

Under the head of "Contingent Defence" within the Public Works Fund, the sum of £20,000 was voted, out of which £10,765 11s. 4d. was expended, the principal items being as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Drill-sheds, erection, &c. ... ..	6,388	10	0
Rifle ranges ... ..	808	19	10
Six-field-guns ... ..	2,802	17	6

£7,296 19s. 11d. was expended during the last financial year on fixed harbour defences. As there remains a considerable amount of uncompleted work in connection with the defences of the principal harbours of this Dominion, a sum of £12,000 at least will be required to enable these works to be carried out.

#### DOMINION RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The annual rifle-shooting meeting was held at Trentham in March last, commencing on the 4th and terminating on the 12th, and was the most successful meeting in the history of rifle-shooting in New Zealand.

The designation of the Association has been changed to the Dominion Rifle Association, by which name it will in future be known.

Although a wave of depression was being experienced throughout the Dominion, there was a large increase in the number of competitors, totalling 519, of whom 335 were Volunteers and 184 Rifle Club men. The number of competitors was a record for New Zealand, and in proportion to population it represented a much larger number of men than England, Australia, or Canada place in the shooting-field.

The weather-conditions that obtained throughout the meeting were all that could be desired, no rain having fallen during the progress of the shooting.

The cash prizes paid totalled £1,448 16s., the prize-money being allocated as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Open to all competitors ... ..	1,308	16	0
Open to Volunteers only ... ..	80	0	0
Open to Rifle Club men only ... ..	60	0	0
	<hr/>		
	1,448	16	0

Of the amount open to all competitors, the Volunteers won 67 per cent., Riflemen 33 per cent.; while the percentage of competitors was, Volunteers 65 per cent., as against Riflemen 35 per cent.

As the entries were more than anticipated, the executive was able to add an additional £100 to the published prize programme.

The Championship Belt was won by Lieutenant W. Duncan, of the Millerton Rifle Volunteers, Westport, with the creditable score of 491; Corporal A. Patrick, of the Victoria Rifle Volunteers, Auckland, being second, with 490; and Quartermaster-Sergeant E. Shaw, of the 2nd Battalion, Auckland Infantry Volunteers, third, with 489.

His Excellency the Governor was present at the firing of the Championship, and subsequently presented the prizes to the winners.

As showing the standard of the shooting throughout the meeting, it is notable that, while the Championship Belt was won in 1908 with a score of 431 for 112 shots, the winner of the 1909 Championship, with two shots less in the series, compiled a score of 491.

The Permanent Artillery were employed as markers, there being no fewer than eighty-two members of the Force doing duty on the range. The marking gave entire satisfaction.

The meeting has been notable for the introduction of several new matches, fired under service conditions, such as the Surprise Target Match, the Loophole Cover Match, and the Attack Match. Other matches will have to be introduced at next meeting in order to bring rifle-shooting more into accord with war conditions.

The Colonial Ammunition Company, Auckland, supplied, as usual, the ammunition for the meeting, which was of excellent quality and gave universal satisfaction.

Having due regard to the fact that the Dominion Rifle Association is assuming such large dimensions, the necessity for additional long-range accommodation is becoming annually more pressing, and the Chief Executive Officer has recommended that the Sommerville Range should be extended so as to give facilities for competitions up to 1,000 yards, thus giving a target accommodation at Trentham, from 200 to 1,000 yards, of fifty targets, and the Collins range being available for twenty-five targets from 200 to 600 yards. With this accommodation the meeting could be carried out within a week. It is suggested that twenty-five iron target-frames, the same as used on the Seddon Range, should be made for the Sommerville Range, in place of the present revolving targets.

The notification by the Government of their intention to send a rifle team to take part in the Empire Rifle Match, in October next, at Sydney, is much appreciated by the shooting-men of the Dominion.