

have been unable to wash clothes, or person properly. Men don't think of these things unless it is suggested to them; they simply say, "how dirty these people are."

Some idea of the strain on the nurses, where any were to be found, may be gathered from the fact that "the" Sister had charge of 70 cases of typhoid, besides an epidemic of measles, pneumonia, tonsillitis, and other cases.

The whole trend of this report is to show that the contempt of our male Government for the value of women's work is a question of national importance which cannot be ignored. Had the Government availed themselves of the expert knowledge and work of women in the organization and management of these camps they would have been spared the blunders described in the report before us. There is not a well-organized house in this country which is not managed by women, and it is reasonable and fitting that the supervision and management of these women's camps should be in the hands of their own sex. Women and children should not be at the mercy of military management. It is futile to plead that "war is war." As a civilized nation our duty is to minimize the horrors of war to the innocent and the weak.

Among the things pressing hardest, according to Miss Hobhouse, and which tend to undermine the health and constitutions of the women, are the following:—

Lack of Fuel.—Imagine three small sticks of wood 18 inches long, or small stony coal enough to fill the well of a soup-plate, for daily cooking. The weekly baking becomes almost impossible, and often the meat cannot be cooked, and the bread is sodden because unbaked.

In Kimberley, charity has supplied the bulk of the fuel. In Springfontein mist (dried manure) ekes out the scanty ration, and the women root up a small weed to try and heat their clay-built ovens. Oil stoves would help if oil in any quantity could be procured.

Lack of Beds and Mattresses.—Only a few have beds or mattresses—the great majority lie on the ground. Even if each tent had a bed it would not accommodate more than one or two inhabitants of the tent. Meanwhile the damp of the ground, the occasional streams of rain that run through, the draughty night air coming beneath the flap of the tent, combine to lower the health of the children, and to kill them off in convalescent and delicate stages.

Lack of Soap.—This necessary was not given in any camp. After much urging and requisitioning, a very occasional and quite insufficient quantity is now doled out.

Diet.—The food is monotonous, and does not suit children. Some vegetable diet is greatly needed. It presses hard when the meat (as often) is maggotty and the coffee coppery and undrinkable.

Water.—In Bloemfontein the supply is insufficient, and it is also bad. The clothes of thousands have for months been washed in a small dam of stagnant water only occasionally freshened by rain. It is foul. Many other camps need washhouses.

Overcrowding.—This is very great. Privacy is impossible. In some camps two, and even three, sets of people occupy one tent, and 10, and even 12 persons

are frequently herded together in tents of which the cubic capacity is about 500 cubic feet. In Mafeking and Norvals Pont this trouble is not nearly so bad.

Shoes, Clothes, and Blankets.—At first khaki blankets were plentiful. Now they are getting scarce, and there is much need in various places. The nights are very cold.

Warm clothes are universally wanted. Those people burnt out are, of course, very bare, and have only been relieved by English, Colonial, and Dutch help. Recent importations have been allowed to bring more with them of both bedding and clothes. Quite recently the Government has provided a little flannelette and dress stuff. Shoes are needed everywhere.

Sanitary Accommodations.—This is very inadequate to the number of people. They are separate for men and women, but otherwise wholly without privacy, open to the sun and rain. Where properly looked after by the authorities all is sweet and clean, but elsewhere, notably Bloemfontein, the effluvia is terrible, making it impossible to approach within fifty yards, unless with nose and mouth tied up. The effluvia reaching one side of the camp makes those tents at times unbearable, and has resulted in tonsillitis and various throat troubles. The people feel these places a terrible degradation.

Each camp has now rough but useful little hospitals. Many necessaries were lacking in these, which I have supplied. The death-rate in most of the camps is high. In Bloemfontein it is terrible; 172 deaths had occurred up to the date of my leaving. On Sunday, April 28th, fifteen persons died in that camp. It figures out to about 25 per cent.

The camp life is felt to be purposeless and demoralizing. Mothers are anxious to get young girls out of such an atmosphere if the means were forthcoming to place them in boarding schools.

Education is now provided in a partial way for some of the children in some of the camps. Accommodation cannot be got for all. This is due to the energy of Mr. Sargent, Education Commissioner. There have been a few abortive attempts at recreation here and there, but most lack heart to enter into them. Something should be done in this direction.

To sum up. There is no doubt that the general discomfort could be vastly obviated by attention to the points mentioned, but it should be clearly understood that they are suggested only by way of amelioration. The main thing is to let them go. The ruin of most is now complete, but let all who have friends or means left go. Above all one would hope that the good sense, if not the mercy, of the English people will cry out against the further development of this cruel system which falls with such crushing effect upon the old, the weak, and the children. May they stay the order to bring in more and yet more. Since Old Testament days was ever a whole nation carried captive?

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