

Their progress in drill is therefore unavoidably slow ; but they seem anxious to improve, and attend their monthly parades with much regularity.

Great complaints were made of the want of iron targets. Many members of these corps expressed a wish to be assembled in the autumn for twelve consecutive days' drill, instead of once a month, to render themselves entitled to capitulation allowance.

*Poverty Bay.*

In March there was only one troop of Cavalry Volunteers in the Poverty Bay district ; but a company of Rifles has since been formed, which has been armed with the Snider rifle. Owing to the disturbances in this district, the population has been very fluctuating, which has caused many changes in the members of the Cavalry, and for this reason the Commanding Officer requested me not to visit the district till next year, when he hoped to have made more progress.

*Bay of Plenty.*

In March there was only one small corps of Cavalry Volunteers at Opotiki, which I did not think it necessary to inspect, as I was aware they had not recovered from their losses sustained on active service, when their Commanding Officer had suffered so much.

A new corps of Cavalry Volunteers, and another of Rifles, have quite lately been formed at Tauranga. I saw the former soon after its services had been accepted, and, from the interest taken by its members at first, I hope it will be a credit to the district.

*Thames.*

The Thames District is composed of six Rifle companies and one Naval corps, amounting to about 420 men. Of this number, 256 have attended class-firing this year, but I am afraid that more attention has been paid to rifle practice than to drill. The day that I inspected them was so wet that I had not a good opportunity of seeing much of their movements ; but it was evident that more attention is required in this respect, and I recommended the officers to endeavour to form themselves into an Administrative Battalion, in order that the several companies should meet more frequently. This district is one of the few in the North Island where any attempt has been made at class-firing, and a member of one of the corps was the winner of the medal for the highest score in the Province of Auckland.

The Naval corps made some good practice with their howitzers, and appeared to have been more attentive to their drill.

TARANAKI.

I did not inspect the Volunteers of this district, as the troop of Cavalry was the only corps, and had not been attending parades for some time ; they have since been disbanded, at their own request. I cannot do better than give an extract from Major Stapp's report in this matter :—

“Several causes have occurred to damp the spirit of volunteering here. There has been scarcely any drill during the past year in consequence of the depression existing in the place, and people making new homes could not attend to it. The universal cry was, ‘We have had so much soldiering and parading for the last ten years, that we want you to let us alone for a while ; but, should anything occur, we will all turn out and defend the settlement.’”

A corps of Rifle Volunteers has been formed quite lately.

PROVINCE OF WELLINGTON.

In June, 1870, the Volunteers of this Province numbered 1,176 enrolled members, which by March, 1871, had increased to 1,702, divided amongst the following districts :—

Wanganui	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	237
Rangitikei	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	385
Wellington	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	803
Greytown	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	136
Masterton	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	141
									1,702

*Wanganui.*

In March, 1871, there were 237 Volunteers,—forming three Cavalry, and two Rifle corps,—two of which are newly raised.

The spirit of volunteering had almost lapsed, probably from the same causes as at Taranaki, although in a less degree ; but on the proclamation of the new Militia Act in November last, and the appointment of Major Turner to command the district, some effort appears to have been made to resume the movement.

At my inspection in November, the Veteran corps was on pay, and employed in making the road between Wanganui and Patea.

The Wanganui Troop have attended irregularly, and consequently their drill showed a great want of steadiness, but they had long felt the want of a drill instructor, which is now rectified. In addition to this serious drawback, the present members had to suffer for an old debt for clothing supplied to former members. This had not been paid, and was necessarily charged against the whole corps ; but having now been adjusted, a better spirit is reported to exist amongst them.

*Rangitikei.*

This district contains four Cavalry and four Rifle corps, which on the 31st of March amounted to 385 men.

The spirit of the Volunteers here appears to be very good, and I was much pleased with their