

TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS.

During the past year the development of the mobilization base and training-camp at Waikato Camp, Ngaruawahia, has been continued, particular attention being paid to the large Ordnance building, which is approaching completion. A small quartermaster's store and one married quarter were erected during the year. The Ordnance Office has been commenced. During the ensuing year one small-arm ammunition magazine, two explosives magazines, three married quarters, one vehicle-shed, one Ordnance workshop, one oil-store, one permanent latrine, one drying-room, and shower-baths will be put in hand, practically completing the camp, except for certain magazines for gun-ammunition. Noxious weeds on the area have received serious attention, fences and roads have been repaired, and the camp generally maintained.

Trentham and Burnham Camps have been maintained and various improvements effected.

At Hamilton a new drill-hall, which was an urgent necessity, is nearing completion. A site for a new hall at Ponsonby has been acquired, and it is hoped to erect a hall there this year.

As mentioned in last year's report, various buildings are urgently required elsewhere. The erection of these must, however, await the completion of Waikato Camp.

MOTOR-VEHICLE LAW.

My Department has recently been directed to take over the administration of the Motor-vehicles Act, 1924, with a view to one Department having the administration of all motor-vehicle law. It is not proposed to change the present system by which the Post and Telegraph Department undertakes the registration and licensing of cars. The main undertaking immediately in view is the issue of uniform regulations concerning motor-vehicles and motor-vehicle traffic throughout the Dominion, and this is under urgent attention.

Another activity was placed in the hands of the Department last year by the passing of the Motor-omnibus Traffic Act, 1926. In general, it may be said that this Act is operating successfully, and with benefit to the public as users of motor-omnibuses and trams. It is proposed to remedy at the earliest opportunity certain defects and anomalies which experience has shown to exist in connection with the working of the Act.

The Motor-lorry Regulations have been consolidated this year and various minor amendments have been made in them. Since the last Statement approval or amendment has been gazetted of the road-classifications under the regulations of thirty-four local bodies, but it is considered that, as a whole, full advantage is not yet being taken by local bodies of their power of road-classification.

PLANT AND MECHANICAL.

The daily papers and other popular publications contain many items of interest connected either directly or indirectly with "things mechanical," and the motor-vehicle in particular seems to be always in front of us these days, hence it is to be expected that regulations for the design and control of motor-omnibuses, and other vehicles, would be mentioned first in a statement of the important works undertaken during the year by the Mechanical Engineering staff.

Any organization that operates a comparatively large fleet of motor-vehicles should be on the alert to detect early any tendency towards inefficiency or waste in their many and varied forms; and the one safe way to effectively eliminate the unfit man or machine in such a service is through a sound, well-reasoned costing-system, which in turn should be carried by intelligent cost-analysis and regular field inspections. Such a system has been instituted during the past year, and is giving satisfaction.

These field inspections cover not only vehicles, but also departmental plant in general, and in this way the Head Office is kept more closely in touch with the actual conditions of the service, and can better serve the respective district works than was formerly the case. The question of supply of spare parts is always given first consideration, in order that the idle time of valuable machines and those who work them may be reduced to a minimum.