

1908.

NEW ZEALAND.

DEFENCE FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND:

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL OF DEFENCE, AND EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF THE NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCES, FOR THE YEAR ENDING 29TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

Laid before both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL OF DEFENCE FOR THE YEAR ENDING
29TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

CONSTITUTION.

THE *personnel* of the Council of Defence, as constituted by "The Defence Act Amendment Act, 1906," was completed by the arrival of Major H. D. Tuson (Manchester Regiment), who took over the duties as Second Military Member (Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General) from the 11th September, 1907, with the local rank of colonel.

MEETINGS.

Fifteen formal meetings of the Council have been held, besides fifteen other meetings, at which routine business was disposed of, the matters considered and dealt with by the Council being scheduled, with the decisions arrived at.

POLICY.

The policy of defence disclosed in last report has been followed in every respect. Regulations have been made to further encourage enlistment and maintain efficiency. Provision has been made for forming reserves, for more decentralisation, increasing the powers and initiative of District Commanders, and for the completion of the necessary staffs, and, generally, endeavours have been made to popularise the Force in the eyes of the public.

Coast defence has been considered in conjunction with the naval authorities, and on the lines laid down by the Imperial Defence Committee, and the work proceeded with accordingly.

The R.N.Z.E. has been reorganized to perform duties in connection with electric lighting at fixed defences.

As it has been decided by the Government that the present system (voluntary enlistment and without pay) is to continue, the attention of the Council must be devoted to endeavouring to obtain a higher standard of efficiency under that system. To do this it is absolutely necessary that means may be devised whereby the whole of the Field Force shall do as much work as possible by daylight in the field, the larger units (regiments and battalions) being brought together as often as possible, and the various arms of which the Force is composed working together more frequently than at present in order that all officers, and especially those of the higher ranks, may obtain some knowledge of their work.

It is the intention of the Council to so revise the regulations governing the earning of capitation and payment for daylight parades that this object may be attained.

Attention will also be devoted to encouraging ex-Volunteers to join Reserve Corps, to the affiliation of Reserve Corps and Rifle Clubs to existing Volunteer units, and the payment of capitation or pay for daylight work to such members of the above as actually turn out for field work with the units to which they are affiliated.

A Promotion Board will be established, to deal with promotions above the rank of captain (this course is followed in England and Australia).

The Board will consist of—

The Inspector-General.

The Officer Commanding the District.

The Senior Combatant Officer of the arm of the service to which the officer whose promotion is under consideration belongs.

The Council also strongly recommends for earnest consideration the question of the establishment of a school, on the lines of that at Kingston, Canada, for the training of future officers, civil engineers, and surveyors.

The Council recommends,—

Uniform, Rank and File.—That greatcoats be supplied, a valuation be made for units already supplied, of those serviceable, the value agreed upon to be paid to those units in lieu of issue. Units receiving issue of greatcoats to have 10s. per year, for three years, deducted from capitation. Field service uniform to be maintained as at present out of capitation, but Dress Regulations must be adhered to.

Arms, accoutrements, water-bottles, haversacks, mess-tins, waterproof sheets, nose-bags, and headropes for Mounted Rifles to be a Government issue.

Uniform, Officers'.—That each officer, in addition to capitation, on passing for his commission, be granted an annual personal bonus, so long as he remains efficient, as follows—Lieutenants, £2 10s.; captain, £5; major, £7 10s.; lieutenant-colonel, £10 for the maintenance of his uniform, upkeep of his position, &c. To include officers of Defence Cadets, except that half of the above rates be paid.

Supply of Officers.—That a Board of Selection be set up in each district, which will select and forward names for approval of Council of Defence, when vacancies or openings for promotion occur, preference by right to be given to officers or non-commissioned officers in the Forces, provided the Board is satisfied of their fitness, before recourse is made to selection from outsiders. A list to be opened where gentlemen desirous of becoming officers may register and receive preliminary training, from which list Board may select when necessary to go outside those at present serving. If election must be adhered to, the Board of Selection should approve of candidates before they go up for election.

Efficiency of Officers.—That all officers be required, in order to draw the annual allowance before mentioned, to be tested every three years as to fitness, failing which they will be placed on the Reserve List.

Officers on the Reserve List failing to maintain their efficiency to the satisfaction of the O.C. District, to be placed on the Retired List. The age-limit of officers and rank-and-file, as per regulations, to be adhered to.

DEPARTMENT OF THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF.

Field Organization, Military Operations, Staff Instructional Duties, Military Training and Education, Intelligence, Mobilisation, War Regulations.

Field Organization.

The organization into "Coast Defence" and Mobile Field Force and Reserves, as quoted in last report, has proved of much value as regards the Coast Defence Garrison Artillery Division. There is, however, much yet to be done in the "Field Force," regiments and battalions at present being so merely in name. Squadrons and companies do not seem to voluntarily give that allegiance to their corps necessary to insure the true regimental and battalion spirit.

It is admitted that the training of a Force is by squadrons and companies, but in war these units must be administered and operate under regimental organization. What is not practised in peace must fail in war. Thus the various divisions, regiments, and battalions require true re-organization as such.

Reserves.—Enrolment in the Reserves is disappointing, but is doubtless due to the fact that units likely to become Reserve Corps, and Volunteers when taking their discharges, are not yet acquainted with the conditions of service in the Reserves. This is being remedied by reminders in General Orders, and issue of posters to display in all orderly rooms.

Rifle Clubs.—Attention must be given to Rifle Clubs in the way of simple training to make them more efficient Reserves. Their organization and affiliation to Volunteer corps would facilitate matters.

Medical, Veterinary, and Army Service Corps.—These important organizations of a Field Force are receiving attention at the hands of the Adjutant-General.

The enrolled strength of the Defence Forces at the end of the Volunteer year, 29th February, 1907–8, was as follows:—

Organization.	1906-7.		1907-8.			
	Enrolled Strength.	Number of Units.	Enrolled Strength.	Number of Units.	Decrease.	Increase.
Headquarters Staff	8.	...	14	...	...	6
District Staff	45	5	50	5	...	5
R.N.Z.A.	361	...	307	...	54	...
Garrison Artillery	929	9	1,001	9	...	72
*Field Artillery	461	5	361	5	100	...
Field Engineers	470	5	439	5	31	...
Mounted Rifles	4,189	72	3,923	69	266	...
Infantry	6,881	118	6,118	114	763	...
Field Ambulance	211	5	215	5	...	4
Defence Cadets	3,094	58	3,158	60	...	64
Rifle Clubs	3,141	126	3,369	143	...	228
†Bands	142	5	449	17	...	307
Unattached officers	101	...	151	...	...	50
Reserves	...	...	215	...	...	215
Medical Staff	...	...	165	...	...	165
Veterinary Staff	...	...	12	...	...	12
Army Service Corps	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	20,033	410	19,947	434	1,214	1,128

* Due to Westport Battery being changed to a Garrison Artillery Company. † Bands.—The increase in 1907–8 is due to regimental and battalion bands being previously included with their corps.

Militia Officers.—There are also 189 Militia officers on the Army List.

By *Gazette* No. 24, dated the 2nd April, 1908, the military districts have been subdivided into subdistricts, under section 4 of "The Defence Act Amendment Act, 1900." For convenience and saving in cost, these subdivisions were made the same as the electoral districts. The enrolment officers for these subdivisions should now be appointed under section 4 of "The Defence Act Amendment Act, 1900," and should be required to complete lists showing all between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one.

