

summer it is difficult to get the men together—it may not be possible, without incurring any extra expense, to make some modification of this nature. In this connection it should be understood that the scale of drills and half-day and whole-day parades is convertible and interchangeable, and that there is no objection on the part of the military authorities to the drills and parades in country districts being “lumped” together, under regimental arrangements, into week-end camps, or extra days before or after the regular week in camp, provided that no expense is thereby incurred to the public. The period in the summer between the shearing and the harvest should be suitable for this purpose, and tents can always be supplied for it by the Department. It must be remembered, however, that a certain number of attendances at parade and drill throughout the year are necessary for the inspection of arms and equipment, if for no other reason. From paragraph 238 of the General Regulations it will be seen that the thirty drills of the scale laid down can, if desired, be worked off as follows: Thirty drills = fifteen half-day parades; fifteen half-day parades = seven and a half whole-day parades; seven and a half whole-day parades = forty-five extra working-hours or an extra week in camp. In addition to the thirty drills, twelve half-day or six whole-day parades have to be done annually. These could be worked off by a whole-day parade at the local drill centre once every two months. There is also the musketry to be considered, and arrangements could, in most cases, easily be made for this to be done in conjunction with some of these whole-day parades. It must be clearly understood that these proposals only mean the “lumping” together of what has to be done throughout the year without pay or rations, and that the public cannot therefore be asked to bear any cost in connection with them. In any case, every effort should be made whereby the services of the excellent material from the backblocks is not lost to the Territorial units.

12. CADETS.

It is very necessary that the training of the boy should be continuous and under the same authority from the time he commences his cadet training at the age of twelve till he ceases it on joining the Territorial Force at the age of eighteen. There has been a tendency for the Junior Cadets under the Education Department, the Senior Cadets under the Defence Department, and the Boy Scouts independently of either Department, to pull in different directions. With this object I have made recommendations, to which I hope effect will be given, for the unification of all methods of boys' training. I am very strongly of opinion that up to the age of fourteen the training should be chiefly only in physical drill, and should be of a non-military character. It is quite time enough for a boy to embark on his military career at the age of fourteen. I think the Boy Scout methods may be adopted in great measure in the training of both Junior and Senior Cadets, and have given instructions that they shall be as far as the latter are concerned.

Unavoidable delay in issuing arms, equipment, and clothing to the Senior Cadets has handicapped the development of their training, but steady progress is now being made.

The visit of Lieut.-General Sir Robert Baden-Powell to the Dominion gave the cadet movement a satisfactory fillip. 10,958 cadets were reviewed and addressed by him at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin.

13. HARBOUR-DEFENCES.

During the past year I have again inspected all the coast defences, and have nothing to add to what I reported under this heading last year.

The new battery at Auckland will be ready for action when a few details have been completed, and the new battery at Wellington is complete and has been fired from.

It is intended to supplement the coast defences with mobile armament, and on arrival of the new field-guns the 15-prs. will be issued for this purpose. This is an excellent gun, and will lend variety to the training of the coast-defence troops.

14. PERMANENT FORCE.

There are now seventy-five men in the Field Artillery section. The establishment is 120. We have not as yet been able to complete it, partly because some of the originally selected have been found unsuitable, and partly because recruiting is bad. Employment in New Zealand is plentiful and wages good, so that it is difficult to get recruits.

The Garrison Artillery instructional cadres are too small, and I have been compelled to ask for an increase of the establishment in order that the work may be efficiently done.

I am well satisfied with the work done during the past year by the R.N.Z.A., and consider that the care taken by them of the fort armaments and the instruction given by them to the Territorial Garrison Artillery are deserving of the highest commendation.

15. ARTILLERY HORSES AND MULES.

The establishment of new field batteries in the various centres necessitated a certain number of trained gun-horses being available for the training of these units.

These have been selected by officers of the Veterinary Corps, under the orders of the Director of Veterinary Services, with the result that a serviceable lot of seventy-four horses have been acquired, at an average cost of about £26 each. The steady demand in Australia for horses of this class (half-draught) rendered the matter of obtaining them somewhat difficult, and the Veterinary officers are much to be commended for the excellent stamp of horse acquired.

The horses have been concentrated at Wellington for training, and when this has been completed they will be distributed to the field batteries throughout the Dominion.

A small number of mules (four) have also been obtained, and are being trained for use with the mountain battery established at Wellington. It is proposed to purchase eleven more, at a cost of £20 apiece.