

*Nature of Test applied.*

23. Passing from principles to particulars, I conceive it to be my primary duty to the Government of New Zealand to report on the success or otherwise attained by the military authorities of the Dominion in producing in peace a machine which has in all respects its exact analogue in war. Therefore I shall proceed to apply the war test to everything connected with the Citizen Forces—their organization, their administration, the Territorial arrangements, the daily routine of office-work, as well as the supremely important question of training and instruction. My comparatively brief sojourn in New Zealand has at least had this advantage—it has involved the simultaneous embodiment of every military unit in the country, and has enabled me to inspect large bodies of Cadets drawn together from wide areas at the very identical time when the whole of the Citizen Forces were actually under arms in camp. The possibility of making the same permanent instructional Staff march across the inspectional stage with the Cadets one day and with the troops the next was absolutely precluded. Accordingly, the military machine in New Zealand has been subjected to a severer trial than that of any portion of the Empire ever inspected by me. The elements themselves seem to have leagued themselves with me in adding some of the genuine discomforts of war to my mimic campaigns. The town-bred lads especially must have often thought wistfully of their happy little homes when the tempest howled around their frail shelters of canvas; when the icy rain penetrated everything and every one; when the mud waxed deeper and ever more adhesive. Actual mobilization would, in fact, have made no greater demands either on the energies of the military authorities or on the pluck and good temper of the rank and file.

*Result of the Test.*

24. I may as well admit straight away that the machine has stood the racket. One or two little jars there have been—of so much every one who reads the papers is aware. The land forces of New Zealand are not perfect, or anywhere near perfect. In some respects development may be backward. But at least I am able to report, broadly, that the progress made during the past three years, in giving shape to a real national army in New Zealand, has been singularly rapid. Further, in my opinion, the general lines on which the organization and training of the Citizen Force, and of the Cadets, have been laid down are sound. Here and there I shall, later on, propose readjustments, but the changes suggested are such as can readily be effected without radically altering any existing institutions. Unquestionably there is a good prospect of a practical war machine, and one admirably suited to the needs of home defence, being ultimately produced. That this is so is due every bit as much to the patriotism of the people as to the wisdom of the military authorities.

*The Cadets.*

25. Of the Cadet system it is hard to speak in terms which may not appear exaggerated. For the moment I am concerned only with the moral and physical effect of Cadet training on the boyhood of the nation. Its military aspect, as a substitute for recruit training, I deal with again later in my report.

I have spared no pains to ascertain the views of those best entitled to form a judgment on this most vital subject. I have discussed it at length with politicians of both parties in the State; with employers of labour; with schoolmasters; with the clergy of every denomination; and last, but not least, with dozens of Cadets themselves, and, whenever and wherever I could catch them, with their mothers. I have not heard one single adverse opinion from the mouth of a live New-Zealander, though, from the numbers of disapproving letters I have received, there must be a minority which makes up for its want of dimension by a radium-like activity. No: amongst all the people I have met there seemed to be a consensus of opinion that the system is wholly beneficial, not to the boys alone but also in its wider national aspect. If the working men and women of Scotland could have participated in my Cadet inspection through Otago Province (verily a smaller Scotland); if the fathers and mothers of the poorer children of London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool could only have been present at my Cadet parades in Canterbury Province and in the North Island—could they have done this and have shared with me the joy of seeing so many keen happy faces, so many bodies in the pink of physical condition—I know they would not permit their rulers to deny to their own sons one day longer the same privileges that the boys of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are now enjoying.

*Economic Aspect of the Scheme.*

26. A striking feature of the military system in New Zealand lies in its economical working. This I attribute in a large measure to a strict observance of the Militia principle throughout the constitution of the Force. Not a single professional officer or non-commissioned officer appears to be employed whose services, with due regard to efficiency, could possibly be dispensed with. The Permanent nuclei, which form part of the Garrison and Field Artillery units, are cheap and excellent substitutes for the Permanent units employed elsewhere as a means of imparting artillery instruction. New Zealand owes much to those who had both the prescience to inaugurate an experiment of this nature, and the boldness to carry it through to a logical conclusion.

*Detachment of Instructors from Units.*

27. The same prescience is observable in the domain of military instruction. The detachment of the Permanent instructor from the Mounted Rifles and Infantry unit, and his attachment to the Territorial area, does not come to me altogether as a novelty. This feature formed part of Lord Kitchener's original proposal. The New Zealand Army, however, is remarkable for the thoroughness