

12. Had they adopted drainage facilities, and so on?—Yes. I may say that Canterbury Show-ground is one of the most up-to-date show-grounds as far as New Zealand is concerned. It has every facility for housing and catering for from forty to fifty thousand people.

13. For housing them?—Yes; you feed them.

14. But not habitation for that number?—No, sir; when you speak of housing a gala crowd you mean taking them in and feeding them. However, in this case the authorities there were well advised and shifted the camp, and that experience should have been taken to heart by the headquarters authorities. They knew the state of Trentham, and that during the winter race meetings there they have tremendous trouble with the mud. They knew that this camp would have to go through wet weather, and they had the whole year to go through. They knew the war was not going to end after a few months, but that it was going to be of some duration.

15. That is rather a large statement to make. I do not know who could have said that. Many people thought it was going to end in a short time, and I do not know that the military authorities knew different?—We have direct evidence of it.

16. You assume that it is possible that they knew?—No; we sent away an Expeditionary Force, and we knew that they were going to send away reinforcements to maintain that Force till the end of the war. They also arranged for mobilizing other reinforcements to be sent away, which has been done. Then we must, at any rate, have a permanent camp for this, and to carry out our territorial scheme we were recommended to have a permanent camp. Knowing that they must go in for a camp to carry them through the winter, and as they had all the dry weather ahead of them, still they did not take sufficient precautions, but set up this camp at Trentham. They also knew that there was a shortage of tents, as I can prove by direct evidence.

17. They knew that when?—Last November and December. I was interested in a Scout camp at Banks Peninsula.

18. They knew in November and December that there was a shortage of tents?—Yes; I was interested in a Scout camp at Banks Peninsula, and the Scouts applied to the authorities for a loan of a dozen bell tents, and they could not give them to us because, they said, they had not got them.

19. We have evidence, of course, that they apprehended a shortage of tents, because that was one of the causes of the erection of the huts?—Yes. Now, I want to show that, although they knew all this, instead of taking their heavy materials, such as corrugated iron, concrete, and so on, and commencing to build their hutments during the summer, this was left over and not started until practically the winter months. All those materials should have been on the ground months ago, and the timber could have dried, whereas the hutments were built of wet timber. I saw that myself. Another thing: they knew they would want metal, of which there were practically millions of square yards lying about. They should have got a stone-crusher and crushed it. They needed it for the highway from Wellington, and for the roads out there. They could have made tarred macadam pathways, instead of one having to go up to the knee in mud, as the conditions are this winter.

20. *Mr. Ferguson.*] Have you seen any place where there was up-to-the-knee mud?—Yes, I have been in it. I went back to Canterbury with mud up to within 3 in. of my knee, and showed it to them down there as the conditions which prevailed at Trentham. There was no surface drainage attempted there at all. The first day I went there it was very deep in mud.

21. When was that?—Sunday, the 27th June.

22. Was that the first visit you paid to the camp?—Yes.

23. How did you see the damp timbers?—I saw them the next day.

24. How could you see the damp timbers when the huts were up?—You can tell damp timber if you are an expert. If a man is taught public health decently when he is a medical student he would know: that is part of your medical education. Besides, I have had practical experience myself in timber-mills.

25. You saw there was no surface drainage attempted on the 27th June?—Yes, you could see that perfectly well by the large pools on either side of the main road past the headquarters. Now, sir, the site itself has been in the past a lake. The gorge below shows that it was a lake originally.

26. *The Chairman.*] I do not think your views on this matter accord with those of the geologist whose report we have: are you a geologist?—Yes; I studied geology in my B.A. course at Canterbury College. Of course, I am not a specialist.

27. We have had the place examined geologically, but I do not think the report accords with what you say: however, we will assume it was a lake?—I am not assuming it was a lake. You can see that prehistorically it was a lake—the gorge shows that the hills came down and filled up the basin of the lake. You can see that sort of thing all over the world. There is no doubting the fact that underneath the surface stratum of gravel and sand there is a clay stratum which varies from 3 ft. to 15 ft. from the top. I saw holes——

28. Can you indicate any hole where you saw more than 2 ft. of clay?—I said that there was gravel and sand 3 ft. deep in places, and at other places it goes to 9 ft. and over.

29. Not of clay?—And underneath that there is clay. That being so, when that stratum of gravel and sand got wet, in the summer the damp might disappear by evaporation, but if you go down to 3 ft. it would still be wet, and under this it would remain wet in the winter. In order to satisfy myself I have been at Trentham at all hours of the night since the 28th June. I have been there at 9 o'clock, at 10 o'clock, at 12 o'clock, at 2 o'clock in the morning, and on till 3 o'clock in the morning. When I have been there within the last three weeks at night-time there was a low-lying fog, and some nights it was so cold that the fog froze on the wind-shield on my motor-car into snow or ice. And when I came down through the gorge and got to the Lower Hutt the snow apparently disappeared. The temperature rose from what was practically