

With the object of stimulating interest in Cadet training, Colonel G. F. C. Campbell, C.M.G., V.D., of Wellington City, and Mr. Eric Riddiford, J.P., of Orongorongo, each donated a handsome trophy. These were competed for during the year, and after very exhaustive tests and keen competition, in which all the larger Cadet units in the Dominion took part, Colonel Campbell's trophy was awarded to C Company, 9th (Cadet) Battalion, Canterbury Regiment (Nelson City Cadets), and Mr. Riddiford's trophy to A Company, 9th (Cadet) Battalion, Canterbury Regiment (Nelson College Cadets).

As in the case of the Territorial Force, the musketry training of the Cadets also shows considerable improvement on former years (see Appendix I). This is largely due to the various musketry competitions which during the past two years have created a healthy spirit of rivalry throughout the whole of the Cadet Force.

Last year the entries in the Imperial Challenge Shield competition, in which Cadets from all parts of the British Empire take part, were double those of any previous year, there being some 3,500 competitors from New Zealand Cadets. His Excellency the Governor-General very kindly donated a special trophy to be awarded to the New Zealand unit making the best effort in this competition, and this undoubtedly accounted for the great interest displayed. Other competitions of a similar nature are the Islington Challenge Cup competition and the *Weekly Press* Challenge Shield competition, both of which draw much larger entries than heretofore.

During the year 600 new match rifles were purchased for the Cadets, and these will be used in next year's competitions, and, although the scores have been good in the past, it is anticipated that even better results will be obtained in the future.

#### *New Zealand Army Rifle Association.*

During the year the N.Z. Army Rifle Association was formed with the object of promoting interest in rifle shooting for service purposes by means of individual and collective competitions—framed, as far as possible, to induce practice in methods, which will lead to increased efficiency on the battlefield.

The association's inaugural meeting was held at Trentham on the 13th March, 1923, and succeeding days, and was an unqualified success. The programme was based on the experience gained in the Great War, and was the subject of very favourable comment by the Commandant of the Small-arms School at Hythe, England; it included individual and teams rifle matches for both the Territorial Force and Cadets, besides competitions for Vickers, Lewis, and Hotchkiss gun teams. Considering the short time that the machine and light guns have been on issue to units, and the scarcity of qualified instructors, the handling of these weapons by the teams was distinctly good.

Rifle meetings on similar lines have also been held in areas and commands, and have greatly assisted in keeping the Territorial Force together during a difficult period, as well as in increasing the musketry standard.

#### *Rifle Clubs.*

Rifle Clubs may be of great value for defence provided they encourage men who would be liable for service in the event of war to improve themselves in the use of the service rifle under active-service conditions. To this end regulations have prescribed that only men who are of military age and who are fit for service may become members, and also that members must fire an annual musketry course. In spite of these regulations, however, rifle shooting appears to be taken up mainly by men who are beyond the military age or who do not take part in more strenuous sports.

It is now proposed that effective members—i.e., those who are of military age and fit for service—should be encouraged to fire a musketry course by granting a free issue of 100 rounds small-arms ammunition to those who qualify, with an extra 100 rounds to those who qualify as marksmen; also that any privileges, except the right to buy small-arms ammunition at reduced rates, shall be limited to effective members who fire the musketry course, and to other members who served in the war.

#### *The National Rifle Association.*

During the year a National Rifle Association was formed, mainly at the instigation of some members of past Dominion Rifle Association committees, who did not approve of the Defence Department's policy, and who had declined to accept the advice of the Department's musketry experts to bring the military events up to date. Though formed under such circumstances the National Rifle Association was given all the Dominion Rifle Association trophies, and also assistance towards its inaugural meeting to the amount of £1,129.

#### DEFENCE WORKS, MOBILIZATION STORES, EQUIPMENT, ETC.

A site for the Northern Command Mobilization Depot has been obtained from the Railway Department in exchange for land at Frankton Junction, but, owing to the necessity for economy, the work of construction has not yet been commenced. For the same reason construction work which it was proposed to carry out at Trentham and Burnham depots has been delayed. The provision of proper mobilization depots at all three places is now an urgent matter, and it is proposed to incur certain expenditure this year for that purpose.

Apart from strategical and tactical considerations, which would be important in the event of mobilization, the completion of these depots is essential to avoid the high cost of maintenance of the temporary buildings in which the equipment is now stored, and the higher freight charges involved distribution of stores for peace requirements from unduly distant Ordnance depots. Further, the lack of substantial weatherproof and fireproof mobilization and depot storehouses causes the stocks of clothing and stores to be subject to a greater degree of deterioration than would normally be the case, and also exposes them to the risk of total loss by fire.