Military Operations.

Manœuvres were carried out at each defended port, and at Nelson and Westport, for four days, continuous, at Easter, the musters being generally an improvement on past few years—viz., Auckland, 793; Wellington, 2,273; Canterbury, 1,153; Otago, 1,165; Nelson, 551: being a total of 5,935. There is no doubt the attendance at Easter manœuvres is much reduced by the Saturday not being a general holiday. The manœuvres were continuous, and adapted to a General Idea prepared at Headquarters, calling for a defence of the important centres of the Dominion against a raid. On this, special Local Ideas were framed for subcentres. The raiding Force was represented by the northern or southern portion of the district operating against each other. The stages gone through to carry out this Idea meant,—

- (a.) Mobilisation of the District Forces from their homes, on to what became, for this exercise, their war stations; reconnaissance; observation and selection of line of resistance to meet the attack.
- (b.) The taking-up of this line of resistance by the Mobile Field Force; manning of forts works; searchlights, &c.; and watching the various bays and landing-places.
- (c.) Occupation of camps and bivouacs; harassing the enemy; and counter-attack.

H.M.S. "Pegasus" co-operated in an attack on the forts at Wellington, and the "Amokura" at Auckland, at which place much reality was introduced. At Lyttelton and Otago local launches acted as the enemy. For the first time an examination service at the defended ports was put in practice. This, with the searchlights working from dark to dawn, and night and day battle practice, proved of the greatest value to the Fixed or Coast Defence Forces, and many useful lessons were learned.

With the Field Forces much was learned in reconnaissance, outpost, attack and defence, and the handling of troops by day and night.

The difficulties incidental to transport and supply were brought home to all; the want of equipment entailed considerable hardship in many ways. A supply of waterproof sheets, mess-tins, &c., now arriving, will meet this want next manœuvres.

The necessity of a real regimental and battalion organization, and the shortage of officers, was evident. Very complete reports on each of the manœuvres are being made use of to follow up the experience actually gained. During these manœuvres, Volunteer officers were in command, the District and Permanent Staffs acting as directors and umpires. For next Easter the manœuvres will probably be under the personal command of each O.C. District and his Staff, as in war, affording opportunity for Volunteer officers to command the troops they lead in peace, giving to the Volunteer officers the chance of further instruction under the leaders who would command them in case of the Dominion being attacked.

It is obvious that the Permanent Staff at Headquarters and districts also require practice in the field. The four days at Easter seem to be the only time any Force can be got together.

Staff rides, as tactical exercises, and minor field operations with available troops, have been carried out during the year by District Commanders during daylight drills.

Staff and Instructional Duties.

Since last report two officers from the Imperial Service have been added to the Instructional Staff. Endeavour was made to procure the services of a Royal Engineer sergeant for the Field Engineers, but without avail. An officer of the late Royal N.Z. Engineers, now undergoing instruction in England, was instructed to turn his attention to field engineering, and on his arrival will be available as an Engineer Instructor.

The Instructional Staff for the Garrison and Field Artillery is very satisfactory: the results are shown in respective reports.

The following shows the available Instructional Staff for the Dominion:—

Artillery Services.—One Chief Instructor, assisted by the officers and non-commissioned officers of the R.N.Z.A.

Engineer Services.—One officer, lately arrived from undergoing instruction in England.

General Service.—One officer, Chief Instructor for Mobile Field Force—on the General Staff.

Mounted Rifles.—North Island: One officer (7) Sergeants-major Instructors. South Island: One officer (5) Sergeants-major Instructors.

Infantry.—North Island: One officer (8) Sergeants-major Instructors. South Island: One officer (8) Sergeants-major Instructors.

An officer for Infantry instruction is urgently required for the South Island.

The Section of Military Instruction is much indebted to the Lands and Survey Department, and Government Printing Office, for necessary mapping and printing.

Training and Education.

The system of district local instruction, followed by continuous courses by the General Instructional Staff, has given very good results. Officers who attended these courses are easily

distinguished during field work or operations. The table below shows the number of officers who attended at Auckland, Otago, Wellington, and Canterbury:—

District.	10 Days.	9 Days.	8 Days.	7 Days.	6 Days.	5 Days.	4 Days.	3 Days.	2 Days.	1 Day.	Total.
Auckland ...	30	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	36
Otago ...	11	2	4	3	4	...	2	9	6	...	41
Wellington ...	46	3	2	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	55
Canterbury ...	18	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	4	43
Total ...	105	9	8	7	8	4	5	13	12	4	175

Wellington includes officers from Nelson District.

In addition to this, officers' clubs in the various centres have been particularly active. Staff rides and district classes have been held. Officers Commanding Districts have been supplied with much valuable information supplied by the Director of Military Operations, War Office, bearing on the subject of military operations, training, and education. The results of the past year bid well for future improvement in the education of officers for the present year. With improvement in the leaders, they in turn will train their rank and file, and greater efficiency will be assured.

The one great want felt during these courses is the lack of an actual Force to handle practically. With so small a Permanent Force, and a Volunteer Force only available on certain holidays and half-holidays, more cannot be accomplished.

On the experience gained last year the continuous courses for this year will be divided into grades, instruction being given as follows:—

(a.) Six days' continuous, for non-commissioned officers.

(b.) " " junior officers' course.

(c.) " " senior officers' course.

The following drill manuals have been issued to the Forces for training purposes:—

"Imperial Infantry Training," adapted to single rank.

"Mounted Rifle Manual, 1908," adapted to N.Z. Forces.

"Field Artillery Training, 1908," adapted to N.Z. batteries.

"Garrison Artillery Training, 1908," adapted to N.Z. companies.

"Musketry Annual Course of Target Practice," adapted to N.Z. Forces, on the lines of Imperial course.

"Instructions for Mobilisation (Provisional), 1908," adapted to local requirements.

"Notes on Military Hygiene on the Field and in Camp."

It is expected that little, if any, change in drills will be made for a considerable time, so that from now forward there will be general uniformity of work and training throughout the Dominion. No attempt is being made to turn the Force into a mere drill-machine, the simplest of movements only being necessary to enable officers to lead their commands in the necessary tactical formation to occupy the position required, where the full and best effect of field-gun or rifle fire can be obtained, and good shooting will do the rest. Assuming that the function of the Dominion Defence Forces is primarily defence, the instruction given to officers is that based on defence with the use of the counter-attack.

It is hoped that in the near future an Infantry Officer Instructor will be available in each district, who will take special charge of musketry instruction and musketry practice. In our tactical Scheme of Defence good shooting is of the greatest importance. The Target Practice Course has this year been framed to give more latitude to officers in the training of their men in shooting.

Examinations of Volunteer Officers for the Year ending February, 1908.—One hundred and sixty-eight officers completed their examinations, of whom 146 passed, and 22 failed. The percentage of officers who passed was slightly over 86½, the failures being represented by less than 13½. Compared with the previous year there has been an increase of 26 in the number of officers who completed examinations, whilst the failures have been less. Last year ending February, 1907, 131 completed examinations, and 25 failed. This year 168 completed examination, and 22 failed. The standard of examinations has been raised, being now largely composed of suitable problems requiring the study of minor tactics, fire-effect, and leading of troops, rather than mere memory-test or drill manuals. There is no doubt this better result is due to the initiation of district and general classes and courses of instruction.

