

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION : PUBLIC-SCHOOL CADETS

(REPORT ON THE).

[In continuation of E.-1b, 1907.]

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

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

THE Education Act provides that "in public schools provision shall be made for the instruction in military drill of all boys"; and it is declared to be the duty of the Board in each district "to cause physical drill to be taught to all boys and girls over the age of eight years attending the public schools in the district." The number of children returned as receiving instruction in drill in the public schools of the Dominion at the end of the year was 137,404. The term "drill" here must be taken to include physical and disciplinary exercises.

There were on the 31st March, 1908, 185 cadet companies, 111 detachments, and 14 sections, with a total strength of 15,183 members, equipped with the "model rifles" (dummies) which have been imported by the Department for purposes of drill, and with a percentage of miniature Martini-Henry rifles for target practice. Details of the number of cadet companies in the several districts are given in Table IV. The number of battalions formed was 31.

At the end of the year the companies in the North and South Islands respectively, exclusive of those attached to district high schools, competed for two challenge shields presented by the Government. The conditions were that each competing squad should consist of ten cadets, all belonging to the same company or detachment; each company to have seven shots at 100 yards (standing), 150 yards (kneeling), and 200 yards (lying), the local range being used in each case. The North Island shield was won by the Dannevirke North No. 1 Company (Hawke's Bay) with a score of 752 out of a possible 840; the South Island shield was won by the Oamaru North Company (Otago) with a score of 705. Details of the scores of the first six companies in each Island are given in Table I. This table also contains the results of the competitions for the valuable prizes presented by the Weekly Press Company (Christchurch) and the Colonial Ammunition Company (Auckland).

During the summer of 1907-8 five camps were held, eight battalions, with a total strength of all ranks of 1,947, being represented. A capitation allowance of 3s. 6d. per head is provided by the Department towards the expenses of these camps, together with the loan of necessary equipment.

For the encouragement of rifle practice by the cadet companies in the Auckland Education District Mr. Henry Brett, proprietor of the *Evening Star*, Auckland, very generously presented the Department with a silver shield and medals. The Thames Battalion was presented by private benefactors with a belt, medals, and stars for competition by the cadets. As mentioned in previous reports, other districts have also received valuable prizes for local competition.