

During the year most successful Naval and Military Pageants combined with military tournaments were held in Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin. In all centres the military authorities received the greatest assistance from civilian committees, the members of which devoted themselves whole-heartedly to making the function a success in every way. The pageants and tournaments had a very beneficial effect upon training generally, and very largely stimulated public interest in the Defence Forces.

6. N.Z. ARMY RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The second Army Rifle Meeting was held at Trentham early in March last, and was even more successful than the inaugural meeting held last year.

Unfortunately, very inclement weather was experienced right throughout the meeting, but this did not damp the enthusiasm of the competitors or impede the smooth running and success of the meeting.

Competitors were drawn from the Permanent Forces, the Territorial Air Force, all units of the Territorial Force, especially selected Cadets from each command, and a small number of reservists.

Competition in all matches was very keen, and the shooting, difficult enough in perfect weather, was exceptionally good considering the adverse conditions contended with.

It was pleasing to note the large increase in the number of competing teams in the machine and light automatic gun matches and the improved results.

Competitions were held on the newly constructed Miniature Battle Practice Range, in which selected teams from the Territorial Force and Cadets took part. These matches disclosed a great weakness on the part of fire unit commanders in controlling and directing fire, but this is not surprising, as there is very little opportunity of training non-commissioned officers in this important work when the time allotted for training is so short.

7. RIFLE CLUBS AND THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

In order to encourage service shooting, members of Rifle Clubs who fire the prescribed musketry course and qualify are given a free issue of 100 rounds of ammunition; those who qualify as marksmen are given 200 rounds. Local rifle associations are given up to 10,000 rounds for their meetings, provided some up-to-date service shooting is included in their programme.

The National Rifle Association, having agreed to revise their service matches, will in the future be given a cash grant of £1,000 annually, the free use of the Trentham Range and equipment, free ammunition, and free railway passes for competitors.

8. DEFENCE-WORKS, MOBILIZATION STORES, EQUIPMENT, ETC.

(a.) *Mobilization Depots.*

As indicated in previous reports, the provision of proper mobilization depots and stores in all three commands is an urgent matter, for economic as well as strategical and tactical reasons. Valuable equipment is at present stored in temporary structures, in most cases quite unsuitable for the purpose, and there is in consequence great danger not only of deterioration, but also of serious loss by fire. Of necessity the bulk of our equipment is at present housed at Trentham and Burnham in wooden buildings erected as temporary accommodation for troops, not as permanent storage for valuable equipment. There it must remain until proper mobilization stores are provided at Burnham and Ngaruawahia. In the meantime heavy charges for maintenance of the temporary buildings are being incurred, the cost of transportation of stores and equipment is increased, and proper supervision and control are made very difficult.

The Northern Command is worst off in this respect. The site at Ngaruawahia is a suitable one, but there are no buildings there whatever, and in the meantime equipment for Northern Command is held partly at Featherston and partly at Trentham. Until an efficient water-supply is installed the site is unsuitable for purposes of holding command camps; work in this connection, however, is now in hand. Mess-huts are also urgently required.

The Southern Command is in a better position. The buildings at Burnham, though inadequate for the storage of all the equipment for Southern Command, are more or less satisfactory. Considerable use is made of Burnham for command camps, and for this reason the installation of an efficient water-supply and the erection of mess-huts are both urgent matters.

The Central Command has ample accommodation of a kind at Trentham and Featherston, but in the near future proper fireproof stores must be erected at Trentham, and the buildings at present in use for storage of equipment can then be taken into use for the purpose for which they were built—viz., the accommodation of troops. Featherston will be dismantled when Ngaruawahia depot is built.

(b.) *Magazines.*

The present magazine accommodation for both gun and small-arms ammunition is quite insufficient for our requirements, although all sorts of temporary accommodation in unsuitable buildings is being utilized. In consequence the usual safety precautions cannot be adhered to, and there is therefore danger of accidents and deterioration of ammunition. Further, such temporary arrangements do not permit of distribution throughout the Dominion in accordance with our requirements.

Proposals have been submitted for the erection of up-to-date magazines at Ngaruawahia for gun ammunition, and for small-arms-ammunition magazines in each command at Ngaruawahia, Trentham, and Burnham. It is hoped that work in this connection will be commenced at an early date.