

## 5. CADETS.

The strength of the Cadets now under training is shown in Appendix I. This shows an increase of 1,743 over last year.

Cadet training has progressed very favourably throughout the year. The affiliation of Cadet battalions to Territorial battalions, and the system of seconding officers from the Territorial Force for service with the Cadets, has improved the *esprit de corps* and general efficiency, and relieved to a certain extent the position regarding the supply of officers, but there is still a real shortage of suitable officers in many Cadet units. The Cadet system is the recruiting-ground for the Territorial Force, and the instruction given to the youths in the most impressionable years of their lives aims at improving them physically and morally, as well as setting the foundation for the more advanced military training to be undertaken in the Territorial Force.

Our cadets are to be congratulated on their good showing in the annual shooting competition for His Majesty the King's trophy, which is fired for throughout the Empire in conjunction with the Imperial Challenge Shields. In this match New Zealand was represented by 6,618 Cadets, against 6,000 from the Mother-country, 8,215 from South Africa, 3,379 from Canada, 2,295 from Australia, and 760 from India and the rest of the Empire. In a report on the competitions furnished by the National Rifle Association of Great Britain it is shown that New Zealand furnishes in proportion to her population a much larger number of competitors than any other country. While none of the major trophies were won by our Cadets, several units were successful in gaining places of honour amongst the best shooting units in the Empire, and Medals of Honour were won by Sergeant H. L. Mason and Cadet W. Charters, of the Ashburton High School Cadets, and Cadet R. Rouse, of the Whangarei Cadets.

The satisfactory progress and encouraging standard obtained by the Cadets has called forth many congratulatory messages and statements from high authorities in England and elsewhere. Every effort is being made to make this particular phase of training as universal in its application as possible, so as to ensure that the fullest advantage is obtained from the careful individual instruction and progressive physical training which forms such a large and essential part of the Cadet's service, and is the preparation and foundation for his subsequent more advanced training in the Territorial Force.

The Nelson College Cadets were again successful in winning the Dominion Cadet Championship for Cadets of secondary schools (the Riddiford Cup Competition), and the championship for Cadets other than those belonging to secondary schools was won for the second year in succession by "A" Company, 2nd Cadet Battalion, W.W.C. Regiment (Wanganui).

Much time and well-directed energy is spent by units in preparing for and taking part in these and other competitions, which are undoubtedly the means of stimulating interest in and increasing the efficiency of the Cadet Force.

## 6. THE N.Z. ARMY RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The fourth Army rifle meeting was held at Trentham from the 8th to the 11th March, 1927, under ideal weather conditions. There was a record entry in all matches, which points to the growing popularity of the meeting, and it is very evident that the increased efficiency of the Territorial Force previously referred to has helped materially to create a greater interest in the Army rifle meeting, and the latter in turn has a very beneficial effect upon weapon training generally. The programme for this meeting was substantially the same as for the 1926 meeting.

In addition to a team from the N.Z. Division of the Royal Navy, a team from H.M.S. "Renown" was invited to take part in the meeting. Competition was very keen in all matches, and the presence of the two naval teams, especially that from H.M.S. "Renown," which included several high-class rifle shots, resulted in much healthy rivalry and good sportsmanship.

The result of the light automatic and machine-gun matches showed a great improvement on the previous year's work, and in the rifle matches I was very pleased to notice that competitors from the Territorial Force attained much greater success than in any previous meeting.

His Majesty the King's Medal was won by Lieutenant T. J. Denton, N.Z. Permanent Air Force; the Army Championship by Lance-corporal G. E. Parker, 1st Battalion, The Wellington Regiment; and the Cadet Championship by Corporal C. Collyer, 1st Cadet Battalion, The Nelson, Marlborough, and West Coast Regiment.

## 7. RIFLE CLUBS AND THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The number and strength of Rifle Clubs in the Dominion is shown in Appendix I. There has been a slight falling-off in membership: this is accounted for by the disbandment of certain clubs in outlying districts. The support accorded by the Defence Department to Rifle Clubs, in the way of free grant of ammunition and free railway passes, has been continued.

The annual prize-firing meeting of the National Rifle Association was held at Trentham from the 17th to the 23rd March, 1927, and the executive reported that, in spite of most adverse weather conditions, the meeting was a distinct success. For this meeting the free use of Trentham rifle ranges, free ammunition, free railway passes for competitors, and £1,000 cash towards the funds of the association were granted, as in previous years, and several officers and warrant-officers of the N.Z. Permanent Forces were detailed to assist in the conduct of the meeting.

## 8. DEFENCE WORKS, MOBILIZATION DEPOTS, AND TRAINING-CAMPS: EQUIPMENT, ETC.

(a) *Mobilization Depots and Training-camps.*

The development of Waikato Camp, Ngaruawahia, has continued satisfactorily. The large Ordnance Store building mentioned in my previous reports is nearing completion, and it is expected that the Northern Command mobilization stores now at Trentham and Auckland will be moved there within the next few months.