

178. *The Chairman.*] When you find suggestions laid down in military books on camp sanitation, do you not regard them as the result of experience?—Yes; in the same light as our manuals on training, and tactics of methods of attack and defence, are a guide and not an absolute rule; so are these sanitary regulations and books a guide to those dealing with the circumstances they find.

179. But then, when they are departed from, should not some justification be shown for the departure?—Yes, some reason for doing it.

180. At any rate, so far as you can say with regard to shifting camps to new ground, or shifting tents on to adjoining sites, that is a matter for the Camp Commandant?—Yes, the senior officer on the spot.

181. You take no steps one way or the other on that subject?—No.

182. And issued no instructions?—No. There is a general instruction to all commanders of camps or in the field that he uses his discretion in such things, and if he is in doubt he appeals to headquarters.

183. But is he not to be guided by authorities and by the manuals put forward on the subject?—Yes, he takes those as a guide.

184. Because evidence has been given here to the effect that those tents ought to be shifted frequently, and that the whole camp should be transferred to a new site at intervals of some three months?—Well, I do not disagree with that when it becomes obviously necessary to do it.

185. And I think you further qualified it by saying that if the ground you had to shift to is muddy you would not shift?—It is far better to stop where you are. I would take the whole responsibility of a G.O.C., because I know the difficulty of shifting to another piece of wet ground.

186. In winter it would be shifting from wet ground on to another piece of wet ground?—Yes.

187. Do you know if the men had floors in the tents?—Quite a number had at that time.

188. As the winter came on?—Yes, as the winter came on.

189. Would not that have met the difficulty of the damp ground by shifting the floor?—Yes, it would in a way.

190. The objection to dampness would be prevented if you had wooden floors?—You would be still putting it on damp ground.

191. Well, on the question of opening-up the tents to dry, what is the proper military course to follow?—To roll up the flies.

192. I mean as to opening the tents, whether to dry or not, is there any regulation as to when it should be done?—Every day when the weather permits the flies should be rolled up. If it is a boisterous day the tent is rolled up on the lee side; on good days take the tent altogether off its ground to allow the ground to get aired, and the tent is put back again on the same spot. By that means you increase the life of your camping-ground almost indefinitely.

193. *Mr. Ferguson.*] How often should the striking of the tents be done?—Take it off its pegs and leave the whole space open to the air.

194. *The Chairman.*] The tent itself will just hang to the pole?—No; take it away altogether and spread it out. It is not so much the tent as to air the ground all round about it.

195. *Mr. Ferguson.*] How often should that be done—of course, it depends on the weather?—Yes. It would average about once a week. I think it is laid down somewhere that it should be done once a week or once a fortnight according to the weather-conditions.

196. *The Chairman.*] Now, those various matters with regard to the tents and so on, as well as the sanitation of the camp, all come under the Camp Commandant, do they not?—Yes.

197. And they have to be carried out?—He has a little staff based on a similar scale to the lines of headquarters: he had an Adjutant-General, a Quartermaster-General, and a Medical Officer.

198. Do you think he had an adequate staff out there for the requirements of this camp?—No, sir, he should have had more; but we are all in the same position.

199. Had he an adequate staff there when the camp stood at, say, three thousand?—Yes, he had then.

200. But after the numbers increased the staff was not sufficient, in your opinion?—No.

201. Why was not that remedied?—For the simple reason that we had not a sufficiently qualified staff to put there. I do not mean anything detrimental to the others who were working.

202. You had not the staff to cope with the position?—No; we were absolutely short of staff throughout New Zealand.

203. How long has that been so?—Since the Main Force went away. We had to select qualified officers to go with them and give them those who had knowledge and experience, and then with each reinforcement we had to send others of our staff—the permanent and trained staff.

204. So that the number of qualified men is constantly being reduced?—Exactly.

205. You will reach the point when you cannot send any away?—I hope to get away myself very soon.

206. You will be the last of the Grand Army?—I am told I have to stay here and work this out, but as soon as it reaches the point that I have to go the better.

207. I suppose by reason of this shortage in the staff the members of the staff become overworked?—Yes, they are overworked.

208. And with a short staff I suppose complaints are sure to arise here and there?—No; there are no complaints among the whole of the staff about overwork.

209. But I mean through matters being overlooked or every one not being attended to?—Yes; you would naturally expect all sorts of complaints to arise out of a large camp with many men coming in without a knowledge of how to take care of themselves, which is the main reason of many troublesome grievances. Having a short staff it takes longer to get all instructed and