

APPENDIX B.

REPORT ON THE TRAINING-CAMP AT TAUHERENIKAU.

7TH JANUARY TO 17TH MARCH, 1911.

OBJECTS.

THE training-camp at Tauherenikau was instituted for the following purposes :—

1. To train a sufficient number of officers, destined for the New Zealand Staff Corps, to fill appointments on the Staff of the Defence Force, and as Adjutants of Territorial units.
2. To train the required number of N.C.O.s as Sergeants-major in charge of areas and Sergeants-major of units.

SCHEME OF INSTRUCTION.

The scheme of work was of such a nature as to develop the powers of instruction in each individual, fit all ranks to take part in the training of the Territorial Forces, and carry out the necessary duties of registration and organization in the areas and area-groups.

DRILL.

With this ideal in view, it was necessary to start every one from the beginning, and give all ranks a thorough grounding in drill, progressively, from squad drill as recruits up to battalion drill and company training in the field. This progressive training was also carried out as regards mounted drill. Thus it was hoped that the officers and N.C.O.s under instruction would be taught to be able in turn to instruct the recruits and trained soldiers of the Territorial units in their military duties.

This instruction in Infantry drill was handed over to the supervision of Captain Hamilton, Grenadier Guards, Camp Adjutant, who was kindly lent to the Defence Department by His Excellency the Governor. As instructors under him, Captain Hamilton had the assistance of the following N.C.O.s of the Permanent Staff: Staff Sergeants-major Dovey, Cheater, Redmond, and Walker.

PROGRESSIVE TRAINING.

The scheme of training of all ranks was progressive—that is to say, every one began at the beginning as recruits, no matter what their training or experience was in the past.

SQUAD DRILL.

The officers and N.C.O.s were divided into four Infantry squads, each under an instructor, and they began as recruits to be instructed in the correct manner of standing at attention, marching, turning, saluting, &c.; in short, how to carry themselves smartly with a proper soldierly bearing. All this preliminary part of the drill was without arms.

When they had sufficiently mastered the rudiments, and had in turn taken the part of an instructor, giving all the necessary explanations and words of command, they passed on to the next step, which is squad drill with arms. In this they were taught the proper method of handling their arms with precision and smartness both while marching and at the halt.

Communicating drill, which consists chiefly in the practice of using the voice properly in giving words of command, and in repeating the explanations and commands in drill, was made a special study, and was attended with good results. A great deal depends, in drill, on the manner in which a word of command is given. Some who have no proper command over their voice or manner of giving an order fail to produce smart movements in drill, while others who have the habit of command can do anything with their men. To obtain full value out of communicating drill the squad should be commanded from a considerable distance.

COMPANY DRILL.

After squad drill, the next step was company drill, and in this, as before, each individual took his turn in commanding squads, sections, half-companies, and the company, so that all should be familiar with every detail of company drill.

BATTALION DRILL.

When sufficient progress was made in company drill, battalion drill, under the Adjutant or Commandant, was taken in hand. Owing to the lack of numbers, each company in the battalion was in single rank. The battalion was composed of six companies only. Officers took it in turn to perform the mounted duties of senior Major and Adjutant and of Commander of a Company, and occasionally one or other was called out to drill the battalion. The officers and N.C.O.s had paid so much attention to their drill from the start that their movements in battalion drill, and the manner of handling their arms, left very little to be desired, and would have done credit to a battalion of Regulars. Their steadiness in the ranks was particularly noticeable.

COMPANY TRAINING.

Besides drill, company training in the field was undertaken. The officers and N.C.O.s under training formed a company, at war strength, between 120 and 130 of all ranks. The training included attack and defence practices; advanced, flank, and rear guards; and outposts. As many as possible took it in turn to command squads, sections, half-companies, and the company. It must be noted that the officers and N.C.O.s took their places together in the ranks, and were trained just as if they were ordinary privates in the company.