

is more economical than horse transport the former has been installed, until some twenty lorries, cars, &c., are now in use by the Department. Up to the present mechanical transport has proved satisfactory, and ensures a better and quicker service.

#### 68. FIELD COOKING.

The cooking at camps was carried out as last year, partly by civilian and partly by Territorial cooks. Field cookers were used generally, supplemented by trench cooking.

#### 69. FIELD BAKERIES.

The Army Service Corps bakeries are now well established at Trentham and Featherston Camps, and the quality of bread is excellent. Since the inception of these bakeries and up to the 31st May, 1918, an aggregate of 5,118,769 lb. of bread has been produced, at a cost of 1.747d. per pound, or 6.988d. per 4 lb. loaf. This cost is based on all expenditure, inclusive of buildings.

A considerable saving has been effected at Trentham now the new bakery is in use. Under the old system of field ovens an establishment of fifteen non-commissioned officers and men was necessary, whereas only six non-commissioned officers and men are now necessary. The saving in wages is over 50 per cent., whilst a considerable saving has also been effected in fuel.

#### 70. SUPPLIES FOR NEW ZEALAND EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, ENGLAND.

Large quantities of supplies—*i.e.*, bacon, preserved meat, jam, peas, haricot beans, butter, flour, cheese, sugar, and condensed milk—for the use of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the United Kingdom, are sent monthly or as shipping-space permits. The supplies are purchased through the Munitions and Supplies Department, delivery being taken by the Army Service Corps for shipment. It is found that these supplies can be landed in England at a much less cost than the rates ruling there, so that the cost of maintenance of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in England is materially decreased. The supplies are all of first quality, and, though shipments have been going on for the past two years, not one complaint has been received.

#### 71. VETERINARY SERVICES.

*Expeditionary Forces.*—The establishment of the Veterinary Corps with the Expeditionary Forces in France and Egypt respectively has been kept up to strength, all requirements for officers and men having been promptly met.

#### 72. TRAINING-CAMPS.

Every endeavour is being made to carry out in an efficient manner the training of the personnel of Expeditionary Reinforcements while in camp, and in addition a still more careful selection than heretofore is being made of men suitable as a result of their previous experience and general knowledge.

The numbers of horses in the camps at the present date are: Featherston—Riding, 350; draught, 67; Trentham, 46; Awapuni, 8. The health of the horses in camp has been excellent throughout, no contagious or infectious diseases having made their appearance—except a small outbreak of strangles, which was promptly suppressed. A number of cases of lameness occurred, consequent largely upon the stony nature of the ground in and about the camps, and not due in any case to lack of proper care and attention on the part of the men handling the horses.

The type of camp stables adopted in New Zealand, which has been in use for some years at Featherston Camp, has proved extremely satisfactory, and I am of opinion that the use of stables of this type has been an important factor in preventing the occurrence of respiratory troubles among the horses, seeing that the animals are sufficiently sheltered from rain and inclement weather yet are practically in an open-air atmosphere.

New stables are urgently needed at Trentham Camp, where hitherto unsuitable structures have been in use, and steps have now been taken to arrange for the erection of these at an exceedingly moderate cost.

#### 73. REMOUNT DEPOT.

Owing to the cessation of shipments of horses from New Zealand, the work of the Remount Depot, being confined solely to the requirements of the camps, was very materially reduced, and consequently the necessity for maintaining a depot on the scale previously found necessary no longer existed. The depot was temporarily transferred in November, 1917, to the Wallaceville Laboratory Farm, belonging to the Department of Agriculture, and remained there until April, 1918, when it was transferred to Tauherenikau and established on a portion of a farm acquired by this Department. It has been found necessary to cast a number of horses, most of which had become unfit for camp work owing to accidents, injuries, or general unfitness, after a long period of hard work. Several of these animals had been used for training-purposes in the camps since the earlier period of the war. Of these, some were sold privately, others by auction; but owing to the depressed state of the horse-market it was found that auctioning horses usually resulted in very small prices being obtained; consequently some animals, which obviously would bring little or no return if sold by auction, and for which we were unable to find private buyers, were destroyed, and their carcasses boiled and fed to the pigs upon the Department pig-farm. The skins were marketed.

#### 74. HORSES FOR USE IN TERRITORIAL CAMPS.

By comparison with previous years, very few horses were required for use in Territorial camps. Arrangements were made under which those camps requiring horses for the use of officers, &c., were supplied with animals from the Remount Depot, these being afterwards returned when the camps closed. By the adoption of this method a considerable saving was effected.