

9-10 GEORGE V, A. 1919

Q. It requires the employment of men specially fitted for that?—A. Perhaps I had better explain that to you—

By Mr. Boys:

Q. Were they built under the supervision of the Public Works Department?—A. I was going to explain that to you. On the 1st of January, 1917, we had on our strength and for treatment 1,250 men. On the 1st of July of the same year we had on our strength for treatment 12,500 men. That was the Military Hospitals Commission. It was necessary that an intensive comprehensive scheme be worked out for providing accommodation for that tremendous increase in patients. That was the time that the Engineering Branch of the Department was originally got together, because the Public Works Department had had no experience in this specialized kind of construction. We provided the beds, and we supplied them at a much lower cost than similar and even inferior beds were built for in the United States, within a very few months. When the department came into being in 1918 this work, which had then got over the hectic stage, was all transferred to the Department of Public Works, and all our records and plans and everything else were turned over to them and were then retained as an assistance to the Public Works Department, and to carry on our continuity of policy, the nucleus of an engineering branch, but it was very, very much smaller and could not be compared in expense with the engineering branch that we had when we originally started the work. That is the history of our engineering branch.

By Mr. Boys:

Q. Was there not some change about last October?—A. That is the change to which I refer.

Q. Is Mr. Bird with you?—A. No, never.

Q. Whom is he with?—A. He is with the Public Works Department, but what his duties are I do not know.

By the Chairman:

Q. This is a statement of your branch as at present constituted? This is dated April 1?—A. Yes, that is it approximately.

Q. Regarding your medical director's branch, how many medical men have you on your staff?—A. Here in Ottawa?

Q. Yes, when the positions were all filled?—A. You only want the professional men, not the clerks?

Q. No.—A. Seven.

Q. Their salaries vary considerably. Have you difficulties in getting men at these salaries specified in this statement?—A. I would not say that there is a constant demand from the medical service for increased salaries, but I think the condition is general throughout Canada, on account of so many men being still overseas.

Q. Have you had any special dissatisfaction amongst the medical men of the branch as to their salaries?—A. No, not to my knowledge.

Q. Would that matter come before you—that any men were dissatisfied with their salaries?—A. Yes, if they were in subordinate positions.

Q. For instance, if a director were dissatisfied with his salary would he come to you?—A. He might come to me.

Q. He might not?—A. If he chose to do otherwise he might do it. He might go to the Minister directly if he wished to.

Q. The deputy director was drawing \$375 a month. Was that salary quite satisfactory to him?—A. I have never heard him complain of it. It was never brought to my attention that he was not satisfied with it.

[Mr. F. G. Robinson.]