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NEW ZEALAND.

SCHEME FOR EFFICIENT VOLUNTEER DEFENCE.

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1. A FEW ideas by the writer of how volunteering might be made sufficiently popular to induce men to join, how the men may be sufficiently drilled to give them some cohesive value as a force, and how their "fire-power" may be increased so as to make them of some use in the day of battle. At present the numbers are too small to give any weight to offensive or any strength to defensive operations, the drill is too imperfect to permit of tactical combinations being arranged with any reliance that they be executed with certainty as to time or place, and the fire-power is too weak to permit of any decisive impression being made upon a trained enemy.

2. These remarks are by an officer who has had six years' experience in command of an infantry company, and previous service in the New Zealand volunteer cavalry, artillery, and infantry.

3. It is assumed that it is necessary to place the country in an efficiently defensive position against external and foreign enemies, and that the enemy will be a disciplined force composed of trained men armed with rifles quite as effective as those on issue to New Zealand Volunteers.

4. It is also assumed that it is desirable and practicable to defend the country with a Volunteer Force.

5. The Volunteer Force, therefore, requires to be sufficient in numerical strength, proficient in drill and tactical manœuvre, subservient to discipline, and able to develop to its fullest extent the fire-power of the rifles with which they are armed.

6. *Numerical Strength.*—The numerical strength is insufficient for the positions to be defended. This is plainly shown on district field-days, when, if all the approaches open to the enemy are held, the defence is weak at all points, and is unable to withstand a concentric attack, and, having no supports or reserves, the defence must be rolled up and destroyed in detail. If only a few of the approaches available to the enemy be held, then the enemy, by a secondary retaining attack on some of the points held, will pass his main body by the undefended approaches, and the operation would result in a parallel march for the capital.

7. *Recruiting.*—It seems necessary and desirable first to define the meaning of a "Volunteer;" and the following definition is offered: namely, that a Volunteer be one who freely and without reward gives the required time for parades and duties, but that such time be outside of the hours wherein he earns his daily bread. At present the Volunteer is asked to give up his spare time, and he does so willingly; he is required to give up business time, and he tries to do that; he also finds that he has to put his hand into his pocket and spend his own money for the privilege of protecting other people's property, and he even does this, but with a feeling that the limit of human endurance has been fully reached.

8. Volunteers are quite willing to give up their spare time; but if required to devote business time to their military duties they must be paid for that, and their necessary expenses must be reimbursed. The Volunteers do not wish to be turned into paid, or partially-paid, men, but they do strongly object to partially paying for other people's defence and protection.

9. It must be remembered that in the early days of volunteering employers of labour and men of leisure and capital assisted volunteering by allowing their employes time to perform their military duties, by personally joining the Force, and by subscribing to Volunteer funds. It is not so now: the Volunteer Force is chiefly composed of poor men; the well-to-do treat it with neglect and indifference.

10. Before volunteering can again become popular it will be necessary to take steps to wake up employers to a due sense of their duty to encourage their employes to become Volunteers, and attend parades and duties.