

187. And to see if there were any complaints?—Yes.

188. If there had been complaints, would they have been embodied in the officer's report?—They would have been brought immediately under my notice.

189. With the exception of the half-dozen cases you have alluded to, there were no complaints?—No. Three of those complaints, or two at any rate, were in connection with the stew. There was a difference of opinion as to whether they were well founded or not. The truth of the matter was, I believe, that they had made the stew with pickles in it, and the men said it was sour. The officer who tasted it said it was perfectly good. However, I got them to issue some other meat in place of it.

190. Was there a daily parade of the men?—No.

191. How often did they parade?—They paraded before they went to Albany, and they paraded for medical inspection at Melbourne. There were no regular parades, except for fire and boat stations.

192. Was there any Sports Committee?—Yes.

193. Did the men take part in sports?—Yes. I got up an Amusement Committee almost as soon as we started, and we had sports and concerts on two or three occasions.

194. Had the men any duties to perform during the day?—Only a certain number each day.

195. How many men were on guard during the day?—About eighty were on duty.

196. Is it customary to have parades?—Not coming back.

197. Do you know what is the custom of the Imperial service, returning from active service?—No, I do not. We had no arms.

198. Were the men ordered on deck at all?—They were ordered on deck every morning, so that the lower decks could be cleaned.

199. Was that order obeyed?—Yes, it was obeyed, with the exception of one or two occasions when I gave orders that they could remain below because it was wet.

200. They were systematically ordered every day?—Yes; they were got on deck for about two hours and a half.

201. Did the men usually like to stay on deck, or did they prefer staying below?—Yes; they liked to stay on deck in fine weather.

202. Were the decks crowded?—No. Most of the men were always on deck.

203. Then, generally, there were no parades. The men were ordered on deck, and there were Sports Committees, and there were general attempts to keep the men interested and employed?—Yes; they had a band in the afternoons playing on deck.

204. Did the non-commissioned officers carry out their duties carefully?—Yes.

205. You were satisfied with the way they performed their duties?—Yes.

206. Did they have any influence over their men?—Yes; some have, some have not much.

207. Your men were mostly of the Eighth Contingent?—Yes.

208. How long had they been in South Africa?—They were away from New Zealand six months.

209. Had they been actually engaged in the field?—Yes.

210. For how long?—Well, from practically three days after they landed—from the middle of March. They went to hold the passes in the Drakensbergs. We were then ordered to Klerksdorp, and were trekking from the middle of April.

211. They had been under good discipline?—Yes; for three months and a half.

212. Who commanded them in South Africa?—I did.

213. Was the standard up to the discipline of the earlier contingents?—Yes, both when in the field and on the ship.

214. Did you find it difficult to enforce discipline on board the ship coming home?—Not at all.

215. You were satisfied yourself with the discipline?—Yes, I was pleased rather than otherwise.

216. Was there any active insubordination on board?—Not one case, excepting the one I have mentioned, when two Australians brought up some fish.

217. Did you inflict any punishments on board?—Yes.

218. Were the men on board under proper discipline, or was there a tendency to insubordination?—They were under discipline.

219. And you were satisfied with the condition of the discipline?—Yes, perfectly.

220. For what military crimes had you to inflict punishment?—For overstaying leave at Albany, for instance; for looting from one another—thieving. There was a good deal of that coming back.

221. On two occasions?—Yes, on two occasions.

222. Was there no feeling among the men themselves to put down these military crimes?—There did not seem to be. Of course, I do not say it was general, but it exists among a few.

223. You think it was no more in this case than in previous cases?—No.

224. Did not the men resent this stealing from a comrade?—Yes.

225. And when they were able to ascertain the crime they brought it under your notice?—Yes.

226. What punishment did you inflict on board?—As a rule, I left it to the officer commanding the regiment.

227. In the case of thieving from a comrade, were they dealt with by a court-martial?—They were dealt with summarily by the commanding officers.

228. How soon after starting from Durban did the men begin to get ill—I do not mean sea-sick?—There were a few men in hospital a few days after we started.

229. From what complaint?—Colds.