

right that I should add that the same witness who spoke of the nurse annoying him at the Hospital spoke of the kindness of the staff there, and especially of the nurses, who told the patients that there was no distinction there between friends and enemies, and faithfully acted up to this profession.

I do not suppose that the use by subordinates of ill-bred and irritating expressions to prisoners of war in the detention camp can be altogether suppressed, especially as I can quite believe that coarse spirits among the prisoners are themselves guilty of provocative conduct, but the first duty of the Commander is to set a dignified example to his staff. That, in this instance, he has not done.

The delivery by Major Matheson of the irritating speech referred to had further ill consequences, which were not unnatural in the circumstances, but which illustrate the mischief that is likely to ensue from such an act. The prisoners of war were allowed liberty to hold a concert on the occasion of the birthday of the late Emperor of Austria. For recitation on the occasion a prisoner prepared a long set of verses ridiculing and professing to repeat in ridiculous terms the language used by the Commandant to the assembled prisoners of war. The author stopped short of delivering it, but admittedly read it to his friends. This was an act of insubordination. When the existence of the document came to the knowledge of the Commander the man was arrested and the document taken from him. I will not go into the story of the arrest, which led to threatened resistance and caused increased irritation. The verses were ribald in tone and, indeed, grossly libellous, and, circulating among ignorant men, were calculated to produce insubordination; but it cannot be forgotten that in the kind of provocation which preceded their composition men saw something that they regarded as a justification, and it was not unnatural that men should think that they saw some injustice in the result. The example set to subordinates in delivering this speech was calculated to bring about a bad feeling between subordinates and prisoners of war.

VEGETABLE-GARDEN.

A large vegetable-garden has since the winter of 1917 been instituted by the labour of the prisoners—so large, in fact, that it is now reported that the whole of the prisoners are supplied with fresh vegetables (other than potatoes) from this source.

The subject of compelling prisoners of war to do the work necessary to create and conduct this garden comes under another head. While the Commandant has claimed that he has a right to compel prisoners of war so to work, the claim has always been put on the footing that they were compellable to do work for their own benefit, and it has throughout been maintained that this vegetable-garden was created and maintained by the labour of prisoners of war exclusively for their own use. I have listened to emphatic assertions to the contrary, which at least show that the prisoners of war have become suspicious that their admitted rights in this respect have been infringed. The general effect of the evidence is that the assumed rights of the prisoners of war have not been completely respected, but that the infringements have not resulted in any very extensive alienation of garden-produce from them. The first infringement was a small but irritating case of men, in defiance of the gardener, taking spring onions, or something of the sort, to eat on the spot. This resulted in a gardener giving up the charge of the vegetable-garden. Then some vegetables were sent ashore, some to the Hospital and some to other destinations. These, I think, are substantially accounted for, though not with such promptitude as to remove all suspicion from the minds of the prisoners, who saw them going and reported the fact to fellow-prisoners, among whom it undoubtedly produced an impression that they were being unfairly treated. Such an impression, unless removed, tends to grow stronger from day to day and to cause much bitter feeling.

This was followed by a large delivery of vegetables to the soldiers' kitchen. This has been fully accounted for, as the vegetables formed a surplus which had to be got rid of; the prisoner of war in charge of the garden agrees with this. The last allegation was as to unauthorized deliveries to the sergeants' mess, which received no further proof or explanation, and must be left out of count. Apart from this I have the evidence of the quartermaster-sergeant to the effect that