

have no doubt that every man in the camp who had served at sea, and likewise every labourer who had worked in New Zealand, had become accustomed at some time to address his superior as "sir." Moreover, after the order had once been asserted and a few men subjected to slight punishment for its infraction, it would become known in the camp that Major Matheson stood as stiffly on the demeanour of prisoners of war in this respect as on that of his own guards.

It has been repeatedly put to me as a grievous matter that this offence has been too severely punished. A wilful offence or one repeated after warning has to be severely punished. All I can say as to the severity of the recorded punishments is that it comes under the general head of alleged excessive punishments, elsewhere referred to.

One thing that appears to be pretty certain is that from this and other disciplinary measures the result that has ensued is that, passing along the lines of men at roll-call, they strike the observer as being under discipline which cannot fail to be for their good, even though won at some cost to themselves.

Another observation that I have to make is that from the first, in examining witnesses, I asked each man if he had served in the Army or Navy. As a rule the answer could be foreseen from the man's demeanour, which was in most, though not in all, cases that of a disciplined man when the answer was in the affirmative.

The only further observation that I have to make upon this insoluble controversy is that the value of disciplinary punishment often depends on the tact with which it is administered. The fact that men long retain a sense of soreness after the punishment is over may indicate want of tact in administering it, or it may represent a national peculiarity with which I am not familiar.

8. PHYSICAL EXERCISES IN PUNISHMENT.

This was another subject which was repeatedly complained of. When men were under detention they were put through a course of exercise variously described—bending backwards and walking under an outstretched walking-stick; leap-frog; running round a ring, &c. Major Matheson in describing the exercises says that when he was conducting them he always went through them himself, doing what he expected the men to do. None of the exercises described seem to me to be unreasonable. They would not be unreasonable if applied to school-boys. Men no doubt complain that they were kicked, cuffed, and hustled to make them move at the proper speed. I can only say that I think it unlikely that anything more was done than was necessary to compel them to carry out the exercises.

9. ORDERLY-ROOM.

In view of the constant conflicts of evidence between witnesses it is not surprising that there should be disputes as to what has occurred at the hearings of charges in the orderly-room. Sergeant Laine has detailed the procedure minutely. If that account is to be accepted men have always had a fair trial. Some of the prisoners have asserted the contrary. I cannot settle these disputes, but they ought not to have been allowed to arise. Major Matheson's records of proceedings are more full and more explicit than those usually kept by Justices of the Peace, and they show on the face of them a fair trial; but the proceedings of Justices are held in open Court, and the Press and public are represented. The orderly-room proceedings were held in the evening in the presence of men of the guard, and from inquiries I have made I think that they have been conducted in very much the same way as in a military camp. Unless there is some explicit regulation already existing on the subject, rules should be drawn up applicable to this case of civil prisoners of war; and the only way to put the matter beyond possibility of disputes such as we have here arising is to see that in every case one or two prisoners of war in whom the general body have confidence are in attendance, so that they may represent to their fellow-prisoners what has actually happened. I see no reason to think that proceedings have been unfairly conducted, but that impression may have got abroad.