Regulations for the examination of the Permanent Staff have been put into effect. In future no officer is to receive permanent appointment, or, in case of officers at present serving, receive promotion, unless he passes the necessary qualifying examination. For this year's examination, one officer, Headquarters Staff; one, District Staff; and four officers of the R.N.Z. Artillery, presented themselves. The first portion of the examination was held in June, the latter part will be in November next. It is to the Permanent officers we must look to fill future staff and district appointments.

Intelligence.

Much information of military value has been collected in the various districts as to resources, roads, bridges, communications, landing-places, &c. This information is sifted and recorded at

Headquarters. Copies are furnished to the War Office, London, where the work has been much appreciated. The interchange of intelligence with the War Office is of the greatest value to New Zealand, and would immediately become apparent if trouble arose.

The collecting and sifting of intelligence by an Intelligence Officer at each centre at late Easter manœuvres was undertaken for the first time with good results.

Mobilisation.

Instructions for mobilisation adapted to local conditions have been issued. When these are better understood, the information as to the resources in vehicles, horses, and harness known and classified, and the facilities for supply appreciated, mobilisation at short notice will be possible, and be on a system uniform to all. It is impossible and unnecessary to maintain full Field Transport for service, or even peace requirements, but it is necessary to have the mobilisation instructions in use, studied, understood, and brought into workable order against a time of need.

The railway system is well adapted for mobilisation. The alternative lines of telegraph facilitate communication; and the yearly increasing roading and population of the lines of communication enable the best use to be made of these mobilisation instructions.

War Regulations.

The schemes for the various and important ports acting in the defence of the Dominion have been revised. The duties of all concerned in war are more clearly laid down. Senior officers are being trained more on these lines; thus, in the event of sudden emergency, they will be better acquainted with their duties.

As can readily be understood, matters under this heading are strictly confidential, but it will be satisfactory to know that steady progress in the readiness for defence is being made.

DEPARTMENT OF ADJUTANT-GENERAL AND QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

Veterinary Department.

The establishment of a Veterinary Branch has been successfully carried out during the year.

The Chief Government Veterinarian has been appointed Director-General, and sixteen other Government Veterinarians have lately accepted commissions in the Department.

It is hoped that, by the end of the year, the whole corps will be in a thorough working-order.

Principal Veterinary Officers have been appointed to the military districts with the exception of Nelson, where no officer is at present available. It is intended in the meanwhile to work this district from Wellington.

Officers will be detailed to attend camps to perform veterinary duties and give lectures and demonstrations on the examination of horses, treatment of wounds, stable-management, &c., and the Director-General is also arranging to give similar lectures at special parades held for the purpose.

In this manner it is hoped not only to increase the efficiency of all mounted men, but, by imparting useful instruction regarding the horse in health and disease, and affording information relative to first aid amongst animals, to induce more young men to join the Mounted Forces of the Dominion.

Approval has been obtained for purchasing four officers' field-chests, and the order for these has now gone forward. It is the intention to place one of these at each of the District Headquarters. They contain practically all instruments and drugs likely to be required in the ordinary course of a training-camp.

It is hoped that during the year sanction may be obtained for a supply of field-forges with farriers' tools, which are needed in the districts.

Medical Department.

Since the last annual report the Medical Branch has been reorganized, and new regulations have been approved and issued.

These regulations provide for a Sanitary Branch, a Reserve of Medical Officers, and a Nursing Reserve, the latter being affiliated to the Royal Army Nursing Reserve, of which H.R.H. Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein is President.

The Sanitary Branch will be administered by the Chief Sanitary Officer, who will be on the Staff of the Director-General, and Sanitary Officers will be appointed to each of the military districts.

The Reserve of Medical Officers has been organized with the object of having a number of medical gentlemen available on the outbreak of hostilities. It is hoped that those officers at present serving in the Defence Forces who find their civil duties preclude their taking any active part in the Medical Corps will join this Reserve.

The Field Ambulances have been favourably reported on by the Director-General, and special mention has been made of those at Nelson and Dunedin.

A new corps has been raised in Wellington, and it is hoped will now prosper.

Equipment.—A supply of first-aid field dressings was obtained during the year, and an additional supply of surgical haversacks and other stores is now being provided for.

A light ambulance-wagon is being constructed in Wellington, and, if considered satisfactory, others will be built to take the place of the Imperial pattern at present on issue in the military districts, these being considered too heavy and unwieldy for colonial requirements.

Army Service Corps.

No Army Service Corps at present exists in the Dominion, but, as it is considered so necessary that men should be trained in these important duties, the Council intend during the coming year to establish if possible a small nucleus of such a force.

The establishment of small companies in the various military districts should be sufficient to carry on the ordinary work required at peace manœuvres and camps, and these would be capable of expansion to meet the necessary requirements in the event of war.

Transport.

Patterns of transport-wagons, S.A.A. carts, and water-carts, are being constructed in Wellington, and if these are considered satisfactory a supply will be built for issue to each district.

Stores and Magazines.

Auckland.—All buildings are in good order, and no additions or alterations have been made during the year.

Wellington.—Approval for the erection of a small armourer's shop at Wellington was obtained some time ago, the plans and construction of which are in the hands of the Public Works Department; but up to the present the work has not been commenced.

Canterbury.—An armourer's shop has been erected in Christchurch. Negotiations are now proceeding for securing a suitable site for a safety cartridge-store, which is urgently needed.

Otago.—The new store buildings and offices have been completed, and are now in use. They are a great improvement on the old Garrison Hall store.

Nelson.—The necessary repairs have been made to the store.

Clothing and Equipment.

As regards clothing, tenders were invited from the various woollen-mills in the Dominion for the supply of cloth for uniforms; those of the Kaiapoi, Mosgiel, and Wellington Companies being accepted.

A good supply of brown-leather accoutrements has been obtained in the Dominion at satisfactory rates, and the whole of the Defence Rifle Cadet Corps have been supplied with new accoutrements. All adult Infantry Corps whose accoutrements are obsolete or unserviceable are now being supplied.

It is recommended that a reserve of accoutrements be gradually built up, so that in case of emergency an immediate issue could be made from store.

The camp equipment is being maintained in good order, and any tents that are unfit for further service are disposed of, the money thus obtained being utilised in purchasing new tents.

A large addition has been made to the stock of cooking-utensils during the year.

Arms and Ammunition.

Six extra 15-pounder B.L. guns have been imported during the past year, and issued to the various Field Artillery Batteries.

As regards small-arms, the whole of the Mounted Corps of the South Island have been armed with the new pattern M.L.E. rifle. A supply of short rifles has been ordered from England to similarly equip the Mounted Corps in the North Island.

All corps were visited during the year by the Inspecting Armourers, and necessary repairs effected.

A satisfactory reserve of gun and small-arm ammunition is maintained.

The ammunition supplied by the Colonial Ammunition Company continues to be satisfactory.

Rifle Ranges.

During the past year the rifle ranges in the Dominion have received a great deal of attention, and are generally in a very satisfactory condition.

By a clause in "The Defence Act Amendment Act, 1907," rifle ranges may now be vested in Trustees under the Volunteer Drill-sheds and Lands Act of 1888, and steps are being taken to have all sites which are rifle range reserves so vested.

During the year a new range has been completed at Hamilton, and a site taken for a range at Te Aroha, and at Tauranga land is to be taken to extend the present range. The Sumner Rifle Range has been purchased by the Government, and money granted for equipping the range at Thames.

