

EXTRACT FROM REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL, NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCES.

[Portion of the report is not published, being considered of a confidential nature.]

SIR,—

1st May, 1909.

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

In my last annual report (May, 1908) I stated that I had then inspected (with one or two exceptions) every corps in the Dominion; that I had inspected every squadron of Mounted Rifles, and every company of Infantry, &c., separately and at their own headquarters as far as possible.

I also pointed out that, as most of the regiments of M.R. and battalions of Infantry rarely, if ever, came together for training, a very large proportion of officers commanding these units, their seconds in command, and their Adjutants had never even *seen* their own units, much less had an opportunity of working with them in the field.

In consequence of the above report of mine, and decision of the Council, it was decided that all regiments and battalions at least should be brought together at the most convenient centres for my inspections, and also that, wherever possible, composite forces should be mobilised at the larger centres, in order that I should be able to judge and report on the ability and experience or the aptitude of the senior officers to command their units and of the various arms of the service to work together.

In order to carry out these mobilisations, free passes on the railways were granted where necessary, and in such few instances where it was necessary that men should remain away from their homes for a night, owing to the squadrons or companies composing a regiment or battalion being scattered over a wide area, an allowance for food, &c., was granted in order that the men should not be out of pocket.

All these musters were allowed to count as daylight parades (which, of course, they are) for personal payment.

The result of these musters for inspection appears under various headings in this report, the officers being reported upon confidentially as usual.

Although my duty is to report upon the *result* of the instruction received, *not to instruct*, I have, of course, tried to make these field-days (of two or three hours, I regret to say, in most cases) as instructive as possible, realising that no opportunity must be lost when so very few are available. In order to endeavour to accomplish this I have lectured to the officers and N.C.O.s on practical field-work on nineteen occasions at various centres, and the total attendance was about 520. When possible, these lectures were delivered the evening before the parade, and the work dealt with at the lecture was attempted next day in the field. In cases where these meetings could not be held on the evening before the parade, in consequence of officers and N.C.O.s not having arrived, they were held on the evening after.

In all cases the work done was criticized on the ground, when possible, and, when that was not practicable, then as soon as possible afterwards.

HARBOUR DEFENCES.

At my inspections I have found the various works and armaments, barracks, &c., in the Dominion in good order, and well kept by the Permanent Force.

The new works in course of construction at Auckland and Wellington (referred to in my last report) have not yet been completed.

PERMANENT FORCE.

I have seen all the detachments of the R.N.Z.A. either separately or acting as instructors to the Volunteer G.A.V. at my inspections, and am glad to be able to report that I consider the Force in a most satisfactory condition. At their most important work, as instructors to the Volunteer Garrison Artillery, officers, N.C.O.s, and men are not only capable, but painstaking and enthusiastic, and it is greatly owing to their energy and keenness that the Volunteers referred to are in such a satisfactory state of efficiency.

VOLUNTEERS.

I have inspected every adult corps of every arm of the service in the Dominion that it has been found practicable to muster at their own regimental or battalion headquarters or otherwise most suitable place for them during the past year. In the case of four corps (two squadrons M.R. and two companies of Infantry) it was not practicable for them to parade with their regiments, &c., and they were not ordered to do so. Also some of the units in the Wellington District could not be got together except at Easter, and were seen by me on that occasion. I have inspected all the Defence Cadets with the exception of three companies. The total number of corps ordered to parade for inspection was 248.

In the returns which follow, giving the numbers present in the various districts and for the Dominion, I have, to make the position clear, separated the Forces into four distinct parts, namely,—

- (1.) Coast Defence Force.
- (2.) Field Force (combatants).
- (3.) Field Force (non-combatants).
- (4.) Cadets.