

As I have already explained, the constabulary will furnish the permanent detachments for the batteries, at the entrance to the harbors; and their reinforcements and garrisons, together with the crews of the torpedo boats, will be provided from naval brigades, which are to be formed under a new organization. At Dunedin volunteer artillerymen are proposed for the battery on the Ocean Beach, if constructed.

It will be seen, on examining the return, that there are already corps of naval volunteers at Auckland, Wellington, Port Chalmers, and Dunedin, numbering 106, 176, 77, and 103 respectively. It will only be necessary, therefore, to convert the corps at Auckland, Wellington, and Port Chalmers into naval brigades, each with a war establishment 120 strong, and to form a brigade at Port Lyttelton of the same strength. At Dunedin the naval volunteers need not be retained unless the Ocean Beach battery is erected.

Remarks as to
coast and
country corps.

As regards the field forces, although there are not, at present, sufficient men enrolled, no difficulty will be experienced in obtaining the number required.

With respect to the remaining corps on the coast, it may be desirable that they should be retained in both islands; but their strength and constitution should be on some recognised principle.

The retention of country corps in the North Island for the maintenance of internal order does not come within the scope of the present enquiry; but, so far as the defence of the country against foreign aggression is concerned, the advantage of having volunteers at such places as Queenstown, Frankton, Cromwell, and Arrowtown—almost in the centre of Middle Island—is not apparent; and I feel bound to observe that any corps, situated at a distance from the point to be defended, will not be of much value.

With volunteers it will be impossible, in time of war, to arrange for their rapid concentration, and, if complete efficiency has to be attained, it will be best to rely only on those men, who are actually residing within a few miles of the point likely to be attacked. The question under consideration is that of repelling the sudden attacks of one or two cruisers; and so long as the volunteers are scattered throughout the two islands—without apparently much regard to the points to be protected—there will be weakness everywhere, the protection of the country against a foreign enemy will not really be provided for, and there will be no adequate return for the large annual outlay incurred.

I am aware that an impression prevails that, in time of war, these corps would afford valuable reserves from which to draw the necessary forces for defence, and that their organization into fighting bodies could be safely left to the time when the emergency arose. To oppose with success the sudden attacks that an enemy would probably make upon the shores of New Zealand, the armed forces of the colony should be ready on the spot, commanded and administered in peace and war upon one and the same system. If the object is to foster the military spirit of the country it is probable that it could be done equally as well, and probably better, by adopting a less costly organization. The military