The Penrose Range has been extended, and repairs have been carried out on the ranges at Whangarei, Polhill Gully, Dannevirke, Trentham, Millerton, Denniston, Mudflat, Kaikoura, Timaru, Grassmere, Pelichet Bay, and others.

Rifle-range sites at Hastings and Pahiatua have been leased. Subsidies have also been granted in various parts, and minor repairs carried out by the corps where the ranges are situated.

Drill-sheds.

The drill-sheds in the Dominion have received attention wherever required, and are in a satisfactory condition. Wherever they are erected on drill-shed reserves they are vested in Trustees under the Act of 1888.

In Auckland District a grant will be made towards the Thames shed, when the site is vested in the Crown.

In Wellington District repairs have been carried out at the Napier Garrison Hall and subsidy granted towards improvements at the Pahiatua and Petone sheds. At Gisborne a new shed is being erected on a fresh site, the Government grant amounting to £2,900.

A new and up-to-date shed has been erected for the Garrison in Wellington, and also a new shed for the Permanent Force.

A grant towards necessary addition to the armourer's shop at Headquarters has also been approved.

At Christchurch, caretakers' quarters have been erected at King Edward Barracks, and retaining-walls are being erected at the Lyttelton Drill-shed.

Repairs have been effected to a number of sheds in the Nelson District.

In Otago District additions have been carried out at the Garrison Artillery Volunteers' shed, and at Arrowtown and the Bluff.

Negotiations are still proceeding in connection with the proposal to erect a new shed in Dunedin.

Minor repairs and additions have been made to other sheds throughout the Dominion from company funds, &c.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE.

The sum of £176,426 was spent out of the Consolidated Fund last year for Defence services generally, which included the expenditure in connection with the Permanent Force, Volunteer Force, Stores and Magazines, and Defence Miscellaneous Services.

The chief items of expenditure were as follows:—

Salaries and Pay,—	£
Headquarters	6,994
Permanent Force	42,727
Volunteer Force	8,952
Stores and Magazines	4,875
Capitation and personal payments to Volunteers	35,735
Training-camps and instruction	8,425
Ammunition	28,236
Arms, equipment, and warlike stores	9,547

It is estimated for the current year that an amount of £214,470 will be required, the increase being accounted for by additional amount required for Easter manœuvres, purchase of arms and accoutrements, camp equipage, and ammunition.

To provide for the increased pay of the Permanent Force, according to establishment, £60,420 will be needed. This provides for the extra amount of pay payable under the new scheme, and awards for proficiency and good conduct. In the past the rates of pay in regard to the Permanent Force throughout the Dominion were considered far from satisfactory, as little or no provision was made for length of service or efficiency. The scheme of pay which is now in operation will obviate any difficulty in that respect in future, as it embraces all officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Defence Forces. It has been the means of making the members of the Force more contented, and is giving general satisfaction, the beneficial effect being already apparent.

As mentioned in the report last year, the Permanent Force expenditure is now kept separate from that of the Volunteer Force, so that the cost of the various services may be ascertained at a glance. This mode of keeping the expenditure, although entailing extra clerical labour, is a decided improvement on the old system.

Out of the Public Works Fund £11,598 was spent on the erection and additions to drill-sheds, and £8,330 in respect of rifle ranges.

The estimated amount required to be voted this year under Contingent Defence is £20,000, which provides for the purchase of six field-guns, erection of and additions to drill-sheds, acquirement of rifle ranges, and other expenditure incidental to the vote.

In connection with fixed harbour-defence the sum of £15,000 is asked for in order to carry out work of an important nature in connection with the defence of our principal ports.

NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCES RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The annual prize meeting of the New Zealand Defence Forces Rifle Association was held at Trentham, commencing on Thursday, the 5th March, and continued till the following Wednesday.

The meeting proved a highly successful one, there being a record entry, while the shooting throughout was of a high order.

The number of competitors was 493, comprising 305 Volunteers and 188 Rifle-club men. The cash prizes paid totalled £1,421 17s. 6d., the prize-money being allocated as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Open to all competitors	1,243	12	6
„ Volunteers only	93	0	0
„ Rifle-club men only	71	0	0
„ Cadets	14	5	0
	1,421	17	6

Of the amount open to all competitors, Volunteers won £736 14s. 6d., or 60 per cent., Riflemen won £492 18s. 6d., or 40 per cent. ; while the percentage of competitors was as follows—Volunteers, 62 per cent. ; Riflemen, 38 per cent.

Owing to the large number of entries the Executive added £120 to the published programme. The Champion Belt was won by Rifleman George Hyde, of the Opaki Rifle Club (a former winner of the belt in 1902), with a score of 431, Lieutenant Timbrell, of Christchurch, being second with 430 and Sergeant Edwards, an Australian, next with 429.

Since the previous meeting many improvements have been made in and about the range. The mounds on the Collins Range were sown down in grass, and those on the Seddon Range returfed. The large mess-room was lined, a new cook-house erected, and other alterations and additions necessary for carrying out the meeting. This work was carried out by the Public Works Department, and was much appreciated by the competitors present at the meeting.

The work of the meeting necessitated the employment of twenty-one officers for range and butt duties, all of whom, like the members of the Executive, gave their services gratuitously. Eighty-one men of the Permanent Force were employed as markers, &c., 6 Volunteers for clerical work, and a staff of 31 men as waiters and cooks.

The universal testimony of the competitors to the excellent arrangements for the meeting, the absence of any serious complaints, and the general satisfaction on the whole, was most gratifying to all concerned in the management.

A rifle team to represent the Dominion in the Empire Match was sent over to Australia in October last, and, though not successful in winning the match, they beat the representative team from Great Britain by three points, the respective scores being—Australia, 2,104 ; New Zealand, 2,056 ; Great Britain, 2,053.

The Commonwealth Council of the Rifle Association of Australia has extended a cordial invitation to New Zealand to be represented in the second Empire match, to be fired in October, 1909, and, as there is every prospect of the Empire being represented not only by the Mother-country, but by several units of His Majesty's Dominion, the Council of Defence ventures to hope that a representative team may be sent from New Zealand.

The importance of service competitions being urged on the Council of Defence by the Imperial authorities, arrangements will be made to add several matches to the programme for the next meeting.

ARTILLERY SERVICES.
Progress.

During the past year the records of both Field and Garrison Artillery Vounteers show that considerable progress has been made in both efficiency and shooting (*vide* Tables 1 and 2).

This improvement is entirely due to the keenness of all ranks, the amount of time devoted to training, and to the valuable instruction given by the Royal New Zealand Artillery.

There are, however, many difficulties in connection with the training of the Artillery Force up to the standard now aimed at, as a result of which it cannot be considered thoroughly efficient, although it is probable that the Artillery Volunteers throughout the Dominion were never more efficient than they are at the present time. While, however, this standard of efficiency is very creditable, much remains to be done *re* organization, system of training, and equipment, before absolute readiness for war can be assured.

TABLE 1.—RETURN showing RESULTS OF EFFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS of the New Zealand FIELD ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS, 1907-8.

Headquarters, Wellington, N.Z., 1st May, 1908.

