

added that unless in peace-time wise and vigorous measures are adopted to maintain discipline, and to prevent men from sinking into indifference and slackness, when war breaks out it will then be too late to remedy the evil—indeed, any attempt to do so would probably cause serious trouble at a moment when it could least be tolerated.

(c.) *Furthermore, lack of discipline on board ship leads to unhappiness and discomfort.* In a human society so complex and so crowded together as that of a ship-of-war, friction and misunderstanding are bound to arise where there is any doubt as to who is to command and who obey, or where there is any hesitation or doubt as to the force of orders or their binding nature. Thus it is generally agreed by all ranks that an undisciplined ship is nearly always a discontented and unhappy one.

2. Discipline, then, being essential both in war and peace, both for efficiency and for the general well-being, the question which next presents itself is, *How is discipline to be taught and maintained?*

In approaching this matter it should be remembered that man has not only a body but also a spirit; and that therefore mere bodily or mechanical discipline—the discipline secured by precision of drill and the performance of evolutions—is far from being wholly sufficient. The discipline of the German Forces in the late war was largely of that type, and in their Navy at least it failed to stand the final test. What is needed is something perhaps less obvious and tangible, but more real and more deeply ingrained—not only the practice of discipline, but still more the habit and spirit of discipline. The question therefore presents itself in this form: *How is the spirit of discipline to be infused and maintained?*

(a.) *The infusing of the spirit of discipline* certainly presents a difficult and complicated problem, though perhaps in reality it is not so difficult as would at first sight appear.

- (i.) *It is rendered easier by entering boys into the Naval service as young as possible.* The habit and spirit of discipline, and of obedience to orders, is more readily acquired in the early years of life than later on when the character is more fixed and moulded.
- (ii.) *In the case of older men it ought to be possible to get them to realize the importance and nobility of duty,* and to make them see that their first duty is discipline. If they can be brought to regard discipline from this point of view, it may well be that they will come to look upon it not as an irksome infliction, but as a necessary part of their profession.
- (iii.) *The spirit of discipline can further be infused by leading men to take a real pride in the service to which they belong,* and conversely a pride in themselves as belonging to that service. Indeed, pride of service is essential to the true spirit of discipline. These are days when men reason and think for themselves, and it is necessary that they should realize the nobility of their profession and the importance of all that makes for its efficiency.

The spirit of discipline once infused, it is no less important to pay careful attention to its maintenance.

(b.) *Discipline will be maintained—*

- (i.) *By being administered with inflexible firmness, tempered with reason.* A discipline which is sometimes firm and sometimes lax is useless, dangerous, and unfair. If men cannot be induced to be fond of discipline they can at least be brought to respect it as a sacred principle which must not be violated, and a breach of which cannot be tolerated.
- (ii.) *By strict regard to discipline in minor matters.* Since discipline is a fixed principle underlying all service life, it follows that nothing is too minute for its notice—more especially as negligence in small matters inevitably leads to indifference in matters of greater importance, and too often prepares the way to a complete destruction of discipline.
- (iii.) *By a spirit of mutual confidence between officers and men.* If this confidence be lacking it will be found that the whole edifice of discipline is built on a foundation of sand.

3. It only remains to point out in general terms the *moral value of the spirit of discipline.* That moral value amounts to this—that discipline rightly directed and understood tends not to dwarf, but to strengthen and elevate the character.

- (a.) *It engenders a spirit of calmness in emergency.* The same spirit which keeps a disciplined man at his post when all his comrades have fallen will keep a man brave and cool in the midst of emergency, panic, and disaster. In other words, discipline renders a man more capable of facing the changes and chances of human existence.
- (b.) *It produces a certain determination and firmness of character.* A disciplined man who has been given a difficult task to accomplish is more likely to carry it through to a successful conclusion than the undisciplined man, who may be turned aside at the first obstacle. The man of discipline has learnt to resist, bear up, hold on, in spite of all difficulties.
- (c.) *It teaches sentiments of confidence and self-respect—for, having learnt to obey, he has gone a long way towards learning to command.*

In a word, the object and the result of true discipline is to inspire men with bravery, firmness, patience, and with sentiments of honour. A service so disciplined is less expensive to the State, and at the same time it is providing the State with citizens who, on their return to civil life, will be a real strength to the community.