

1904.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION: PUBLIC-SCHOOL CADETS

(REPORT ON THE).

[In continuation of E.-1D, 1903.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The OFFICER COMMANDING PUBLIC-SCHOOL CADETS to the Right Hon. the MINISTER OF EDUCATION.
SIR,—

Wellington, 30th July, 1904.

I have the honour to submit the following report regarding the public-school cadets:—

Organization.—Since the last report battalions with their respective staffs have been organized in the Auckland (2), Wellington (3), Wanganui (2), Marlborough (1), Grey (1), and Nelson (1) Education Districts.

The strength of the corps in the several education districts at the 30th June, 1904, was 10,858, being an increase of 1,766 over the previous year; and it is fully expected from the enrolments which are coming to hand that the total strength by the end of the year will be twelve thousand. The encouragement given by headmasters towards furthering the movement still continues, and thanks are due to them, the Education Boards, their Secretaries, and the Inspectors of Schools for the assistance given at all times towards the encouraging and fostering of the movement.

Inspection of Corps.—The whole of the corps of the South Island and the Auckland District have been inspected since the last report, and those in the Taranaki, Wanganui, and Wellington Districts will be inspected at an early date.

It is again pleasant to have to report favourably on the general appearance and discipline of the corps inspected; a marked improvement was found in the drill and marching. All the sergeants were examined personally as to their knowledge in drill, giving words of command, and manoeuvring their corps; and on the whole these non-commissioned officers acquitted themselves well. The necessity of utilising them was strongly impressed on officers commanding corps, who appreciated the suggestion and promised compliance therewith.

Infantry Training, 1903 (New Zealand), and Firing Exercise Manuals.—A large demand for these has been made by the cadets, and it was found necessary to issue a second edition of the "Firing Exercise," so great was the demand. It is very gratifying to find that these manuals are appreciated by the cadets.

Equipment.—Since the last report it was found necessary to procure further articles of equipment for free issue consequent on the increase of corps. Up to date there are 8,750 cadets fully equipped, and with the articles arriving there will be sufficient to equip ten thousand; but a further supply will be necessary for future demands. With a view to utilising the model rifles for firing exercise and skirmishing, percussion-caps have been procured, as also pouches for carrying them in. This will enable the cadets to get a training in "fire discipline."

Ammunition.—With a view to giving the cadets more practice on the rifle range, the annual allowance of free issue of ammunition has been increased from twenty-five to fifty rounds per cadet. The ammunition required for the year, 600,000 rounds, is due in the colony in a few weeks, and will be in plenty of time for issuing by the time the annual firing commences.

Result of Shield Competitions.—The following are the results of the competitions for the challenge shields fired for annually by ten cadets of each corps in the North and South Island respectively, for 1903. In addition to the shields a money grant of £10 was given with each shield; but, as the cadets prefer having a souvenir of the event rather than the money, it is recommended to give suitable medals instead.