

Treves said he had himself actually witnessed the washing up of all the plates, dishes, knives and forks in the sink in which the bed-pans were washed out, many of the patients having typhoid fever. It was positively incredible. That applied to two separate hospitals, and he witnessed it on two occasions. In the cold weather they could not find a ward in these hospitals up to 50 deg. It was hardly a temperature for a sick man to be living in. In regard to operations in the large hospital at Canterbury, dealing with a number of cavalry men, there was no surgical equipment. The hospital was falling into the earth, and there was nothing in the place at all except the four walls and the beds. "If anything happens there, if a man meets with a bad accident, so much the worse for the man, as there is no proper outfit in the hospital. There are hospitals of over 200 beds with no surgical outfit, so that it cannot be said that the military surgeon is encouraged in the Service."

EVIDENCE OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, called and examined, said he went out to South Africa in 1900, and was at Bloemfontein during the enteric epidemic. He was the head physician of the Langman Hospital. It was only supposed to take 100 cases, but the pressure was so extreme that about 150 cases were taken in all the time. He considered that the gentlemen who fitted out the private hospitals had been ignored unduly. They did a great patriotic action, they spent a lot of money, they did the Service really an incalculable good. He thought there would have been a terrible scandal and disaster if it had not been for the presence of those hospitals, and the gentleman who fitted out his particular hospital—Mr. Langman—had never had one word of official thanks of any kind whatever, except in the field, where the General, on inspecting the hospital, complimented him on its efficiency. From the home authorities he had not only had no reward, but no thanks of any sort. At the end of nine months the whole thing was given as a going concern to the Government, without its being charged a penny. Mr. Langman kept it up for nine months, and at the end of that time he gave the tents and drugs and everything, so that some thanks were due to him.

With regard to supplies, witness said he never heard of drugs being actually short, but they ran short of all sorts of accessories, such as bed-pans, and so on; all the conveniences you could not do without you had to vamp up. With regard to the nurses, the witness said he knew nothing about those at Cape Town—those who got up to the front were simply admirable; he did not know what they would have done without them. Such confidence was felt in them that when there was a really serious case, and the drugs had to be given

at a certain hour of the night, the medical staff did not ask the orderlies, although they were good men; they knew the nurses were infallible, that they would never sleep, and were bound to do their duty. The orderlies sometimes made a mistake, but the nurses never. They were splendid, self-sacrificing women. Only three of them were in the Langman Hospital; he believed two of them were dead.

The witness then said: "There is one other small point I should like to mention, and that is that it was very strongly borne in upon me over that epidemic that any breach of sanitary law ought to be made a military offence; the soldier never recognises anything except a military offence. You may argue with him, and give him advice, and he will not do it; but if they had made the drinking of foul water (and I have seen the soldiers drink from the puddles by the wayside) a military offence, they would not have done it. No efforts were made to cut the thing off at the fountain-head, so as to prevent the men getting enteric; when they did get it, every effort was made to cure them, but no effort was made to stop them getting it, and, as far as I know, right through the war there was no military order against drinking foul water, and no precautions of that sort were taken. We wanted preventive medicine very badly, I think, all through the campaign." The witness said, further, he was quite sure that if the soldier were told he would be punished for drinking foul water he would take a direct interest in microbes. He would never commit a military offence.

This article concludes the series of reviews on the evidence given before this Royal Commission which is of special interest to nurses.

Legal Matters.

BEATING A PATIENT.

Annie Jones, nurse at Thame Union, was charged at the County Hall, Oxford, on Saturday last, with committing an aggravated assault on an inmate named Caroline Stretton on Christmas Day.

The evidence showed that a brutal assault was committed by the prisoner, who, it was stated, was under the influence of drink.

Stretton is an old woman and paralysed. She had no doubt given some amount of trouble, and the prisoner was observed to strike her with her fists; afterwards she was caught by the master of the workhouse beating the old woman with a stick, inflicting a wound over one eye which it was necessary to stitch.

When the police went to arrest the prisoner she threatened to commit suicide. The magistrates sent her to prison for six weeks with hard labour.

It will be observed that the qualifications of this woman as a nurse are not given, and it is therefore impossible to know whether there is any ground

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)