

49. THE PRESS.

Every facility was provided for the attendance of accredited representatives of the Press throughout the camps, and assistance was readily given them to obtain such information as they might require. I am glad to say that the decision to receive these accredited representatives in camp has been fully justified by the results, and I feel sure that the information provided to the public through the medium of those pressmen who lived in camp cannot but be beneficial to the defence scheme.

SECTION III.—THE BRANCH OF THE QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL TO THE FORCES.

50. THE ARMY SERVICE CORPS.

At the end of 1913 four Imperial Army Service Corps officers arrived in the Dominion, under engagement with the local Forces, for the organization and training of the local Army Service Corps, transport and supply duties, &c. They have been appointed to each military district as Assistant Directors of Supply and Transport.

During the year the initiation of a local Army Service Corps has been made by the establishment of companies as under :—

Auckland District—

- No. 1 Company (Headquarters), Auckland.
- No. 2 Company (Infantry Brigade), Auckland, Hamilton, Te Aroha, Whangarei.
- No. 5 Company (Mounted Rifles Brigade—independent), Auckland.

Canterbury District—

- No. 7 Company (Infantry Brigade), Christchurch, Nelson, Rangiora, Timaru.
- No. 9 Company (Mounted Rifles Brigade), Christchurch.

Otago District—

- No. 6 Company (Headquarters), Invercargill.
- No. 8 Company (Infantry Brigade), Dunedin.
- No. 10 Company (Mounted Rifles Brigade—independent), Dunedin.

Wellington District—

- No. 3 Company (Infantry Brigade), Wellington.
- No. 4 Company (Mounted Rifles Brigade), Palmerston North, Napier, Masterton, Hawera.

Men are posted to companies from the General Training Section, or Senior Cadets eligible for transfer, having regard to numbers available, suitability, and civil trades. During camps the Army Service Corps companies were attached to the camp supply-depots for training and general transport and supply duties. The establishment of these companies will be completed this year as far as possible from the recruits available.

The work done by the corps during the camps earned the special commendation of the Inspector-General.

51. NEW ZEALAND VETERINARY CORPS.

Very satisfactory work was done, and much good instruction afforded, by officers of this corps at the camps.

The report of the Director of Veterinary Services will be found in Appendix K.

52. MOTOR RESERVE CORPS.

This corps has proved its usefulness and importance during the year. It now numbers seventy-nine officers.

The regulations governing the corps have now been on trial for a full year, and on the experience gained it is hoped shortly to amend them to the benefit of the Department and the corps.

53. ARMOURERS.

During the year the Senior District Armourers went through a course of instruction in machine guns, in Wellington, under the Chief Armourer, and at the end of the course were examined in the theory and practice of examination of and repairs to Maxim guns, all qualifying for the issue of certificates in these subjects. This will enable them in turn to instruct their assistant armourers, and will ensure the proper inspection and care of the machine guns on issue to units. The Armourer Cadets are progressing favourably, and in order to give them experience in the field one Cadet has been temporarily attached to each district.

Reports from District Armourers as to the condition of arms on issue to units have been, generally speaking, good, but owing to the outbreak of smallpox in the Auckland District the annual inspection of arms was impeded, so that all the arms in the district were not examined during the year. The late industrial disturbance also affected the examination of arms, especially in the North Island.

Incidental on the large increase of arms, a corresponding increase in the Armourer Section will require to be faced.