

CHAPTER V.

Discipline.

The question of discipline has already been commented on in the covering-letter. The subject is of such importance that it was considered that it would be of interest to obtain independent views of experienced officers of different ranks on the subject. These were called for, and the essays marked A, B, C, D, and E are attached. They were written (not in the order given) by a Rear-Admiral, a Captain, two Commanders, and a Chaplain R.N. The four first-named have all had experience as Executive Officers and in command, and the last-named is devoting his life to the furtherance of the well-being of the men of the Navy, and of the community at large.

I am in general agreement with the remarks in these essays, and in order to enable them to be readily put into effect the following recommendations are made:—

(a.) *Lectures on discipline and its value* should be given to—

- (i.) Petty officers in the depôt.
- (ii.) Boys in the training ship.
- (iii.) Stokers in the training ship.

(b.) Officers, and particularly the officers of divisions, must be taught that their first duty is the well-being of those under them. To this end they must take a great interest in the men's work and recreations, and get to *know* those under their orders. Kindness and courtesy should always be shown without familiarity or loss of respect being engendered. Men should be able to feel that the officer of their division is one to whom they can always appeal when in difficulty.

(c.) Officers must thoroughly realize that the more efficient they are at their work the easier it is to command their men.

They should not spare themselves, and it should be a proved fact that they never call on a man to perform any duty which they cannot do themselves. (This cannot in many cases apply to technical craftsmen.)

(d.) The attention of officers should be called to the necessity of not flaunting their advantages over the men. As an example in this direction, it is sometimes thoughtless for large numbers of officers to go on shore as soon as a ship anchors and long before any liberty men can land. Judgment should be exercised in these matters.

(e.) Senior officers should not, as a rule, correct individual men for mistakes made, but should call the attention of the officer or petty officer in charge of the work to the mistake, in order that the latter may have it corrected.

(f.) Officers and petty officers should be taught to give words of command smartly. Slovenly methods of giving orders will never produce good results and smartness.

(g.) Officers should be most carefully instructed in the best methods of investigating the cases of men brought up before them charged with various offences.

They must thoroughly understand that the "accused" is not an offender unless the charge is proved against him.

They must exercise patience and restraint in dealing with all cases brought before them, constantly bearing in mind the fact that it must be clear to every one that they are certain of obtaining justice.

The old service custom by which accused men take off their caps during the investigation of their cases is out of date, being now generally considered to be a humiliation to which a man who is under trial should not be subjected. I have recommended to the Admiralty that it should be discontinued.