Battery.	Station.	Attendance.	Staff Sergeants.	N.C.O.s and Men (gunnery).	Signalling.	Range-finding.	Gun-laying.	Trumpeters.	Driving.	Turn-out and Route march.	Battery Drill.	Laying out Lines of Fire.	Total Marks.	Percentage.	Deductions for Discipline.	Marks awarded for Efficiency.	Class for Shooting.	Grade awarded 1907-8.	Improvement in Efficiency since 1906-7.
A	Auck'd	95	50	80	76	38	60	10	35	78	80	90	692	777	..	777	2nd	"A"	Per Cent. 1.38
B	D'edin	99	50	89	90.7	32.5	106	20	39	98	90	95	809	90	..	90	1st	"A"	10
D	W'gt'n	95	50	83	97.6	50	101.4	18	43	100	85	90	813	90.13	..	90.13	2nd	"A"	3.13
E	Ch'ch	94	50	67	85	39.7	104.8	18	40	80	90	85	752	84.5	..	84.5	2nd	"A"	15.5
H	Nelson	90	40	79	50	28	103	15	41	89.7	85	..	620.7	78.5	..	78.5	2nd	"A"	10.3

D Battery wins the Challenge Shield for efficiency for 1907-8, being only 4 points ahead of B Battery.

TABLE 2.—RETURN showing STANDARD OF EFFICIENCY of the New Zealand GARRISON ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS for 1907-8.

Division.	Company.	Subaltern Officers.	Staff Sergeants.	N.C.O.s and Men (Gunnery).	Range-finding.	Signalling.	Gun-laying.	Trumpeters.	Fort-manning.	Attendance.	Total.	Percentage.	Penalties for Discipline.	Marks for Company Efficiency.	Class awarded for Class Firing.	Efficiency Grade for 1907-8.	Increase in Efficiency since 1906-7.
Auckland ..	1	33	28	64	89	77	78	10	85	70	534	76.3	1.25	75.05	1st	"A"	Per Cent. 19.88
	2	50	28	70	81	90	82	16	90	70	577	82	Nil	82	2nd	"A"	9.86
	3	33	20	58	73	82	95	20	90	64	535	76.4	Nil	76.4	1st	"A"	21.1
Wellington ..	1	50	30	89	83	87.6	91.6	20	95	96	641.6	90	Nil	90	1st	"A"	7.9
	2	46.75	30	96.68	98.9	96.9	90.36	19	95	97	670.59	95.8	Nil	95.8	1st	"A"	3.6
	3*																
Canterbury ..	1	50	15†	84.67	90.3	47	65.3	20	75	90	537.27	76.7	Nil	76.7	1st	"A"	6.9
	2	42	28	74.4	87	91.7	87.9	14	90	79	596	85	Nil	85	1st	"A"	31.45
Otago ..	1	50†	30	85	88.5	90	80.6	20	100	95	639.1	91.3	1	90.3	1st	"A"	8.2
	2	48	27	92	90	76.5	82.4	19	95	92	621.9	88.8	1	87.8	1st	"A"	9.2
Westport ..	1	35	25	59	..	61	92	18	75	92	457	76	1	75	2nd	"A"	..

* This company is organized for electric lighting only. Marks for engine-driving, 64; electrical work, 51; signalling 50; attendance, 65.75; efficiency grade for 1907-8. "B." † Only one staff sergeant in company. ‡ Officers very efficient although not examined in signalling and G.G.C. duties.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The number of adult Volunteers, all ranks, who capitulated as efficient for the year ending 28th February, 1904, was ... 11,419

Ditto, 1905 ... 10,773

Ditto, 1906 ... 11,051

Ditto, 1907 ... 10,846

Ditto, so far as the returns yet to hand (30th June) for year ending 29th February, 1908, is ... 10,336

The average number of recruits under twenty years of age who enrolled in adult corps during the past five years has been ... 3,722

The total strength of the adult Volunteer Force, all ranks, on 29th February, 1908, was 13,049

The decrease of adult Volunteers between February, 1907, and February, 1908, has been ... 607

Nine adult Volunteer corps (one Artillery and eight Mounted Rifles and Infantry) were disbanded during the year.

Percentage of attendance of adult Volunteers at the Easter manœuvres, 1908:—

	Strength of District.	Total Strength attended.	Percentage.
Auckland	2,868	793	27
Wellington	3,538	2,273	64
Nelson	1,163	551	47
Canterbury	2,283	1,153	50
Otago	3,197	1,165	35
	13,049	5,935	

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL, NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCES (COLONEL R. H. DAVIES).

The Right Hon. the Minister of Defence.

SIR,—

29th May, 1908.

I have the honour to submit the following annual report on the forces of New Zealand:—

I have now, since my appointment as Inspector-General, inspected (with two or three exceptions which circumstances have rendered unavoidable) every adult corps of every arm of the service in the Dominion and nearly every company of Defence cadets.

I have endeavoured by travelling almost continuously for more than a year to see them under the circumstances most favourable to the maximum attendance possible—*i.e.*, at their own corps headquarters, and after as long notice as possible, in all cases ample; and have left the selection of dates, places, and hours, as far as possible in the hands of the Officers Commanding Districts, who should be thoroughly acquainted with local circumstances.

I quite believe that Commanding Officers and all those interested have in almost all cases done their best to insure as large musters as possible for these inspections, and I feel quite confident that the total number I have seen under these conditions most favourable to good attendances represents approximately the maximum that can be said to do any real work. This opinion is confirmed by the fact that inspection reports of their own inspections show that Officers Commanding Districts have seen considerably fewer men during the same period than I have.

HARBOUR DEFENCES.

I have inspected all the fortifications in the Dominion and have found, on all occasions, that the works and armaments are very well kept and cared for by the Permanent Force.

New works are in progress in Wellington and Auckland (the details of which it is not advisable to enter into in this report), the former of which will be completed in a comparatively short time.

The latter, owing to the conditions under which it is being carried out, will take much longer.

PERMANENT FORCE.

In my last report I stated that the recommendations for the organization of the R.N.Z.A. and R.N.Z.E. which were made by the Council of Defence would no doubt put the Force in a thoroughly satisfactory state.

It has not been found possible to complete all these arrangements yet, or at any rate a sufficient time has not elapsed for any effect to appear, the officer selected to command not yet having commenced his duties. I can therefore only repeat my former statement.

In most respects the Force is in an entirely satisfactory state, and officers, N.C.O.s, and men have carried out their duties in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

It is to be hoped that the new regulations with regard to clothing will soon have the effect of insuring uniformity, which is absolutely essential and does not add to expense.

VOLUNTEERS.

I have inspected 246 separate corps, including Defence cadets. This includes every live adult corps of every arm of the service in the Dominion, except three, which, owing to unavoidable circumstances, I have not yet been able to inspect, but which I intend to see shortly, and a few corps (mounted rifles and infantry), in process of disbandment at the time of my visit to the districts. Also a few cadets corps in Auckland which could not be paraded owing to the school holidays while I was in that district.

Several of these corps I have had an opportunity of inspecting more than once, and whenever possible I have also seen them in the field by daylight, but the detailed return which follows gives the result of one inspection only of each corps, and in all cases the one at which there was the largest muster present, in order to show the numbers that I have actually seen, without duplicating.

Details of Inspection by Districts.

