

a considerable reduction can be made. The remaining Permanent Force is to be maintained at the highest state of efficiency as instructors, and first relief of specialists to train the Artillery Volunteers, who must be further encouraged, as, in case of emergency, it will be the Volunteers who will have to form the manning details and reliefs to maintain the service of the various works. For this purpose the Volunteer Garrison Artillery have been directly linked with the Permanent Forces.

GENERAL.

Artillery and Engineers.

Garrison and Field Artillery and Field Engineers are reported on separately, under heads "Artillery Services" and "Engineer Services."

Mounted Rifles and Infantry.

It is shown under heading "Instructional and Equipment" that much has to be done to improve these very important branches of the service. The Council does not consider any good can come from criticizing the past, but intend, if voted the supply, to exercise every effort to the further improvement of these arms, the result of which will form matter for next year's report.

For results of shield competition see Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4.

The Mounted Rifles are handicapped by the long rifle now on issue. An amount is on the estimates to bring the present stock of short rifles up to a number sufficient to arm the Mounted Force.

Cadet Corps.

There are fifty-eight Defence Cadet corps, two being formed and four disbanded during the year, leaving fifty-six serving. Of these thirty-two are connected with colleges or high schools. The further training of these corps is to be given effect to.

The Schools of the Empire Shooting-match for 1906 was competed for, Australia entering 13 schools, Canada 1, Cape Colony 2, Great Britain 50, Natal 4, New Zealand 16—in all, 95 teams; resulting in Wanganui taking 18th place, Wellington 23rd, Auckland 42nd, Christ's 44th, Christchurch 54th, Otago 58th, St. Patrick's 62nd, Rangiora 64th, St. John's 72nd.

New Zealand schools are considerably handicapped, being armed with a carbine only, having the rifle loaned for a short time before the match takes place.

Thanks are due to the rectors and principals of these schools for the manner they assist by giving facilities for the drill and training of these corps.

Rifle Clubs.

There are 126 rifle clubs, five having been formed and seven disbanded during the year.

A Supervising Officer has been appointed, whose duty is to assist rifle clubs in all matters and afford information. Clubs are now included in the Defence Annual Musketry Course. A small pamphlet of regulations, simple drill, &c., is to be prepared for their use. It is hoped to encourage such clubs, and make them feel that they are an important adjunct to the active Force, being taken into consideration in the general defence scheme of the colony.

Drill and Training Manuals.

The Imperial Drill Training is to be taken into use for the Infantry Force at an early date. A supply of books is to shortly arrive. The Drill Training Manual now in use by the Mounted Rifles is being revised and brought up to date, and will shortly be printed. Various books and instructional pamphlets are sent to districts for use by instructional staff and formation of district libraries.

New Zealand Defence Forces Rifle Association.

During the past year several additions and improvements have been carried out on the Trentham Rifle Range, and accommodation for eighty targets is now available.

The increased target accommodation proved a great boon to competitors, enabling the annual rifle meeting to be carried out with despatch.

The annual meeting took place at Trentham from the 28th February to the 6th March, and was most successful, the arrangements made being very satisfactory.

The number of competitors was 433, of whom 283 were Volunteers and 150 rifle-club men.

The weather was fine and the shooting good.

The championship of the colony was won by Rifleman Arthur Ballinger, with a score of 461. As this was his third win, having previously won the championship for 1893 and 1897, the Championship Belt becomes his own property.

The ammunition manufactured by the Colonial Ammunition Company, Auckland, gave every satisfaction.

Advantage is now being taken of the non-shooting season to put the firing-mounds in order, by levelling the mounds, clearing the stones, and sowing grass-seed.

New Regulations, and Regulations Amended.

The following new regulations and amendments to the regulations have been issued by the Council:—

1. Precedence determined by organization into Coast Defence, Mobile Forces, and Reserves.
2. Definition District Staffs.
3. Reorganization Instructional Staff, and Courses of Instruction.
4. Examination for Permanent Staff and Permanent Forces.
5. Further promotion of Field Artillery and Engineers field officers after seven years, and examination.