VENEZUELA

Area ............ 912,000 sq. km.
Population (XII. 1934) .......... 3,324,000
Density per sq. km .. .......... 3.6
Length of railway system (1930) (excluding some industrial lines) ... 1,070 km.

I. Army.

The President of the Republic is the supreme head of the armed forces; he either commands the armed forces in person or designates a commander to act in his place. The duties of the Commander-in-Chief of the army are laid down by the National Congress. The command of the army is entrusted to the general officer who is regarded by the Federal Executive as best fitted for the appointment.

All matters concerning the army, navy or air force are within the competence of the Federal Government.

With the exception of the police and prison guards, the States and municipalities are not allowed to have forces other than those organised by order of the Federal Government.

The army is made up of contingents provided by each State, by the federal district and by the dependent federal territories, in proportion to their population.

The Ministry of War and Marine is the supreme authority for all questions concerning organisation, armament, fortifications and administration of army and navy; it is also the organ through which the Commander-in-Chief exercises his command.

The Ministry of War and Marine consists of three directorates: War Directorate, Naval Directorate and Administrative Directorate.

The General Staff is placed under the Ministry of War and Marine and is an intermediate organ between the Commander-in-Chief of the army and his subordinates.

The General Staff includes: the General Staff proper and the brigade or regimental staffs which assist the General Staff in carrying out its duties in connection with the army.

The inspectors of arms and services are under the direct authority of the Minister of War and Marine; it is their duty to see that uniform instruction is given in all the units and in the military institutions.
MILITARY AREAS.

The territory of the Republic is divided into five military areas:

First Military Area: States of Táchira, Mérida, Trujillo and Zamora.
Second Military Area: States of Falcón, Lara, Portuguesa and Zulia.
Third Military Area: States of Aragua, Carabobo, Miranda, Yaracuy and Cojedes, and the Federal District.
Fourth Military Area: States of Anzoátegui, Nueva Esparta, Monagas and Sucre.
Fifth Military Area: States of Apure, Bolívar and Guárico; federal territories of the Amazonas and Amacuro Delta.

COMPOSITION OF THE ARMY.

The national army includes the active army and the reserve army. The active army includes the following arms: infantry, cavalry, artillery and air force, besides the following departments and services: staff, engineers, intendance, medical, veterinary and audit services, and army chaplains' department.

The Venezuelan army is organised in 9 brigades, consisting, in all, of 43 infantry battalions.

The artillery consists of 5 fortress and coast artillery groups, one regiment of field artillery and one machine-gun company.

The cavalry consists of one regiment.

The air force possesses 14 machines.

WAR MATERIAL.
(1931.)

Infantry.

Mauser rifles, 71/84 ........................................... 25,000
Oberderf. rifles, 7-mm. calibre ................................ 5,000
Mauser carbines ............................................. 1,500
Oberderf. carbines, 7-mm. calibre ................................ 1,000
Mauser cartridges, 71/84 ...................................... 10,000,000
Oberderf. cartridges ........................................ 7,000,000
Hotchkiss heavy machine-guns, 7-mm. calibre ................ 25
Hotchkiss light machine-guns, 7-mm. calibre .............. 50
Machine-gun cartridges ..................................... 2,000,000

Artillery.

Schneider guns, 15 cm. ........................................ 7
Shells for the above ........................................... 1,500
Krupp guns, 8 cm. ........................................... 50
Shells for the above ........................................... 20
Erhardkt guns, 75 mm. ....................................... 4
Shells for the above ........................................... 5,000
Saint-Chamond guns, 7 cm. ................................... 1,000

Shells for the above .................................. 500
Hotchkiss guns, 42 mm. ................................ 18
Shells for the above .................................. 2,500
Infantry guns, 37 mm. ................................ 8
Shells for the above .................................. 3,000
Mortars .................................................. 8
Shells for the above .................................. 1,700

POLICE.

Municipal Police.—The approximate strength of the municipal police on March 9th, 1933, was 2,900 men, armed with revolvers and carbines. The Venezuelan police, who are recruited by voluntary enlistment, do not possess a military character. The training, which is the ordinary training for police duties, is given by police officers.

Frontier Guard.—The frontier guard is under the authority of the Ministry of Finance and comprises 759 officials and guards (1935-36).

RECRUITING SYSTEM AND PERIOD OF SERVICE.

Military service is compulsory for all citizens between the ages of 21 and 45. The period of active service in the army and in the navy is three years. Service begins at the age of 21. Service in the reserves of the army or navy lasts until the age of 45.

Volunteers from 18 to 20 are incorporated for two years. Students in the military and naval schools who receive instruction for at least two years are considered to have performed their military service as volunteers.

Under a decree of January 8th, 1934, 2,150 recruits were called to the colours. This figure represents the number of men discharged during the year on the completion of their term of service.

Similarly, under a decree dated September 1st, 1934, 3,050 conscripts were called to the colours to take the places of an equal number of men whose service with the colours was at an end.

Cadres.

The ranks of lieutenant-colonel, major, captain and subaltern officers are conferred by the President of the Republic in accordance with the law on promotion. The ranks of colonel and general officer are conferred by the President of the Republic after a previous vote by the Senate.

Warrant and non-commissioned officers are appointed by the corps commander.

The officers of the active army may be “active” or “administrative”. The cadre of active officers is recruited from among students who have completed their studies at the Military School and men who have attained the rank of first sergeant, possess the qualifications required for promotion to the rank of second lieutenant and pass the examination.

The administrative officers belong to the military services. They may rise to the rank of colonel.
Re-engagements.

In order to re-engage, an officer must not have been off the active list for more than five years and must be four years under the age-limit for retirement in his rank.

Other ranks may re-engage after they have completed their period of service in the army or navy. A soldier who has retired from the active army may re-engage if he is not over 30.

Schools.

Military and Naval School (111 students in 1934).
Air Force School (26 students in 1934).
School of Wireless Telegraphy attached to the Air Force School (13 students in 1934).
Special artillery course for officers (17 students in 1934).
Special course for N.C.O.s of the technical services (150 students in 1934).

EFFECTIVES.

The active army of Venezuela has a strength of 6,000 men.¹

II. Navy.

LIST OF UNITS.

(I935.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tons</th>
<th>Gunboat Mariscal Sucre (10 guns)</th>
<th>Gunboat General Salom (5 guns and 1 machine-gun)</th>
<th>Gunboat Maracay (no guns at present)</th>
<th>Gunboat Miranda (4 guns)</th>
<th>Gunboat Jose Felix Ribas (2 guns)</th>
<th>Gunboat Aragua (1 machine-gun)</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>1,125</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>154</td>
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III. Budget Expenditure on National Defence.

The financial year covers the period from July 1st to June 30th.

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<th>1930-31</th>
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<th>1932-33</th>
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<td>Estimates</td>
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<td>Department of War and the Marine</td>
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<td>27.7</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE.—The above figures include expenditure on military pensions (amounting to 0.5 million bolivars for 1930-31 and to 0.6 million annually for the subsequent years), pilotage and lighthouses.

¹ This figure is not official, and its accuracy cannot be guaranteed; the Secretariat has not been able to obtain any official Venezuelan documents showing the strength of the active army.