

entitled to the capitation which they had received for last year. The advice I gave them will, I think, be adopted, and if so they will not be long in acquiring the knowledge the Volunteer Regulations demand.

The Cadet Company, like many other Cadet corps in the country, had been armed without having had sufficient preliminary instruction; and I directed them to parade in future for a time without arms, that they might be carefully instructed in rudimentary drill.

There seemed to be a feeling in this district that if the Militia Act were annulled, the Volunteer companies would prosper, an opinion which is contrary to that entertained in other districts, where it is held that if the Militia Act were enforced or introduced, Volunteers would abound; the reason being given, with regard to Taranaki, that Militiamen are eligible to fire for colonial and district prizes by attending only four parades in the year, whereas Volunteers must attend at least twelve parades, and possess other more important qualifications in respect of efficiency not imperative in the instance of Militiamen.

#### NAPIER.

In this small district there exists three corps—the Hawke's Bay Cavalry, the Artillery Company, and a Cadet Company. At the period of my inspection, the officer commanding the first-named corps asked me to be allowed to apply for the discontinuance of the services of his troop, without undergoing annual inspection, to which I consented. The last-named corps has been in existence since November, 1870, and at the period of my visit in March last, had not been clothed; its members talked incessantly, jostled with each other, &c., in the ranks, and seemed not to be under any control whatever. As to instruction, it had evidently not received any; and upon what grounds it received capitation for the year ending March last, I cannot understand.

With respect to the other corps, the Napier Artillery, the whole matter of its condition is revealed in the correspondence which is hereto annexed, consisting of your letter to me of the 8th of May, No. 166, covering extracts from Napier *Telegraph* and *Evening Post*, which you had submitted to Major Withers for report, with the reply of that officer and Captain Routledge's explanation, together with my letters, all of the 9th of June, to Major Withers, Major Roberts, and Captain Marshall, and their replies thereto, closing with my letter to you of the 13th of July, commenting on the matter under correspondence.

The small force of this district had, besides its permanent Commanding Officer, two drill instructors, both of whom were capable of affording instruction to Volunteers. I think the district might now be abandoned as a Volunteer centre, and the Volunteer Acts and Regulations suspended therein.

#### THAMES.

Of the six adult corps in this command at the time of my inspection, 236, of an enrolled strength of 484, were on parade.

The Scottish Company produced the largest relative attendance—70 being present. These presented an exceedingly good and imposing appearance—very steady in the ranks, and evidently pay great attention to drill. The same favourable report may be made of the Rifle Rangers and No. 2 Hauraki Company. The Naval Brigade is also a smart body of men, but I could only see half its enrolled strength at drill. The No. 3 Hauraki was in course of reconstruction, and only 11 of its members were present.

The No. 1 Hauraki Company has ceased to exist since my visit, for insubordinate proceedings in connection with my inspection, induced, no doubt, by the example of its captain, whose conduct, and Volunteer irregularities in general in this district, are brought under your observation in the annexed letters from me of the 11th and 12th of May, as well as in a communication from Major Cooper, the date of which is unknown to me, in which I understand that officer recommends the disbandment of the company, and gives his reason for making the request.

The carriages, limber, and guns (howitzers) of the Naval Brigade have been standing for years outside the Naval Drill-shed, exposed to sun, rain, &c., and my inspection of them discovered their entire woodwork to be perfectly rotten. On this account, I could not satisfy myself that the members of the corps knew anything of their duty as gunners. I recommend that the guns be taken into store, and the woodwork burnt or sold; but I think a board of officers should first decide as to who is accountable for this wanton loss of valuable Government property. A corps which has for years past received so large an amount of capitation as has this corps, should have been directed to place a covering of some sort over the guns confided to their charge. This corps is very anxious to possess a boat, and one is essential to comply with the form of Naval efficiency certificate; but no guarantee was supplied to prevent its receiving the same treatment as that which had been bestowed upon the limbers and carriages of the two howitzers.

There are two Cadet corps at the Thames—one attached to the Scottish Company, and the other to the Engineer Cadet Company; both are in fair order. The latter corps complained that it had been unsuccessful in learning the state of its finances, as its adult commanding officer, Captain Rowe (who was, when I inspected his corps, employed in Waikato with the Engineer Militia), had, when questioned by his subaltern on this subject, replied in very offensive language, and declined to give any explanation. Captain Rowe had better be called upon to hand in his resignation of the command of this Cadet Company, after satisfactorily explaining the state of the funds of the corps.

#### TAURANGA.

Wet weather at the period of my visit to Tauranga may have had some effect in causing a small attendance on the inspection parades, and short notice was also pleaded in excuse. Of 22 of all ranks of the Tauranga Light Horse, 7 only were present, who came to the conclusion, on my advice, that if the corps could not be recruited to a reasonable strength within three months, it would resign. The members attributed the cause of its decline to the inattention of its late captain, who had a short time previously very properly resigned.