

	Adult.	Cadet.
Establishment of corps ordered to parade (at date of inspection)	15,379	2,746
Enrolled strength of corps ordered to parade (at date of inspection)	10,761	2,146
Total present at inspections	8,116	1,731

Field Artillery.

The establishment of Field Artillery for the Dominion is 410 all ranks and the enrolled strength on last day of the Volunteer year (29th February, 1908) was 361. These corps have mustered very well for my inspections, there being altogether 79 per cent. of the enrolled strength at date of inspections present.

The discipline and drill are very satisfactory indeed throughout, and, considering the very few opportunities they get for work in the field, great credit is due to all ranks for their present state of efficiency. In appearance and dress they are smart, and officers, N.C.O.s, and men take a pride in their corps. All that is required to make them entirely efficient is work in the field in daylight.

In some instances, owing to its being found impossible under existing conditions to enlist men as drivers who are accustomed to horses in their daily occupations, the batteries are much handicapped when manœuvring.

In my last report (June, 1907) I pointed out that I was convinced more attention should be devoted to training for firing from direct instead of covered positions. By direction of the Council of Defence this has been done this year, and very nearly all, if not all, the firing has been direct.

In support of what I then wrote, I beg to point out that in "Notes on Recent Changes in the Japanese Field Artillery Manuals, Part II, Fighting," published in the *Journal of the Royal Artillery* for August, 1907 (after my report was written), one of the "principal lessons deduced from the war" is stated to be "disadvantage of covered as compared with direct firing positions," and in another paragraph, after pointing out that in certain cases indirect laying may be "allowed," it is stated, "This alteration is, however, on no account to be taken to imply that indirect laying is recommended."

The indirect method will doubtless be often used under certain conditions, but I think it highly improbable it will ever be required in this country; therefore it is right that as little as possible of the all-too-short time for training should be devoted to it.

The detailed report by the Acting Director of Artillery on these corps show that their progress during the past year has been very satisfactory.

Garrison Artillery.

The detailed reports of the Acting Director of Artillery clearly prove that excellent results have been obtained in connection with the training of this branch of the service during the past year. All the companies have improved in a greater or less degree in efficiency. The shooting has been good throughout and in some cases excellent, one company (No. 2 Wellington Division, G.A.V.) obtaining 100 per cent. hits, which is a record for the Dominion. The result of my own inspections have been also very satisfactory, all corps having mustered and worked well.

As regards readiness for war, with the opportunities that the various arms get under present conditions for training and for the reasons stated in my last report, I consider that the garrison artillery are and will always be much better prepared than any other branch, and the efficiency of the men they have is steadily progressing.

With regard to the numbers necessary, however, the state of things is not nearly so satisfactory, the establishment laid down as necessary to man the forts being 1,608, while the enrolled strength at the end of the past Volunteer year was only 975, or 60 per cent. This would not provide reliefs to enable the work to be carried on in war-time, and untrained men taken on at the last moment would be practically useless. It is to be hoped, therefore, that every effort will be made to bring the strength up to within measurable distance of establishment.

Field Engineers.

There are four field engineers corps in the Dominion with a total establishment of 420. The strength, at the end of the year, was 297 and the total paraded for my inspections 203, less than half the establishment. The total average attendance at the annual camps of instruction was 221. This cannot be regarded in any way as satisfactory from the point of numbers.

In the work in which they are now trained, three of the corps take great interest, are in a very good state of efficiency, and they are enthusiastic and keen throughout. One corps, however, I regret to say, is very backward indeed in every respect, and has fallen off considerably rather than improved. As at present constituted it is certainly not worth the expenditure. This opinion, which I formed from my personal inspection, is entirely borne out by the detailed report of the Director of Engineers Services.

More attention should be devoted to signalling in all corps, and, above all, as stated in my last report, much more work in the field is required before these corps can ever become in any way efficient in the most important duty of field engineering.

I repeat again, "Field engineers should be experts in the choice of ground, and have the knowledge of how to use it to the best advantage," and I also pointed out that it is a knowledge of where, not how, to dig, &c., that is required. It is impossible to train for this in drill-halls or flat paddocks, and to so educate field engineers that they may become, as they should be, the experts