

drainage as per plans herewith, pending final decision as to the suitability, &c. These huts are to be taken as a sample from which tenders are to be subsequently called. Complete plans of the hutments, officers' quarters, cookhouses, guard-room, &c., are available in this Department, and I have to request that you will finally have the necessary specifications, &c., prepared, tenders called, and the work carried out under the supervision of your Department. Of course, it will be understood that specifications, &c., cannot be finally accepted until the sample huts have been erected and tested, and any alterations found necessary provided for. As the work is very urgent, I have to request that you will kindly issue the necessary authority to the District Engineer for, say, £500 to proceed with the erection of the sample huts immediately. The approximate total cost has been estimated at £14,605." Can you say whether it was before or after that that the Dr. Frengley Board reported?—Before that, because the hut that was put up was on the recommendation of that Board. This was to erect the sample hut in order to test it, and not to commit ourselves to the whole affair without having a sample.

117. I see you got the report from the Dr. Frengley Board on the 13th February?—Yes.

118. That Board, of course, came after the Medical Board?—Yes, after it reported.

119. And that order of reference was from the Minister to the Dr. Frengley Board?—Yes.

120. I see this report said they had considered the matter "from the standpoint that what is required is not the provision of buildings of the character and for use as permanent barracks, but rather, as an alternative to tents, structures of a partially permanent character"?—That is so.

121. "We are of opinion that the double bunking system should be avoided if possible, consequently we confine ourselves to the proposal marked No. 1": that was the one without barracks?—Yes.

122. "Site—aspect: We are in accord with the general arrangement of the huts as set out on the plan, but suggest these amendments: (a) That the six officers' huts adjacent to the headquarters office be moved nearer to the road from the main entrance, to secure a better fall for the branch drains therefrom; (b) that the sites for the officers' huts on the flanks of the camp be finally decided with due regard to military requirements and their adjacency to the drains; (c) that each hut be made to accommodate a hundred men." The Defence Department's suggestion was a hundred men?—There was to be a partition to be put in the middle to save the cost of two ends.

123. What they say is: "That each hut be made to accommodate a hundred men, divided into two parts by a strongly built partition, that portion above the wall-plates to be covered with expanded metal for ventilation purposes. This alteration would effect considerable economy, the cost of at least thirty-four end walls being eliminated. Having regard to the aspect of the buildings as shown (which will secure ample direct sun's rays upon the space intervening between the huts), their reduced height (further referred to below), adequate space for the free circulation of air, and the general prevalence of winds, we are of opinion that the light and air available to each hut and its surroundings will be entirely sufficient. The plan shows 20 ft. between the huts, a distance according to our amended proposals of approximately one and a half times the maximum height of the huts, a distance we regard as ample." That approved of it in block and not in echelon?—Yes.

124. Then there was the material and design of the huts. Then, "Walls: We conclude iron must also be used for the following reasons: (a.) Economy—Less timber is required for its support in comparison with other materials; time and labour are saved in erection; if properly fixed it can be taken down if so required and reused. (b.) Durability—No other material could equally well stand hard usage to which the walls are likely to be subjected. (c.) Appearance—Erected with vertical corrugations and according to the amended plan submitted we are of opinion a presentable appearance will be obtained. For the diffusion of the interior light, improvement could be cheaply effected by coating all internal surfaces with a suitable sanitary distemper of greenish-grey colour. This would also render the exposed interior woodwork more sanitary." Then, with regard to the floor: "We have fully considered the possibilities of flooring other than wood on account of the very considerable cost of this item. In view of the fact that these huts are for eating as well as sleeping accommodation, and for other reasons, we have decided that a wooden floor is imperative. Any other floor equally or less expensive would necessitate woodwork upon which to lay the mattress. In recommending a wood floor we have in mind that such woodwork will be provided by the floor itself, and the cost thereof is therefore included in the floor-cost." That is the woodwork on which to lay the mattress, apparently?—Yes.

125. "Again, any less expensive flooring would not sufficiently remove the objection to the likelihood of ground air gaining access to the occupants." Now, there was no woodwork on the floor in order to lay the mattresses on?—The original idea was a ground floor which necessitated little raised platforms that we had for the men to sleep on, and then the question of sanitation as regards the men eating in huts with ground floor cropped up, and it was found that it would be very difficult to keep a hut sanitary with the morsels of food that were bound to fall, and therefore the ground or matrix for flooring was dropped and a proper floor put in, which did away with the necessity of having a piece of floor for the men to sleep on of about 2 ft. 4 in. wide, and enabled the messing to be done in a hut, because the floor could be kept clean by being periodically scrubbed and disinfected, and the hut could be used for sleeping and eating in as well.

126. Then there is the other item, "Ventilation: To quote from an authority, 'The object should be to allow a free flow of air round each individual, consistent with comfort, so as to permit of an adequate dilution of the impurities given off into the air by each man.' We are therefore in entire accord with the proposal to leave a permanently open space right round under the eaves. For the still more thorough flooding of the hut with fresh air we advised (above) ade-