ing.

We spent the morning in one of those interminable discussions at the Ministry over the recommendations of our report for railway betterment. They have no real intention of making a move to carry out our suggestions; they appear acquiescent, but throw in the way of doing anything the most trivial objections and discuss endlessly little details instead of formulating a broad plan of action. In the end they waive their objections, when it is conclusively shown that they have no foundation in fact, but they always fall back upon the statement that the Russians can of themselves do nothing and that we must furnish all materials as well as men to show them how to do the work. This, of course, means that the war will be over (or, at least, the time for effective help will have passed,) before anything can be accomplished.

This p.m. my "insides" went back upon me, and I could not attend the reception given us by the Government Railway Engineers, or the testimonial dinner in the evening.

July 27th. Today I am laid up in bed. The effect of bad and at times insufficient food has been cumulative. Besides losing over 20 lbs. in weight, I have had for the past two weeks a low fever daily and have been threatened with dysentery, which is very prevalent. There is little wholesome food to be had in the city; the meat is bad, except occasionally veal, which is fresh; fish comes from the filthy river and canals and is not safe; the vegetables are all canned-- and old at that; the black bread is one of the horrors of the war, it is black, soggy and sour, fit only for the in-