Branch of Service.	Number of Corps.	Present on Parade.	Enrolled Strength.	Establishment.	Percentage of Enrolled Strength present.	Percentage of Establishment present.
<i>Auckland Military District.</i>						
Field Artillery	1	47	64	82	73½	57·5
Garrison Artillery	3	224	272	479	82·3	47
Engineers	1	45	64	106	70·3	42·5
Mounted Rifles	21	544	1,056	1,824	51½	30
Infantry	15	563	831	1,005	67·7	56
Field Hospital and Bearer Corps	1	15	33	50	45½	30
Bands	3	65	73	66	90	...
Cadets	1	28	43	63	65	44·4
<i>Wellington Military District.</i>						
Field Artillery	1	65	89*	82	73	79
Garrison Artillery	1	87	126	156	69	56
Engineers	2	77	150	212	77	36·5
Mounted Rifles	14	435	726	1,224	60	35½
Infantry	36	1,130	1,782	2,328	63·3	48·5
Bands	4	76	87	86	87·3	87
Cadets	11	529	618	693	85½	76½
* 7 over establishment.						
<i>Nelson Military District.</i>						
Field Artillery	1	57	65	82	87·7	69·5
Garrison Artillery	1	52	69	156	75·3	33·3
Mounted Rifles	4	151	252	351	60	43
Infantry	10	409	535	654	76·4	62½
Field Hospital and Bearer Corps	1	48	53	50	90·57	...
Bands	3	68	71	66	...	...
Cadets	4	188	207	258	90	73
<i>Canterbury Military District.</i>						
Field Artillery	1	50	64	82	78	61
Garrison Artillery	2	131	149	334	88	39
Engineers	1	61	89	106	72	60
Mounted Rifles	11	329	558	969	59	34
Infantry	20	698	955	1,303	73	53·6
Field Hospital and Bearer Corps	1	27	41	50	...	...
Bands	2	39	46	46	...	...
Cadets	9	378	473	567	80	66
<i>Otago Military District.</i>						
Field Artillery	1	55	63	82	87	67
Garrison Artillery	2	150	224	334	67	45
Engineers	1	60	75	106	80	56·5
Mounted Rifles	11	390	612	954	63·7	41
Infantry	29	896	1,402	1,875	64	48
Field Hospital and Bearer Corps	1	38	52	50	...	...
Bands	1	31	33	26	...	...
Cadets	15	608	805	945	75½	61·3

Detail of Inspections for Dominion.

Field Artillery	5	274	345	410	79½	66·7
Garrison Artillery	9	644	840	1,457	76	45
Engineers	5	246	378	531	65	46·5
Mounted Rifles	61	1,840	3,204	5,346	58	34·5
Infantry, Cycle, and Signalling	110	3,696	5,505	7,174	67	50
Field Hospital and Bearer Corps	4	128	179	200	71½	64
Bands	13	279	310	285	...	...
Cadets	40	1,731	2,146	2,626	81	63½

A summary of the above gives the following result of all corps inspected, counting, as stated above, only one inspection for each corps, in cases where they have been seen more than once.

	Adult.	Cadet.
Establishment of corps ordered to parade (at date of inspection)	15,379	2,746
Enrolled strength of corps ordered to parade (at date of inspection)	10,761	2,146
Total present at inspections	8,116	1,731

Field Artillery.

The establishment of Field Artillery for the Dominion is 410 all ranks and the enrolled strength on last day of the Volunteer year (29th February, 1908) was 361. These corps have mustered very well for my inspections, there being altogether 79 per cent. of the enrolled strength at date of inspections present.

The discipline and drill are very satisfactory indeed throughout, and, considering the very few opportunities they get for work in the field, great credit is due to all ranks for their present state of efficiency. In appearance and dress they are smart, and officers, N.C.O.s, and men take a pride in their corps. All that is required to make them entirely efficient is work in the field in daylight.

In some instances, owing to its being found impossible under existing conditions to enlist men as drivers who are accustomed to horses in their daily occupations, the batteries are much handicapped when manœuvring.

In my last report (June, 1907) I pointed out that I was convinced more attention should be devoted to training for firing from direct instead of covered positions. By direction of the Council of Defence this has been done this year, and very nearly all, if not all, the firing has been direct.

In support of what I then wrote, I beg to point out that in "Notes on Recent Changes in the Japanese Field Artillery Manuals, Part II, Fighting," published in the *Journal of the Royal Artillery* for August, 1907 (after my report was written), one of the "principal lessons deduced from the war" is stated to be "disadvantage of covered as compared with direct firing positions," and in another paragraph, after pointing out that in certain cases indirect laying may be "allowed," it is stated, "This alteration is, however, on no account to be taken to imply that indirect laying is recommended."

The indirect method will doubtless be often used under certain conditions, but I think it highly improbable it will ever be required in this country; therefore it is right that as little as possible of the all-too-short time for training should be devoted to it.

The detailed report by the Acting Director of Artillery on these corps show that their progress during the past year has been very satisfactory.

Garrison Artillery.

The detailed reports of the Acting Director of Artillery clearly prove that excellent results have been obtained in connection with the training of this branch of the service during the past year. All the companies have improved in a greater or less degree in efficiency. The shooting has been good throughout and in some cases excellent, one company (No. 2 Wellington Division, G.A.V.) obtaining 100 per cent. hits, which is a record for the Dominion. The result of my own inspections have been also very satisfactory, all corps having mustered and worked well.

As regards readiness for war, with the opportunities that the various arms get under present conditions for training and for the reasons stated in my last report, I consider that the garrison artillery are and will always be much better prepared than any other branch, and the efficiency of the men they have is steadily progressing.

With regard to the numbers necessary, however, the state of things is not nearly so satisfactory, the establishment laid down as necessary to man the forts being 1,608, while the enrolled strength at the end of the past Volunteer year was only 975, or 60 per cent. This would not provide reliefs to enable the work to be carried on in war-time, and untrained men taken on at the last moment would be practically useless. It is to be hoped, therefore, that every effort will be made to bring the strength up to within measurable distance of establishment.

Field Engineers.

There are four field engineers corps in the Dominion with a total establishment of 420. The strength, at the end of the year, was 297 and the total paraded for my inspections 203, less than half the establishment. The total average attendance at the annual camps of instruction was 221. This cannot be regarded in any way as satisfactory from the point of numbers.

In the work in which they are now trained, three of the corps take great interest, are in a very good state of efficiency, and they are enthusiastic and keen throughout. One corps, however, I regret to say, is very backward indeed in every respect, and has fallen off considerably rather than improved. As at present constituted it is certainly not worth the expenditure. This opinion, which I formed from my personal inspection, is entirely borne out by the detailed report of the Director of Engineers Services.

More attention should be devoted to signalling in all corps, and, above all, as stated in my last report, much more work in the field is required before these corps can ever become in any way efficient in the most important duty of field engineering.

I repeat again, "Field engineers should be experts in the choice of ground, and have the knowledge of how to use it to the best advantage," and I also pointed out that it is a knowledge of where, not how, to dig, &c., that is required. It is impossible to train for this in drill-halls or flat paddocks, and to so educate field engineers that they may become, as they should be, the experts

of the Force to point out and superintend the manner in which the best results may be obtained with the greatest economy of labour and material, for offensive or defensive operations, they *must* be taken out into the field and instructed how to deal with any situation that may arise.

Since I wrote my last annual report (June, 1907), a clever article appeared in the *Royal Engineers Journal*, August, 1907, entitled "Field Engineers for our Next War," which so exactly explains what I endeavoured in a few words to point out that I here quote it: "Field engineers have also a special *tactical* function. This special tactical mission, which requires the very highest type of *spade-rifle* instinct, is the consolidation of the successful infantry assault. Field engineers must make for and occupy or reinforce with their own rifles, and subsequently strengthen artificially, such key or pivot points as a calm review of the tactical situation shows it to be vital to retain at all hazards. The instinctive power of recognition of these pivots or *points d'appui* is not a common gift, and some men never acquire it. It is often represented by the natural inclination to occupy every prominent knob on the terrain."

