

forces of New Zealand have done good service in the field, reflecting the greatest credit on both the officers and men engaged ; and the volunteers have shown patriotic spirit and devotion in giving their time, and in many cases their money, to the service of the State ; but I fear that their energies will be misdirected and wasted unless a better organization is adopted.

The principle of making a distinction between forces—maintained so as to be immediately available for defence against foreign aggression—and others, which are established for the encouragement of rifle-shooting and other reasons, has already been recognised in South Australia. In that colony there are volunteers for the defence of Adelaide, and rifle companies distributed in the inland districts, which are liable to be called out for service against a foreign enemy or for the maintenance of internal order.* These rifle companies cost very little to maintain, they are governed by less stringent regulations than the volunteers, and the State only provides arms, accoutrements, and ammunition. Each company is periodically inspected, and is only required to possess an elementary knowledge of drill.

Rifle companies in South Australia.

I believe that such an organization—not necessarily the same, but partaking of a similar character—would be well adapted to certain districts of New Zealand.

The inspections, which I held of the volunteers at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill, were necessarily brief, and I had no opportunity of testing the efficiency of the officers and men, except at drill of an elementary character ; nor could I, in so short a time, ascertain the extent of the military knowledge possessed by the officers. At the same time I was very favorably impressed with the force, and I am satisfied that it lies in the power of the officers, by a closer application to their duties, to remedy most of the shortcomings that I noticed. The great want in the force is the same as that which is common to all volunteer forces, and does not appear to be easily supplied, viz., that, owing to the difficulty of getting the men to turn out for daylight drill, it is not possible to teach them some of the most essential portions of a soldier's training—drill in extended order and combined movements, such as would have to be executed in the presence of an enemy, and whereby both officers and men learn to work together and rely upon each other. Bad habits are contracted by the officers and men from constantly drilling in sheds by gaslight. The absence of continuous training is also a cause of general complaint. To these and other matters my attention was directed during my inspections ; and I will now proceed to explain briefly the recommendations, which I have to make in respect to the force. Many of my suggestions are

Inspections of volunteers held at Auckland, &c.

Defects in present organization.

* Copies of the Act, under which the South Australian rifle companies are formed, and of the rules of the Rifle Association established in connection with these companies, will be found in the Appendix to this report.