

of all such in various belligerent detention camps as cannot afford to obtain extra supplies for themselves. It admits, however, of very little variation save such as can be introduced by the cooks themselves. The cooks are chosen by the prisoners and are paid for their services. It is open to the prisoners to elect other cooks.

In this connection, however, the following facts should be mentioned: In 1916 two medical gentlemen from Samoa were here for a short time pending repatriation. Major Matheson asked them to represent the conditions of matters to their Government. The result was decidedly beneficial, as the German Government decided to allow each man who complied with certain conditions 10s. per month. This did not, of course, include Austrians, Turks, or Bulgarians, of whom there are a considerable number in the camp. It of course excluded those who had become naturalized here. It further excluded all those who had been ten years abroad without registering their names at a consulate, unless they had in the interval served on a German merchant-ship. This caused a good deal of ill feeling among those who were rejected, who blamed without reason the prisoner of war who took the trouble to prepare the list.

Then as to quality: Captain Gentry, Supply and Transport Officer, inspects the meat daily before it is sent down to the steamer. Occasionally it is not up to the proper standard, just as one finds it in a private house. If it appears to be tainted it is at once rejected. Complaints were made that it sometimes came tainted to the kitchen. The evidence is that in rare cases this may in this climate arise in the course of transit. Captain Gentry assures me, however, that the quality is the same as that supplied to the soldiers here and at the military camps.

The supply of potatoes is admittedly this year defective owing to the presence of blight. This cannot be altogether remedied, but an attempt has been made to mitigate it by increasing the supply and so leave a margin for rejection. Residents in private houses in Wellington have this year suffered from the same trouble. The production of fresh vegetables on the spot has effected a great improvement. Whether that can be continued may be problematical.

6. DISCIPLINARY SENTENCES ALLEGED UNDUE SEVERITY.

A very large part of the time was taken up hearing evidence as to disciplinary punishment inflicted by Major Matheson, consisting of so-many days' fatigue or so-many days' detention. The object was to support the allegation that excessive punishments were inflicted. The turn matters actually took was to ask me to entertain a very large number of appeals from disciplinary sentences generally inflicted long ago. This would in any case have been a difficult task; it was rendered more difficult by the circumstance that, as a rule, I had to listen to a narrative that was manifestly exaggerated, as the complaining witnesses described in many cases a course of conduct implying no offence at all on the part of the offender, while witnesses who might have been called to support the decision were often abroad on active service.

So far as regards the case attempted to be made out of the wilful infliction of unnecessarily severe punishment is concerned, I am satisfied to say that this has not been substantiated. The alternative suggestion that punishments were in fact more severe than ought to have been inflicted is a matter in respect of which I can hardly be expected to form a satisfactory opinion. In this country the Supreme Court itself has never had confided to it the task of revising sentences inflicted by Magistrates. It hears appeals, and either affirms or reverses the sentence of the Magistrate. Appeals from military disciplinary sentences are on a somewhat different footing. It might be possible for a competent military administrator experienced in the management of camps to examine the whole of the cases and say whether, having regard to the usual course in dealing with disciplinary cases and to the special circumstances of an internment camp, he would consider that the sentences, taken as a whole, were too severe. I do not claim any such competence. I am wholly inexperienced in such matters and do not know what standard tests should be applied. I can quite believe that, if I were asked to say whether the sentences for ordinary offences inflicted by a given Magistrate over a series of years