And again, "The planning and laying-out of the entrenchments requires chiefly *tactical* and in a minor degree *technical* knowledge. The Boer, with the shikari instinct, exemplified this over and over again."

It cannot be supposed that our field engineers, who are nearly all town men, have the "shikari" instinct, and therefore the best means must be adopted to make up for this want by practical training on the ground. Very little instruction is required to teach them the shape and the dimensions of the few simple works that will be needed in the field, and that can be taught, as is done now, indoors, but a great deal of experience is required to enable them to select the best position to occupy. This experience will never be got by digging various descriptions of trenches in flat paddocks or on the sand of the seashore, and I again repeat that it is *where*, not *how*, to dig to which attention must be devoted.

The two companies of submarine mining engineers have been given the opportunity of becoming attached to the garrison artillery divisions at Wellington and Auckland, as extra garrison artillery companies for working searchlights, telephones, &c. In the case of the former this will probably be successful, but in Auckland I understand a new company will probably have to be raised.

Mounted Rifles.

With regard to enrolled strength in comparison to establishment and also attendance at parades this arm of the service comes out much worse than any other. At my inspections throughout the Dominion only 58 per cent. of enrolled strength at date of inspection or 35 per cent. of the establishment of the corps that were inspected turned out.

There are only two live corps that I have been unable to see to date—one on account of wet weather and flooded rivers, and the other did not parade when ordered, owing, I understand, to some mistake in the orders issued from the District Office. There were also a few corps in process of disbandment that had done no work for some time, and were merely waiting to get in Government property before becoming extinct.

The establishment for the Dominion at the end of the Volunteer year was 6,006, the actual strength 3,923, and the total number paraded for inspection only 1,849, or 30 per cent. of establishment, and 47 per cent. of strength. This I need hardly point out is an entirely unsatisfactory state.

With regard to efficiency, the squadrons vary from a fair number that in knowledge of drill, in discipline, uniformity of turn-out, and real usefulness in the field, considering the very short time they have to train, are in a most satisfactory state, to some few that are in all respects quite useless, being without discipline or knowledge and very slack and slovenly in turn-out and appearance. The want of discipline and general slackness is, of course, the fault of the officers, who for some cause are not fit for the position, but in several cases now it seems impossible for even the good keen officer to get decent musters, and therefore good results, and some have apparently lost heart and got slack themselves in consequence.

In the great majority of squadrons more knowledge of what are known as "detached duties"—*i.e.*, outpost, advanced, rear and flank guards, patrols, &c., and also of fire tactics and fire control, is required by all ranks, especially officers and N.C.O.s, and in these duties, though theory can be easily studied indoors, they can only become proficient in the field.

I have found that in a surprisingly large number of instances the squadron sergeant-major, who should be the smartest man in the squadron and a pattern to all in discipline, knowledge, and general smartness, is one of the most useless. I have often inquired why he was selected, and have been told, "Oh! he is a good chap, and they all like him, and wanted him; he has been in the squadron for a long time, and we didn't know what to do with him, so we made him sergeant-major," or something to that effect. This, I feel sure, will in many cases account for the general slackness in everything which is apparent in some corps, and I conclude is a consequence of the system of the election of officers, the assumption being that if the men have a voice in the selection of officers they should also have a voice in the selection of N.C.O.s, and of course this soon ruins a corps.

I also regret very much to find that the mounted rifles, who, almost without exception, were accustomed to train by remaining in camp and the field for a full seven days, now, in a great and increasing number, merely come to camp in the evening and go to their ordinary work in the daytime. This was stopped for the infantry, and their camps done away with, as it was considered, and undoubtedly was, a waste of money. It is a much greater waste of money when applied to mounted rifles, as the horses have to be fed as well as the men, and as they (the mounted rifles) certainly are less able to learn their work at night it should be put a stop to at once. Also it is entirely unfair to those corps that train as they are expected to train.

Infantry and Cycle Corps.

On paper at the end of the last Volunteer year, there were 111 infantry and three cycle corps in the Dominion, with a total establishment of 7,431, and an enrolled strength of 6,118. I have inspected every infantry corps (except four which were about to disband and were not working at all), and also the cycle corps, and the total number present at my inspections (counting, of course, only one inspection of each corps in cases where I have seen them more than once, as before explained) has been 3,696, or 60 per cent. of enrolled strength and 49 per cent. of establishment. Of those actually enrolled at times of inspection in corps which paraded, 67 per cent. turned out. Thus, less than half the establishment for the Dominion have presented themselves at inspections, and seeing that these infantry inspections have almost without exception been at night in their own halls and at their own headquarters and times, this must be considered most unsatisfactory.

Like the mounted rifles, the infantry corps vary very much in usefulness and efficiency, owing generally to the same causes. A few corps in each district are really excellent in all the work they do, have excellent discipline, and in some cases where they have exceptionally enthusiastic and capable officers every effort is made by the latter to get as much daylight training as possible, but unfortunately the opportunities are very few. At the other end of the scale there are some corps (about twenty) so bad and useless in every way that there is no justification at all for the expense incurred upon them in their present state. The majority of the corps range from fair to good, and there is no reason whatever why they should not improve, even under the present conditions, if all ranks make an effort and mean business. The reasons for the standard of efficiency being lower generally in the infantry than in the scientific branches that do their work almost entirely in the drill-halls (such as artillery, engineers, &c.) I feel sure are—

- (1.) The work the latter learn in the halls and at night is made much more interesting for them.
- (2.) The junior officers and N.C.O.s of the latter have definite and special duties to perform without which the work cannot proceed at all, and they must learn their work more or less.
- (3.) In the former the whole company may be moved about, and I fear sometimes has been for a year, by one man, without any one else being compelled to exercise any authority, or even open his mouth, possibly.
- (4.) The scientific branches have more instructors in proportion to their numbers.

Of course there is plenty of interesting and very useful work that infantry can be taught in drill-halls, but I am convinced that in order to understand what is wanted, and even how to make their indoor work interesting, they must be taken out into the field in daylight and shown what they are for. A few odd hours scattered over the year will never accomplish this, I am certain.

As a result of the foregoing, I regret to say that in many corps the N.C.O.s and sometimes the officers have little or no idea of instructing or handling their men, cannot sometimes carry out the simplest manœuvre (such as putting half a dozen men quickly into any required position), have practically no knowledge of field duties, fire control, or fire discipline, and I have even several times found that they have not been able to sight rifles correctly when instructed to show men who were ignorant.

In turn-out I am glad to be able to report that generally they are neatly and uniformly clothed, and there are not nearly so many corps whose appearance is spoilt by want of attention to this as in the mounted rifles, but in physique they are as a whole below the standard of any other arm of the service.

Field Hospital and Bearer Corps.

I have inspected all the corps in the Dominion. In all cases they were neatly and well turned out, drilled smartly, and officers and N.C.O.s and men took great interest in, and, I believe, thoroughly understood their special work.

Defence Cadets.

