

Rifles. Within a few months an infantry battalion was formed, and placed under the command of Major (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel) T. L. Murray, an old Thames volunteer. The first new company formed was the No. 1 New Zealand Native Rifles. This corps was started by the New Zealand Natives' Association, the chief promoters being Messrs E. Ford (president) and E. H. Montgomery, who first proposed the formation of the corps at a meeting of the Association. The No. 1 Natives was formed in November, 1897, the No. 2 and No. 3 Natives, Auckland Rifles and No. 2 Victorias followed next April. The Newton Rifles, the most recent infantry corps in Auckland, was formed in October, 1898, and completed the Auckland Infantry Battalion No. 1. Meanwhile the Devonport Coastguard Artillery had been formed in February of the same year; the Auckland Mounted Rifles were gazetted in October, and the Engineers in November, 1898. Since then the only other corps formed in Auckland has been the Seddon Horse, a company of mounted infantry started a few months ago.

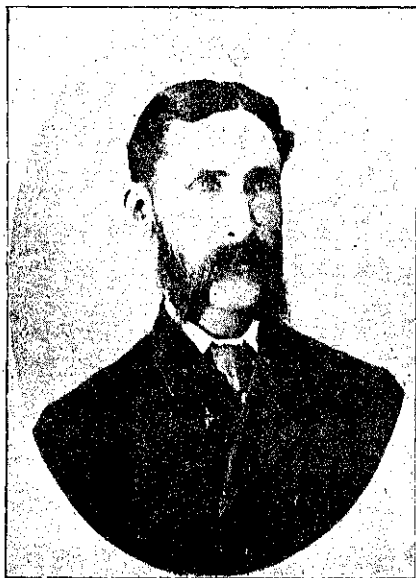
The new No. 1 Battalion came into prominence last Easter by offering its services for Samoa. An attempt was made in some quarters to belittle the offer of a New Zealand force for service in Samoa, and to sneer at the idea as jingoistic; but for the most part the volunteers were warmly commended for the spirit they displayed. The offer was not accepted by the Home authorities, but the fact of its being made was evidence of the readiness of colonial troops to help the Mother Country. In what a striking and practical manner this "spirit of Empire" has since been manifested by all the British colonies, no one needs to be reminded. The Transvaal War will be memorable for the part played in it by colonial volunteer troops.

At the present time there are only five Volunteer Companies in Auckland of more than four years' standing. Of these the "A" Battery, the Victoria Rifles and the Auckland Naval Artillery date back to the earliest days of the movement, while the

Ponsonby Naval Artillery have been fifteen, and the Devonport Submarine Mining Corps six years in existence. A sketch of the history of the older corps of the Auckland Garrison should be of interest.

THE "A" BATTERY.

As the direct descendants of the old Royal Rifles, the first Volunteer Company sworn-in in New Zealand, the "A" Battery of Artillery can fairly claim to be the oldest Volunteer Company in the colony. The



CAPT. D. A. TOLE.

Royals were formed in 1858, and carried on as an infantry corps till 1866, when the members decided to re-form as an infantry corps. There was at the time no field artillery in Auckland, the old Auckland Artillery having already disbanded. The Government agreed to the proposal, and the Royal Rifles accordingly became the Auckland Royal Artillery. Their armament consisted of part of a battery of six-pounder Armstrong breech-loading guns, belonging to Captain Mercer's Artillery in the Maori War. The Volunteers used these guns for many years, and became very proficient with them. The corps had, of course, its ups and downs, following upon that tide-like "ebb and flow" which has been such a