

44. ENGINEER UNITS, TERRITORIALS.

The work of replenishing the equipment of the Engineer units has proceeded as rapidly as the prevailing conditions would admit, and fair supplies have been obtained from abroad, as well as through local sources.

45. FIELD COMPANIES.

Since last report six tool-carts and four G.S. wagons have been received from Woolwich and issued to the field companies. Modelling stores ordered from Woolwich are now coming to hand, and will be issued for training purposes.

46. DIVISIONAL SIGNAL COMPANIES.

These companies have been provided with complete sets of field-telephone equipment, which were manufactured in New Zealand according to the Imperial pattern; also the latest pattern of portable field telephones. Training in field telephony and cable-laying can now be gone on with; but as the replacement of cable-wagons and telegraph equipment withdrawn for the Expeditionary Force has not yet been effected, training in laying field telegraph-cable cannot be carried out at present.

47. MOUNTED SIGNAL TROOPS.

These troops have been supplied with field-telephone equipment to replace that withdrawn for service abroad. The troops are therefore now able to complete their training in field telephony.

48. CARE OF EQUIPMENT ON ISSUE TO ENGINEER TERRITORIAL UNITS.

As a result of investigations by an Ordnance Board in the Wellington and Auckland Districts a number of discrepancies in stores on issue to Engineer and other units was discovered, and it was also found that the stores were not properly cared for. Experience demonstrates that it is impossible for Territorials to keep their technical equipment in proper condition. The appointment of a permanent storeman at each district for the care, custody, and issue of Engineer stores on charge to Engineer Territorial units appears necessary to prevent losses and to keep the stores in a satisfactory condition.

49. ELECTRIC LIGHT AND TELEPHONE STORES, R.N.Z.A.

The equipment for all authorized Defence lights and for telephone communication at the forts is complete. The electric-light store ledgers of the R.N.Z.A. detachments in the districts are satisfactorily kept by the R.N.Z.A. Sub-Accountants.

50. EQUIPMENT.

The supply of Mills web equipment remains practically in the same position as last year, and is principally concentrated in Expeditionary Force camps.

Bandoliers (leather) for Mounted services, Field Artillery, and A.S.C. are being made locally, and the supply is adequate. The supply of Sam Browne belts is also being maintained.

51. CAMP EQUIPMENT.

Many of our tents have been in constant use during the year, and consequently are considerably the worse for wear. Twelve hundred circular tents and fifteen marquees have been received from England. Tents issued in the first instance for Territorial camps are now being returned, and will be used in the four-section camp at Tauherenikau during the winter months.

52. COOKERS.

Owing to the cost of the repairs constantly necessary in the water-control system, the boiler apparatus has been removed from all cast-iron cookers. Hot water in camp is now provided—(a) In hutment camps—(1) by circulating-boilers heated by small stoves, (2) by cast-iron boilers set in brick; (b) in canvas camps—by 400-gallon tanks set in brick. These methods of providing hot water have proved most economical, and, it is estimated, reduce the cost of maintenance of cookers by at least 50 per cent.

53. CAMP-KETTLES AND WASHHAND-BASINS.

A good stock of each is in hand, and should suffice to meet all requirements.

54. CLOTHING.

The supply of clothing has been well maintained, and in addition to equipping Reinforcements a 20-per-cent. reserve has been built up.

Contracts were let for officers' clothing in connection with outfit grant, thus enabling the complete kit to be issued within the allotted sum.

The Territorial 1916 postings and the Senior Cadets have been supplied, and sufficient stocks are held to meet this year's demands.

Deliveries of clothing for 1916 contracts are nearing completion. During the early stages of the contracts some difficulty was experienced in getting contractors to supply garments up to the required standard, but this has been overcome, and only occasionally are garments returned for alteration.

The 1917 contracts for clothing, underclothing, blankets, &c., have been let, the samples supplied by the tenderers are being sealed, and the first requisitions have gone forward.