

## 2. PERMANENT FORCES.

During the period under review the following officers were sent to England for special training :

- Major W. I. K. Jennings, D.S.O., N.Z. Staff Corps, entered the Staff College, Camberley, in January, 1925, and will undergo a two-years course.
- Captain G. H. Clifton, M.C., N.Z. Staff Corps, joined the School of Military Engineering, Chatham, in September, 1924, for a one-year course.
- Captain R. S. Park, Royal N.Z. Artillery, joined the Artillery College, Woolwich, in November, 1924. This officer will take the Gunnery Staff course and will specialize in Coast Artillery.

Under the scheme put forward by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, War Office, for the further general training of all overseas officers sent to England for special and technical instruction, the above-mentioned officers of the N.Z. Permanent Forces will, on completion of their special courses, receive an additional six months' general training with other arms and services. This extended scheme will not only prove of great benefit to the officers concerned, but it will also provide a most economical and effective method of ensuring that the officers of the N.Z. Permanent Forces are kept up to date in military science and armament, and obtain very valuable experience and general military knowledge which is not possible during their normal duties in this Dominion.

The approval, recently obtained, for the interchange of selected officers of the N.Z. Permanent Forces with officers of British units serving in India will enable our officers to gain practical and essential experience in working with and handling troops at war strength under conditions which approach war training and which do not obtain in New Zealand. This system of interchange will be initiated during the coming year, and I wish to acknowledge the cordial assistance which has been given by the authorities in India in arranging this very important matter.

During the year the strength of the officers of the Permanent Forces has been reduced to six under establishment by reason of retirements, deaths, &c. Two of the vacancies have been filled by granting commissions to two warrant officers of the N.Z. Permanent Staff, selected as the result of a competitive examination. Steps are being taken to fill the remaining vacancies by the reappointment of ex-Cadets who attended the Royal Military College of Australia, and who were retired in 1921 in consequence of the general policy of retrenchment.

With regard to the filling of future vacancies, approval has been given to the policy of sending selected candidates for training as Cadets to the Military Colleges in England, which will prove more economical than the previous policy of sending Cadets to the Royal Military College of Australia. Provision is also being made for granting a limited number of commissions to warrant officers of the Permanent Forces.

Ten vacancies in the N.Z. Permanent Staff have been filled by ex officers and non-commissioned officers of the N.Z. Expeditionary Force and British Army, who were selected from a large number of applicants after a testing and qualifying course of instruction. All other units of the Permanent Forces are now up to establishment.

The high standard of individual efficiency of the Permanent Forces, referred to in my last report, has been fully maintained during the year under review. To keep up to date and to follow the constant developments in armament, equipment, military science and methods, and to ensure the latest and uniform instruction, makes constant and careful study imperative on the part of all concerned. The time required for this study and for preparation for promotion and other examinations is very limited. With the Permanent Forces reduced to an absolute minimum, there being no spare or emergency numbers, the constantly increasing duties of training and administration, the temporary absence of officers abroad undergoing special training, and also the inevitable vacancies due to retirement and other causes occurring each year, much extra work falls to the lot of individual members of the Permanent Forces, many of whom are performing the duties of two or more appointments.

The hearty co-operation of Commands and Regimental District Staffs, and the loyal work of all concerned, has enabled the above difficulties to be met without any interruption of training, administration, and the care and maintenance of the large amount of valuable equipment and armament on charge. That these duties have been so continuously and effectively performed reflects great credit on the N.Z. Permanent Forces, and it is very satisfactory to me to be able to report so favourably upon the efficiency of all ranks, whose efforts have at all times been characterized by excellent team work.

The Permanent Forces of this Dominion, in addition to providing an expert and technical Instructional and Administrative Staff in time of peace, also form a very essential part of the wider organization and cadres for mobilization and war. Much careful study and preparation have been devoted to these requirements during the last year, and, should the necessity arise, I feel confident that the smooth working of these plans will demonstrate the care and foresight which have been exercised in their preparation.

## 3. AIR SERVICES.

*(a.) N.Z. Permanent Air Force.*

The strength of this unit has been increased during the period under review by the enlistment of one corporal, one aircraftsman and two boy mechanics, and now stands at four officers and eleven other ranks.

Owing to the non-arrival of new aircraft and spares ordered from England the staff experienced considerable difficulty in keeping the old machines in an airworthy condition in order to carry out the refresher courses for officers of the N.Z. Air Force (Territorial), and great credit is due to all concerned for the admirable results attained.