

stores for laying field telegraph cable. It would not, however, be advisable to issue the cable-wagons and stores required until the store accommodation referred to above is provided. Wagons are not available at present, but same will be received on arrival of the divisional equipment from abroad.

#### FIELD ENGINEER COMPANIES (FOUR).

The technical equipment now on issue to these companies is sufficient to enable preliminary training being carried out. Vehicles, harness and saddlery, and bridging stores are, however, required for advanced training, and should be supplied when store accommodation is provided, but not till then. This material will, however, come to hand with our divisional equipment.

A supply of guncotton slabs and primers, lately received from Woolwich for use of these companies in demolition work, is now stored in the magazine at Kaiwarra. As the Railway Department refuses to carry guncotton wet or dry, it becomes a difficult matter to supply out-stations with these explosives.

#### SIGNAL TROOPS (FOUR).

These signal troops are supplied with the latest pattern of field telephone and telephone equipment. Pack wireless is included in their equipment, but has not yet been supplied. The telephone equipment on issue is designed for carrying partly on the person and partly on the Universal saddle.

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH CORPS.

A small supply of technical stores consisting of field telephones, field electric cable, and telegraph instruments have lately been supplied to this corps for training. No technical equipment has yet been approved for this corps.

#### RAILWAY BATTALION.

This battalion has a supply of artificers' tools, entrenching-implements, and bridging-material. No technical equipment for the Railway Battalion has yet been approved. Two Quartermaster-sergeants have been appointed to the battalion from this corps.

#### UNITS OTHER THAN THE ABOVE.

As disclosed by the District Boards, the accounting, care, and custody of stores by units has, in the main, been unsatisfactory in the past. Units have not realized their responsibilities as far as the provisions of paras. 25, 26, and 35, Regulations for New Zealand Military Forces, are concerned. The Adjustment Board have now reduced matters to a working basis, and it is hoped that the future audit of accounts will disclose few if any deficiencies. It is, however, evident that the storage accommodation for Groups and units is inadequate—in fact, in many instances Groups have no accommodation where stores can be locked up.

#### BOOT SECTION.

The total quantity of boots received from manufacturers during the period under review was 51,693 pairs; shoes (deck), 6,552 pairs. When drawing up specifications for the supply of boots for 1918 it was recognized that several alterations were necessary to render the boots more comfortable and durable than those of the 1917 pattern. Special fittings were placed on the toes of all military lasts used by manufacturers to render that portion of the boots more roomy, and also short stout puffs were introduced, with the result that no complaints whatever were received regarding undue pressure on the toes of the wearer. A special tannage of sole leather suitable for military work was also obtained, and by test of wear gave every satisfaction. The total number of boots rejected during this period was 95 pairs. The majority of boots rejected were discarded for minor faults only, no case being observed where manufacturers had deliberately attempted to depart from specifications, the deliveries as a whole being, both in workmanship and material, well up to the standard required.

During the past twelve months shipments of boots (ankle) comprising 42,900 pairs, and shoes (deck), 14,000 pairs, were forwarded to England for the purpose of equipping returning members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force before leaving for New Zealand. This was found to be necessary on account of the shortage of military footwear in England at the time. In connection with demands made in New Zealand, the following distributions were made: Boots (ankle, regulation), 29,886 pairs; boots (light and special), 68 pairs; shoes (deck), 9,845 pairs. It is gratifying to observe that although these large quantities of boots were subjected to a severe test during the past wet seasons, no serious complaints whatever were received regarding the comfort or stability of the footwear supplied. The present stock of boots (ankle, regulation) in store comprises 5,092 pairs, shoes (deck) 7,684 pairs, which is sufficient for present requirements.

#### BOOT-REPAIR FACTORY.

During the past twelve months the output from the boot-repair factory has been equal to all demands made on it, all repairs required for Trentham and Featherston Camps, Somes Island, and districts being properly effected. The total quantity of boots repaired from the 1st June, 1918, to the 31st May, 1919, is 12,709 pairs, at an average cost of 5s. 1d. per pair. There were also 713 pairs of shoes (deck) repaired during this period, at an average cost of 1s. 7d. per pair. All material used in repairing boots and shoes was of the highest quality obtainable, and the results given in wear proved to be highly satisfactory. Before repairing, all boots are thoroughly disinfected by immersion in a solution of kerol and water. They are then pulled on perfect-fitting lasts, when the necessary repairs are carried out, and also the sizes stamped on the soles. The next process is cleaning and blocking. This is done in the following manner: The boots are pulled on perfect-fitting followers, and the uppers thoroughly washed in a mixture of soap and lukewarm water. While the leather is in a mellow state all creases and wrinkles in the uppers are rubbed out, and the boots are then put