

268. But you were afterwards requested to leave when you said that you had come to get evidence for this Commission?—I was not requested to leave: I was told I could not go through. I could not have represented that I was sent by His Honour to get evidence for this Commission, because I have not had the pleasure of speaking to His Honour. I would like to be allowed to give my reasons for giving evidence here. It was not done in order to prejudice the case of the camp authorities and medical men, as has been suggested. I take a great interest in the soldiers, and I think that the men who are serving the country should have everything done for them which it is possible to do. Therefore I have gone to great trouble, and got into trouble for doing so. I have got into trouble for giving my views and experience for the sake of the soldiers. In the next place, I want to say that I consider the whole of the headquarters staff a competent staff. They have done everything they could do in that camp. They have all worked willingly, and with good *esprit de corps*. They were overworked, and if they have not kept the camp in a sanitary condition I do not blame them, for they could not do it.

269. *The Chairman.*] It was overcrowded?—I think the whole of the staff were overworked and had too much to attend to with their military duties, and there should have been some one to take charge of the sanitary duties in a proper manner. With regard to the training of the Medical Officers, I think it was an absolute absurdity to call it a training-camp for Medical Officers. I also say to talk about the training of probationary Medical Officers in a camp where there was no training for them is an absolute absurdity. I want to take exception to a word used by Dr. Frengley twice in his evidence. He spoke of "funk." I object to that—it has a nasty German sound. And I object to it if it is applied to the men or the officers: there was no fear among the men or the officers. If he applied it to them he had no right to do so. I would call the condition "panicky" if it is applied to the exodus from the camp.

270. You had been in camp before you came here?—I was a month in Auckland.

271. You had not been practising there?—I was supposed to be on duty; I was an expeditionary officer.

272. Were you practising in New Zealand?—Many years ago. I gave up my home in California to come to New Zealand to offer my services to the Defence Department, and I was sent to the front at Samoa two days after my arrival.

JOHN THOMAS MARRYAT HORNSBY sworn and examined. (No. 36.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are a member of Parliament?—Yes.

2. You have come to make a statement with regard to the case of a private, regarding whom we had some evidence yesterday?—Yes. I would like to just briefly outline the whole business in connection with this matter, and I have here a copy of a letter which I addressed to the Hon. Mr. Rhodes, Minister of Public Health, in connection with this incident. It clears up the whole question. It was early this month that I discovered the whereabouts of this young man Pearson. For days I was trying to discover him, because I had had an urgent telegraphic communication from his father asking me to tell him of his son's whereabouts. I could not find Pearson anywhere. After some three days I went direct to the Minister of Defence in the House and asked him if he would interest himself in the matter, because I had that day had another telegram from the father telling me that the boy's mother was seriously ill through worrying over him. I handed that telegram to the Hon. James Allen, and in about a couple of hours I had the information I wanted. I immediately telegraphed to the boy's parents and allayed their fears. I made inquiries as to where this lad was, and found he was at Kaiwarra, and at the earliest possible moment I went out to the Kaiwarra Hospital and there saw the boy. The Red Cross officer who was in charge warned me before the boy came downstairs that I was to stand 5 yards from him, and not attempt to shake hands with him. I had a short conversation with Pearson, and he told me of his condition, or what he had learned of it since, because he was unconscious when he was taken from Trentham. I misunderstood him in one particular: I understood him to say he was taken to Kaiwarra from Trentham, whereas he had been taken to the Wellington Hospital. I attended to some wants of the boy, and then when the trouble arose in the House over it I took the earliest opportunity of asking this lad if he would come before this Commission and make a statement. He said he was afraid, and I asked him what he was afraid of, and he made this excuse: he said that there was a good deal of feeling displayed by those in charge when anybody made any complaints which reached the public ear; and he was not singular in that. I may say that several of the men have told me the same thing. They do not want to give evidence because they are afraid of the ulterior consequences. I do not know what they are. In order that I may put myself quite right in this matter I want to read this letter which I addressed to the Hon. Mr. Rhodes on the 20th July. This is a copy:—

"Hon. R. H. Rhodes, Minister of Public Health, House.

"DEAR SIR.—In further reference to the case of the young soldier of whose affairs I spoke in the House, I have now to inform you that the lad is afraid of the consequences to himself, and will not give his consent to my handing his name to you. I regret this, not so much on account of the refusal as because of the expression of fear of consequences. Rightly or wrongly the young fellow is possessed of this fear, and I cannot force him to do anything against his will. I have, however, had a further interview with the lad, and now desire to give you the full particulars, correcting one portion of my statement in the House.

"The lad was very ill, and was removed to a loose-box, where he lay without a mattress. Then he was taken to the kiosk, where he lay in blankets on the boarded floor without a mattress. He developed bleeding at the nose, and was seen by a doctor when the orderly (there was no nurse) failed to stop the bleeding. The doctor said, "Put your head back"; and that is all