

The number of competitors was 493, comprising 305 Volunteers and 188 Rifle-club men. The cash prizes paid totalled £1,421 17s. 6d., the prize-money being allocated as follows :—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------------------|-------|----|----|
| Open to all competitors | 1,243 | 12 | 6 |
| „ Volunteers only | 93 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Rifle-club men only | 71 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Cadets | 14 | 5 | 0 |
| | 1,421 | 17 | 6 |

Of the amount open to all competitors, Volunteers won £736 14s. 6d., or 60 per cent., Riflemen won £492 18s. 6d., or 40 per cent.; while the percentage of competitors was as follows—Volunteers, 62 per cent.; Riflemen, 38 per cent.

Owing to the large number of entries the Executive added £120 to the published programme. The Champion Belt was won by Rifleman George Hyde, of the Opaki Rifle Club (a former winner of the belt in 1902), with a score of 431, Lieutenant Timbrell, of Christchurch, being second with 430 and Sergeant Edwards, an Australian, next with 429.

Since the previous meeting many improvements have been made in and about the range. The mounds on the Collins Range were sown down in grass, and those on the Seddon Range returfed. The large mess-room was lined, a new cook-house erected, and other alterations and additions necessary for carrying out the meeting. This work was carried out by the Public Works Department, and was much appreciated by the competitors present at the meeting.

The work of the meeting necessitated the employment of twenty-one officers for range and butt duties, all of whom, like the members of the Executive, gave their services gratuitously. Eighty-one men of the Permanent Force were employed as markers, &c., 6 Volunteers for clerical work, and a staff of 31 men as waiters and cooks.

The universal testimony of the competitors to the excellent arrangements for the meeting, the absence of any serious complaints, and the general satisfaction on the whole, was most gratifying to all concerned in the management.

A rifle team to represent the Dominion in the Empire Match was sent over to Australia in October last, and, though not successful in winning the match, they beat the representative team from Great Britain by three points, the respective scores being—Australia, 2,104; New Zealand, 2,056; Great Britain, 2,053.

The Commonwealth Council of the Rifle Association of Australia has extended a cordial invitation to New Zealand to be represented in the second Empire match, to be fired in October, 1909, and, as there is every prospect of the Empire being represented not only by the Mother-country, but by several units of His Majesty's Dominion, the Council of Defence ventures to hope that a representative team may be sent from New Zealand.

The importance of service competitions being urged on the Council of Defence by the Imperial authorities, arrangements will be made to add several matches to the programme for the next meeting.

ARTILLERY SERVICES.
Progress.

During the past year the records of both Field and Garrison Artillery Vounteers show that considerable progress has been made in both efficiency and shooting (*vide* Tables 1 and 2).

This improvement is entirely due to the keenness of all ranks, the amount of time devoted to training, and to the valuable instruction given by the Royal New Zealand Artillery.

There are, however, many difficulties in connection with the training of the Artillery Force up to the standard now aimed at, as a result of which it cannot be considered thoroughly efficient, although it is probable that the Artillery Volunteers throughout the Dominion were never more efficient than they are at the present time. While, however, this standard of efficiency is very creditable, much remains to be done *re* organization, system of training, and equipment, before absolute readiness for war can be assured.

TABLE 1.—RETURN showing RESULTS OF EFFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS of the New Zealand FIELD ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS, 1907-8.

Headquarters, Wellington, N.Z., 1st May, 1908.

| Battery. | Station. | Attendance. | Staff Sergeants. | N.C.O.s and Men (gunnery). | Signalling. | Range-finding. | Gun-laying. | Trumpeters. | Driving. | Turn-out and Route march. | Battery Drill. | Laying out Lines of Fire. | Total Marks. | Percentage. | Deductions for Discipline. | Marks awarded for Efficiency. | Class for Shooting. | Grade awarded 1907-8. | Improvement in Efficiency since 1906-7. |
|----------|----------|-------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|----------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---|
| A | Auck'd | 95 | 50 | 80 | 76 | 38 | 60 | 10 | 35 | 78 | 80 | 90 | 692 | 777 | .. | 777 | 2nd | "A" | Per Cent. 1.38 |
| B | D'edin | 99 | 50 | 89 | 90.7 | 32.5 | 106 | 20 | 39 | 98 | 90 | 95 | 809 | 90 | .. | 90 | 1st | "A" | 10 |
| D | W'gt'n | 95 | 50 | 83 | 97.6 | 50 | 101.4 | 18 | 43 | 100 | 85 | 90 | 813 | 90.13 | .. | 90.13 | 2nd | "A" | 3.13 |
| E | Ch'ch | 94 | 50 | 67 | 85 | 39.7 | 104.8 | 18 | 40 | 80 | 90 | 85 | 752 | 84.5 | .. | 84.5 | 2nd | "A" | 15.5 |
| H | Nelson | 90 | 40 | 79 | 50 | 28 | 103 | 15 | 41 | 89.7 | 85 | .. | 620.7 | 78.5 | .. | 78.5 | 2nd | "A" | 10.3 |

D Battery wins the Challenge Shield for efficiency for 1907-8, being only 4 points ahead of B Battery.