I have inspected forty separate companies of Defence cadets, and the total muster for parade was 1,731, or 81 per cent. of their then strength. In the case of one school company the drill, and of another the drill, manœuvre, fire-control, and indeed all work undertaken, have been excellent. In all the others the work is quite satisfactory, with the exception of two schools, in one of which the whole tone and work of the corps was very indifferent, and far below any other cadet corps I have seen (for what reason I was unable to discover), and in the other it was entirely the fault of the commanding officer, who may be an excellent school-teacher, but was certainly not intended for that work. In all cases they have been uniformly clothed, and neat and clean in general appearance. Of course they vary very much in size and physique, from fine strapping lads in the senior corps to little chaps who are really hardly strong enough to use the arms provided for them in a few of the junior ones. They all appeared enthusiastic and keen to learn and to do well.

Rifle Clubs.

There were at the end of the year 140 rifle clubs, with a total strength of 3,369.

The officer who was appointed to superintend these clubs was instructed to make such arrangements with regard to times and places as were found most suitable to the clubs, to inspect them and report to me. After travelling for rather more than a month in his endeavour to carry this out he reported as follows: "Regret to say that very few clubs have any idea of drill, and I am afraid in the past have neglected that part of their training. Numbers of them are of the opinion that it is unnecessary. In most cases I was only able to interview the president." As I did not consider that the expense incurred by this officer would be further justified when the only result

was that he "interviewed the president" and did not see the clubs, I, after consultation with the other members of the Council of Defence, instructed him not to travel for that purpose any more at present, and his time has since been occupied with other work.

I presume that it is really not necessary for me to point out that if the members of rifle clubs never do any drill or any field work of any sort, beyond shooting at a fixed target, usually, if not always, at known ranges, and cannot therefore be moved quickly about and manœuvred as required, they will be quite useless for defence purposes—indeed, in my opinion, a source of danger to their friends instead of their enemies.

No sane man of course will deny the fact that a man who can shoot is better material out of which to make a soldier than a man who cannot, but to be of any use in war he must be capable of being put where he is wanted, and shown what to shoot at, which means that there must be leaders and that all must have some knowledge of manœuvre, fire control, fire discipline, &c. To give any hope of success, battle (as defined by a great authority) must be a combined effort directed by trained leaders, and this certainly cannot be accomplished by men with no other training than target shooting.

It will probably be said by advocates of rifle shooting only that that great soldier, Lord Roberts, advocates the training of every man to shoot. He does, but no one in the world knows better than he that rifle shooting only will not suffice. In a letter from Lord Roberts, read last February at a meeting of the National Rifle Association in Sydney, the following passage occurs: "The complete soldier required training, discipline, marching-power, morale, and rifle shooting. *All these were essentials*, and nothing would be gained by exalting one to the detriment of the other. It was advisable that citizen soldiers should practise rifle shooting, a comparatively easy thing for them to do in view of their leisure time. Nevertheless the other points should not be forgotten. The individual should learn rifle shooting by himself, not so with drill, discipline, and co-operation, which required a period of continuous training under proper organization *and good officers.*" The italics are mine.

ARMS AND EQUIPMENT.

The number of new short rifles already issued to mounted rifles is 1,160. There are 840 in store, to be issued, and more are ordered. These arms are in every respect suitable for the purpose, and all those already armed with them whom I have inspected have expressed satisfaction with them from every point of view.

There is a sample of an apparently excellent arrangement, a combination of rifle-sling, belt, and bandolier, now in the Dominion, the patent of an officer in India, which I believe would prove the most satisfactory method yet found of carrying the rifle, and should be tried. The mounted rifles are equipped with bandoliers, and I consider the infantry should be also, as it is a much better way of carrying ammunition than with the pouch only.

Greatcoats, mess-tins, and waterproof sheets throughout are undoubtedly required before the Force can be fit to take the field.

Some few infantry companies still have only white belts to wear over khaki, which are for every reason quite unsuitable, and should be exchanged for brown.

CLOTHING.

All the corps I have seen (field Forces) have been in khaki service dress with the exception of two or three, and I believe they have now procured it. The appearance of the Force is spoilt, however, by the various shades and make of the uniform: not only are the uniforms of battalions, and companies in the same battalion, different, but in many cases even men in the same company or squadrons are not clothed alike.

This is a great contrast to the appearance of the forces of the Commonwealth, where uniformity exists, and whatever steps may be necessary to provide a remedy should be taken with as little delay as possible.

STANDARD AND SYSTEM OF TRAINING.

A new Drill Manual has recently been taken into use by the infantry, and one has either been or very shortly will be issued to mounted forces.

As it comes within the province of the Inspector-General to report upon the "Standard and system of training," I feel compelled to point out that I consider the aim of those responsible should be, as no doubt it is, to have the very least possible change in all drill which does not affect the fighting efficiency of the Force.

To make my meaning clear, I would explain that drill is for two purposes at least. One to obtain uniformity and discipline, and the other to enable troops to be easily handled, and put in the best and quickest manner where they are required. Of course, as tactics change the portion of the drill which affects tactics must change also, but there need be no changes in drill which is only for ceremonial or purely disciplinary purposes.

For instance, it *does* matter whether a body of men is in such a formation that it can be with the greatest safety and speed moved into the best formation and position in which to fight, but it *does not* matter in the least, from a fighting point of view, exactly in what manner men "present arms" so long as all do it smartly in the same way at the same time. With the exceedingly limited time we have to train, and the very short service of our men on the average, if there are constant changes they never learn one drill properly before it is altered, and they have to try to forget the drill they partially learned, and work at another, which naturally discourages them. Unnecessary changes are bad enough in the case of the regular forces; they are much worse in the case of Volunteers, with other work to do. I have found at many of my inspections great confusion in the drill consequent upon these changes.

With regard to the training of officers, I am sure the classes of instruction that have been held in the various centres during the past year have had in many cases good results, but I am quite aware of the almost insurmountable difficulties that lie in the way of making the courses thoroughly practical. The officers were in such very widely separated stages of knowledge and experience that it was probably impossible to avoid beginning a short course of a few days with elementary drill, and ending with the duties of an officer in command of a force of all arms. I understand that in future the seniors and juniors will be in separate courses.

Then, again, there are no troops available with which to train the officers, and though much can, of course, be done by staff rides and regimental tours, yet that alone will never enable officers to handle forces in the field if they never work with troops. To quote one of the finest authorities on the subject of training officers, Colonel Henderson, in his "Science of War," says with regard to regimental officers,—

"The four things necessary are,—

"(1.) To train the judgment of the officers so that when left to themselves they may do the right thing;

"(2.) To make use of the most difficult ground available;

"(3.) To avoid the constant practice of normal formations;

"(4.) To train the individual skirmisher."

Referring to the groundwork of an officer's training, he says, "Let him learn how the individual soldier, the individual section, company, and battalion is expected to act in every phase of active service, and the knowledge he has thus acquired will render it easy for him to learn the art of independent command." "Skill in placing his men in a good position for using their rifles, in leading them from cover to cover, in knowing when to close and when to extend during an attack, is of infinitely more value to the regimental officer than a knowledge of how Wellington crossed the Douro, or Steinmetz passed the defile of Nachod. Four weeks' company training is a better education for a company leader than a year's study of Hamley." Also he says, "Theory, if it is to leave an impression on the mind, must go hand-in-hand with practice, and a system of instruction which overlooks this consideration is not only useless, but revolting to common-sense."

It is sincerely to be hoped that means may be found to make the courses of instruction for officers thoroughly practical.

THE READINESS OF THE FORCES FOR WAR.

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