

still more varied and advanced competitions for them at the Army meeting. At the sixth meeting an anti-aircraft match was introduced for Lewis and Hotchkiss guns; at the 1929 meeting additional matches will be included in the programme.

His Majesty the King's Medal was won by Lance-Corporal S. T. Bernet, 1st Battalion, Wellington Regiment. The conditions under which this match is fired are identical in England and in the other dominions, and Lance-Corporal Bernet's performance was all the more meritorious as he was the first member of the Territorial Force to win the medal, and competed against no fewer than four previous winners, all of whom were members of the Permanent Forces.

The Army Championship was won by Corporal H. Symon, 1st Battalion, Otago Regiment; and the Cadet Championship by Sergeant R. R. Hudson, 1st (Cadet) Battalion, Otago 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 again been a falling-off in membership; this is accounted for by the disbandment of further Rifle Clubs in outlying centres. The support accorded by the Defence Department to Rifle Clubs in the way of free grant to ammunition and free railway passes has been continued.

The annual prize-firing meeting of the National Rifle Association was held at Trentham from the 23rd to 29th February, 1928, and was a distinct success. The same privileges in the way of a cash grant of £1,000, free ammunition, free railway passes for competitors, and the use of the Trentham rifle-range, were again accorded to the association, and in addition several officers and non-commissioned officers of the N.Z. Permanent Forces were detailed to assist in the conduct of the meeting.

Two teams from Australia—one from Victoria and the other from New South Wales—visited New Zealand to compete at the meeting, and although they were not successful in carrying off any of the principal prizes, two members of the Victorian and three members of the New South Wales team qualified for the King's Fifty.

The Gordon Highlanders trophy—a competition for teams of eight men—was competed for during the meeting, and was won by the New Zealand team, which scored practically the same number of points as the combined Australian teams.

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

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

The development of Waikato Camp, Ngaruawahia, is now in its final stages. During the year the large Ordnance Store building has been completed, and the stores from the Ordnance Depot, Mount Eden, are now being transferred to it. Two additional short railway-sidings—one off the main siding, and one off the Ordnance Depot siding—to facilitate sorting of trucks and disposal of empties, have been completed. The Ordnance Office, a small oil-store, loading-bank, vehicle-shed, A.S.C. forage and grocery-store, and small additions to the men's messing establishments, are now in use, while the Ordnance workshop and small-arms-ammunition magazine are approaching completion. The temporary latrines for units' annual camps have been replaced by permanent flush-system latrines.

Three married quarters for Ordnance personnel were erected and a fourth completed during the year. Septic-tank drainage has been completed for all quarters. Necessary drainage, roading, and general maintenance have received attention. Electric power and lighting have been provided. Two high-explosive magazines were completed. The erection of shower-baths, drying-room, small hutment for hospital, coal-store, three high-explosive magazines and laboratory, and the provision of mains and equipment for fire-prevention, will complete this camp. These works are in hand.

At Trentham Camp minor improvements have been effected, and the electrical change-over enabling the independent-power plant to be dispensed with has been completed. Roads in the camp are receiving attention, while the numerous wooden buildings have been painted and otherwise maintained in good order.

Burham Camp has been maintained, and the water-supply system completed.

The railway-siding at Featherston Camp has been removed.

##### (b) *Drill-halls.*

The new drill-halls at Ponsonby and Hamilton have been completed. At Petone a most suitable site has been purchased at a very satisfactory price, and the drill-hall which will serve both Hutt and Petone should be completed this year. Elsewhere, drill-halls and various departmental buildings have been maintained, and various improvements effected.

##### (c) *Rifle Ranges.*

Important permanent improvements to Trentham rifle range have been completed. Rifle ranges generally have been maintained in good order.

#### 9. FINANCE.

The net expenditure out of Consolidated Fund for Defence purposes, including aviation and assistance to Rifle Clubs, for the year ended 31st March, 1928, was £481,759, and that from Public Fund, vote "Contingent Defence," for construction of training-bases, new drill-halls, &c., was £39,986, making a total from the two funds of £521,745, which was £5,542 less than the previous year.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. YOUNG, Major-General,

Commanding N.Z. Military Forces.