

(5.) ENGINEERS.

There are two corps which are trained as field companies. The Dunedin company is a very good one; the Christchurch company good.

District and Corps.	Officers.	Men.	Capitated.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Canterbury— Christchurch Engineers ...	3	64	62	5	Good.
Otago— Dunedin Engineers ...	2	78	65	15	Very good.
Total, 2 companies	5	142	127	20	

(6.) INFANTRY.

It is with pleasure that I am able to report that I have generally found amongst the infantry companies in the Wellington, Canterbury, Otago, and portion of the Nelson Districts a very distinct improvement as regards their knowledge of drill and field-work. I am sorry that I cannot report any improvement in the infantry of the Auckland District or in the corps of the Westland Sub-district. In the latter I found the officers and men belonging to the various companies most anxious to learn, but unable to do so owing to inefficient supervision. The bringing of this sub-district under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Pitt, V.D., will, I feel certain, have an excellent effect.

The condition in which I found the Auckland infantry companies I have already reported confidentially upon, and I need do no more in this report than state that they were quite inefficient at my inspection, and that there is practically no infantry force to be relied on for the defence of Auckland. The instruction and example as to smartness set by some of the instructors leaves much to be desired. If all the corps were well instructed, and had a smart example set to them, they would be capable generally of doing anything that was required of them. The *esprit* of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men is, as a rule, most excellent. They have generally worked hard to improve, and have done so.

In the Canterbury and Otago Districts, and in Nelson and Marlborough, there are several officers of field rank who take the greatest interest in the Volunteer movement; but in the remaining districts officers in that position do very little. This is much to be regretted. I do not here refer to Volunteer officers who are permanently employed.

The rifle companies are being gradually armed with Martini-Henry rifles, and arrangements have been made within the colony for the supply of small-arm ammunition. This is very satisfactory.

There is at present no organization beyond that of the so-called corps, which is in reality a company, and should be made part of a battalion. A battalion organization is provided for in the new regulations, and should be enforced in each district.

The infantry always has been and must remain the base of any force. No artillery and submarine defence can be relied on unless that defence is supported and protected by infantry. It is therefore necessary that the infantry force of the colony shall be made effective as regards its organization, its equipment, and its capability. The force is being efficiently armed; it remains for it to be efficiently organized, commanded, and instructed.

The uniforms of the various corps vary both in pattern and in quality: it will be of great advantage when the whole of the corps are clothed alike.

I wish specially to commend the following companies—Wellington City Rifles, Wanganui Rifles, Kaiapoi Rifles, Christchurch City Guards, Timaru Rifles, Dunedin City Guards, and Invercargill City Guards; while many other companies have improved very greatly since I last inspected them.

Distribution.

—	Companies.	Officers.	Men.	Qualified for Capitation.	Unqualified.
Auckland District ...	4	9	183	59	133
Wellington District ...	9	25	506	484	47
Canterbury District ...	9	19	544	497	66
Otago District ...	11	31	572	491	112
Nelson, Marlborough, and Westland Districts ...	10	26	545	528	43
Grand total ...	43	110	2,350	2,059	401