

One great difficulty is to obtain a sufficient number of officers for service with the Cadets. Under the present system of seconding officers from Territorial units for service with the Cadets the position is steadily improving, and it is evident that these officers are fully alive to the importance and responsibility of their work.

Very good progress was made with the weapon training of most units, and the standard attained by some companies is demonstrated in the great achievement of the New Plymouth Technical College Cadets, who won the senior division of the Imperial Challenge Shield Competition, in which some seventeen thousand boys from all parts of the Empire competed. This and various other competitions held annually continue to hold the interest of a large number of Cadets, and have a very stimulating effect. The Dominion Cadet championship for secondary schools (the "Riddiford Cup" competition) was won by Nelson College Cadets, but the championship for Cadets other than secondary-school units (the "Campbell Statuette" competition) had to be abandoned on account of the epidemic.

During the year it has been very pleasing to receive many commendatory messages regarding our Cadets, not only in connection with their proficiency in the annual competitions, but also on the system of training in vogue in the Dominion and the results obtained therefrom.

6. THE N.Z. ARMY RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

Arrangements were made for the Army rifle meeting to be held at Trentham early in March, 1925, but the epidemic prevented the meeting taking place.

7. RIFLE CLUBS AND THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The number and strength of Rifle Clubs in the Dominion are shown in Appendix I.

The majority of clubs are active, some are prevented from doing much shooting owing to the lack of nearby safe rifle ranges, while a few have been dormant since the war. The more active clubs are taking up service shooting, owing to the encouragement given in the nature of free grants of 100 and 200 rounds of ammunition to those riflemen who fire and attain the qualification and marksmanship standards respectively in the rifle course prescribed for the Territorial Force.

A number of rifle meetings was held by District Rifle Associations, and for each of these meetings a free issue of ammunition up to 10,000 rounds was made.

Owing to the epidemic the annual prize-firing meeting of the National Rifle Association was held very late in the year and in very inclement weather. The executive reported that notwithstanding the adverse conditions the meeting was very successful. In addition to the free use of the Trentham rifle range and equipment, free ammunition, and free railway passes for competitors given in previous years, a cash grant of £1,000 was made towards the funds of the association.

8. DEFENCE WORKS, MOBILIZATION STORES EQUIPMENT, ETC.

(a.) *Mobilization Depots.*

Some progress has been made in the provision of these depots, which, as previously indicated, are of prime importance. At Waikato Camp, Ngaruawahia, a railway-siding has been completed, and a branch line into the camp is under construction. A water-supply has been installed, quarters are in course of construction, and the provision of buildings for Ordnance stores is now receiving consideration.

Trentham Camp has been maintained, but the temporary buildings which now house the very valuable equipment at this depot must be replaced in the near future with permanent fireproof buildings, so concentrated as to ensure the most economical working of the staff.

Burnham Camp has been maintained and improved. At this depot, additional cookhouses, mess-rooms, quarters, and Ordnance storehouses are necessary, and their provision will be effected as finances permit.

The question of fire-prevention at Featherston, Trentham, and Burnham has received attention. Up-to-date motor-engines have been provided for Trentham and Featherston, and a powerful hand-drawn engine transferred from Featherston to Burnham, where the concentrated nature of the depot permits it to be used to much greater advantage. At all depots the staff is properly organized and trained to act as fire brigades, while trained fire-brigadesmen are in charge of the engines and fire-fighting equipment.

(b.) *Magazines.*

As indicated in my previous report, the provision of proper magazine accommodation had become a matter of urgency. At Waikato Camp, Ngaruawahia, considerable progress has been made in the construction of magazines for gun ammunition, two being practically completed, while several others are in course of erection. A small-arms-ammunition magazine also will be commenced shortly. A small-arms-ammunition magazine is practically completed at both Trentham and Burnham Camps. When these gun-ammunition and small-arms-ammunition magazines are available the situation will be very considerably improved.

(c.) *Quarters.*

A considerable improvement has been effected by the erection of quarters at Waikato and Burnham Camps, and by the conversion of existing buildings at Trentham. Additional married quarters are essential at each of these camps, the somewhat isolated location of which makes it impossible to obtain private quarters near the camps. More vital requirements in other directions will, however, prevent the erection of further married quarters in the meantime.