

sidered and prepared beforehand in time of peace. It would not be possible to extemporize defences which would be reliable, and it is well to bear in mind that extemporized defences are generally very costly and of doubtful value. The true policy will be to look upon the defence preparations, made in time of peace, in the light of an insurance against the risks the colony will be exposed to in time of war.

Having examined in detail the defence requirements of the principal harbors of the colony, and briefly suggested the basis upon which the protection of other settlements on the coast should be established, I will proceed to consider the number and description of the forces necessary in connection with the proposed system of defence.

Number and description of forces required for proposed defences.

It will be noted that the conditions under which the subject has to be discussed—as regards the various places to be protected—are almost identical; thus, the principal cities and ports of New Zealand are exposed to attacks by sea, and possibly to raids by bodies of men landed from an enemy's ships, with the object of turning the fixed defences, or of gaining the end in view by a direct attack on the cities.

The plan of defence—proposed for the present—comprises fixed defences on land, supplemented by spar torpedo boats, together with the necessary men for manning the batteries and boats, backed by local forces so organized as to be capable of operating in the field. In every case it is proposed to keep the enemy's vessels outside the ports—and thus give the defence a superiority over the attack,—for it is obvious that an enemy, attacking any of the New Zealand ports, would be fighting at a disadvantage if, before he could reach the object of attack, he had to run the gauntlet of fire from batteries and, at the same time, be exposed to the attack of torpedo boats—kept well concealed from view until the ships were actually engaged in navigating the channels at the entrance.

First, then, as regards the men required to work the guns and defend the batteries against assault.

If expense had not to be considered, the best plan would be to maintain a sufficient number of permanent artillerymen at each port who, in time of war, would reside in the batteries. The necessity for permanent garrisons in the batteries has been urged as a reason against guns being placed at a distance from the object to be protected. It is obvious, however, that—under any circumstances in time of war, and wherever the batteries may be situated—men must reside in them to keep everything in order and ready for the guns to open fire at the shortest notice. Consequently the best arrangement will be one that provides a nucleus of permanently enrolled men—placed in the batteries on the outbreak of war—supplemented by a sufficient force to complete the gun detachments and garrison the works at the time of attack.