

76. VETERINARY CARE OF HORSES IN CAMPS.

In the training-camps the health of horses has been very good, the percentage of mortality small, and, apart from ringworm (a troublesome but by no means dangerous affection) and a few cases of strangles, no contagious or other disease has given any trouble.

Injuries resulting from kicks have, as usual, been of frequent occurrence, and this emphasizes the necessity for continuous vigilance on the part of pickets. The use of the new stables at Featherston Camp should have the effect of largely minimizing this trouble. These stables, now in occupation, will enable both horses and men to avoid the discomfort entailed by picketing on lines during the winter months.

The new pattern of leather headstall adapted for use either in camp or on board ship has proved, on the whole, satisfactory as regards their pattern. These headstalls are fitted with light chains for securing horses to lines, and though naturally more costly in the first instance than rope halters they are really economical, as the wastage in material is far less, and much loss of time on the part of men in securing loose horses is avoided.

77. HORSES AT SAMOA.

Additional riding-horses were despatched to Samoa during this year. A Veterinary Officer paid a visit of inspection and instruction, leaving there on permanent service details of the Veterinary Corps who had accompanied him. Climatic and native feeding-conditions in Samoa are rather hard upon our horses, but the animals are doing as well as can be expected.

78. WAR EXPENSES BRANCH.

The work of this branch has greatly increased during the year, and will continue to increase with each monthly draft of recruits. Added to this, regularly returning sick and wounded increase the number to be dealt with locally. For instance, the number of allotments remitted to relatives, &c., monthly has steadily risen to 30,906 in March, and will continue to rise as each reinforcement comes into training; and these are sent all over the world—Australia, United States, Canada, India, South Africa, Russia, &c.

The accounts are of a diversified nature. Currency rates are involved—*e.g.*, the mark was legal tender at Samoa; the vouchers from Egypt are rendered in piastres and Egyptian pounds, either in Turkish, French, or English language—sometimes all three.

Pre-audit has been established, ensuring a final checking before payments are made.

When Base Records transfer to the new building more room will be available for the staff, which at present is somewhat congested. Great credit is due to all grades of the staff for the generally expeditious manner in which allotments and pay and accounting generally are being dealt with.

79. ARMY SERVICE CORPS.

The Army Service Corps companies are now fully equipped with uniform, and went into annual camp by detachments, where they performed the supply and transport duties of regimental camps very satisfactorily.

The Army Service Corps are at present about 30 per cent. under establishment, caused through so many men enlisting in the Expeditionary Force since last posting. Every effort will be made at next posting to complete establishment as far as possible.

Owing to the war great difficulty is experienced in filling the artificer ranks, and the officers and non-commissioned officers' positions become more difficult to fill.

80. SUPPLIES AT TRAINING-CAMPS.

The supplies for training-camps throughout the Dominion were obtained by contract by the Assistant Director of Supplies and Transport, and all issuing and accounting was done by the Army Service Corps. The number of tenders received was up to the average, the contracts were all well carried out, and the quality of the supplies was good.

81. CANTEENS.

The dry canteens in camp were arranged regimentally. No complaints were received.

82. RATIONS AND FORAGE.

The scale of rations this year was as follows: Bread, $1\frac{1}{4}$ lb. (or biscuits, 1 lb.); butter, 4 oz.; candles, one per tent; cheese, 2 oz.; coffee, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; flour, 1 oz.; jam, 4 oz.; fresh meat, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. (or preserved meat, 1 lb.); condensed milk, $\frac{1}{8}$ tin (or fresh milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint); oatmeal, 2 oz.; onions, 2 oz.; pepper, $\frac{1}{8}$ oz.; potatoes, 1 lb.; salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; sugar, 4 oz.; tea, $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.

Forage rations: Chaff, 12 lb.; oats, 6 lb.; hay, 6 lb. An additional 2 lb. oats allowed draught horses.

An allowance of 2d. per man per diem was granted in addition, and this was much appreciated, as it enabled officers commanding units to purchase any extras they considered necessary for their men.

No complaints regarding the quality or the quantity of the rations were received.

The following gives the average cost of rations and forage per head per diem, inclusive of the allowance of 2d. per diem, in the following districts:—

	Average Cost of Rations, Fuel, Light, and Straw per Man per Diem.		Average Cost of Forage per Horse per Diem.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
Auckland	1	5·931	1	4·072
Wellington	1	8·041	1	2·702
Canterbury	1	6·87	0	10·93
Otago	1	9	0	11·25