscious that you realize you are discharging a duty, and we shall be glad if you will tell us of anything you know or of any people who can give us information?—I do not desire to be regarded as a hostile witness, as Mr. Gray's attitude towards me and his questions seemed to imply.

94. We do not regard you in that light?—I only want now to see that the money is not thrown away on the hutments. I would like to suggest that they be painted white, better ventilated, and double-lined, because at present it is so dangerous, in my opinion. Another matter I would suggest is that in future huts should be built of wood, and roofed with shingle, and floored, as this is a permanent or standing camp. Walls of wood do not radiate the heat like iron does.

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THURSDAY, 22ND JULY, 1915.

JAMES SANDS ELLIOTT sworn and examined. (No. 19.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are at present Acting Chairman of the British Medical Association?—I am Acting Chairman of the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association.

2. And what was your position in the earlier part of the year—the same?—Yes.

3. How long have you been Acting-Chairman?—For a year and seven or eight months.

4. *Dr. Martin.*] You are also Principal Medical Officer of the Wellington District?—Yes.

5. How long have you been in that position?—Since the beginning of April.

6. And as P.M.O. of the district, the plans of all hospitals built in the district should be submitted to you?—Yes, according to the British Army and other regulations, but here there was an exception to the rule.

7. *The Chairman.*] You wish to make an explanation in regard to these particular plans?—Yes, sir.