

the P.M.O.'s office, where I saw General Wilson. He, while admitting that it was very deplorable, argued that it was unavoidable in this case, as the medical officer, a civilian who had despatched the convoy, had neglected, contrary to his strict orders, to advise the authorities at Bloemfontein when he sent the train off. He admitted that he had received a message from the railway staff officer that morning, and that he had taken immediate steps to have the men fetched away, but owing to the difficulty of procuring ambulances this delay had occurred."

Mr. Guthrie then states his belief that though much sickness was due to drinking bad water, the epidemic was brought about by want of sanitary precautions, by overcrowding, mixing of cases, and by lack of doctors, nurses, and orderlies.

He visited No. 8. General Hospital at the height of the epidemic. To the casual visitor everything seemed satisfactory, but when he came to inquire the proportion of doctors and nurses to patients, when he visited the bell tents, where the men were lying on the ground in the same clothes they had worn for months, covered with vermin, and fouled beyond description, owing to the nature of their diseases, it was not difficult to understand how enteric was on the increase. He likens the hospital to a whitened sepulchre.

His account of the provision for the various hospitals at Pretoria should be studied. For instance, the 14th Brigade Field Hospital, which was supposed to be equipped for 100 men contained 197. They were in receipt of 14 pints of fresh milk daily, and possessed 100 blankets, no beds, mattresses, sheets, or any requisites whatever.

Another point to which Mr. Guthrie draws attention is the "bucket system" in vogue at Pretoria. The full buckets were each night removed by a contractor, conveyed to pits outside the town, and there emptied into pits which when full were closed up. Enteric was rife. There was no separate service for the hospitals. It might easily happen that hospital buckets were replaced in private houses and *vice-versa*.

He also asserts that the hospitals were lamentably under-staffed, to which fact he attributes the excessive number of deaths, and concludes:—

"It can scarcely be questioned that the Government and Lord Roberts did everything in their power to meet and even to foresee the difficulties that occurred, fulfilling every demand that was made upon them in the most generous spirit, and even giving more than they were asked for. I am therefore compelled to argue that the deficiency of doctors, orderlies, and nursing sisters was due to a lack of foresight, and that the blame rests on the heads of the Medical Department in South Africa. This being so, one is reluctantly brought to the conclusion that the local military medical authorities were unfitted for the task they had to perform—a task I admit of the greatest difficulty and magnitude, and one which I do not think their previous training in any way fitted them to cope with. There was apparent at head quarters, where most of the sickness prevailed, an obvious lack of energy and organization; initiative was non-existent. Had the Royal Army Medical Corps had at head quarters some man of capacity and determination, who would have grasped the whole question and worked it out in time, I believe there would have been no occasion for a Royal Commission."

New Preparations, Inventions, etc.

CAFOLIN.

WE heartily commend to the notice of our readers the Cafolin, supplied by Messrs. Peek Bros. and Winch, Ltd. It is a pure liquid coffee, and, with the addition of hot water and milk as desired, a most excellent cup of coffee is produced, having the fine flavour obtainable only from the purest ground coffee, made as only a few cooks can make it, and being absolutely free from foreign flavours which are so characteristic of so many coffee extracts, so that they form a palatable drink perhaps to some, but would be better designated by some other name than Coffee. Besides making excellent coffee; Cafolin may also be used for puddings and for making iced coffee, and coffee ices, with the best results. Cafolin is specially to be recommended to nurses living alone, to the large army of night nurses, and to all, whether nurses or not, who desire a good cup of coffee at the minimum amount of trouble. It may be obtained from the leading grocers in bottles containing sufficient to make 20 coffee cups at 1s. 6d., or for 14 cups at 1s. 2d., or from the Cafolin Co., Ltd., 20, Eastcheap, E.C.

SHREDDED WHEAT.

It is a generally acknowledged fact that the ordinary white bread of modern civilization is a most foolish and wasteful production, representing, in fact, only the starchy constituents of the wheat from which the best and most valuable elements have been, with insane carefulness, removed. For example, the mineral matter, chiefly phosphates essential to the proper nutrition of bones, teeth and nervous system, contained in the outer layers of the kernel, are stripped away; the cerealine ferment and digestive contained in the next layer is callously thrown away; the gluten layer which comes next is almost completely lost in the grinding, and so only the innermost starch grains are left. The facts only require to be stated to be condemned. The Shredded Wheat preparations aim at a more rational use of the natural food. The whole wheat kernel is shredded by machinery into fine strips, which can be used in hundreds of methods to make appetising dishes, but all of which must be valuable as well as palatable because they represent Nature's best food, and, what is more, the whole of it. Shredded Wheat preparations can be obtained from any baker or grocer, or from G. E. Ingersoll, 6, East Cheap, E.C.

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