

DEFENCE.

Military and Defence Forces of Australasia.

IN all the Colonies small permanent military forces are maintained, consisting for the most part of artillery and submarine miners. The greater portion of the Colonial forces is, however, maintained by a system of partial payment, which affords a cheap and effective defence force without the disadvantages and expense of a standing army. Under this system the men receive a fixed amount of pay, which compensates them for loss of wages during the time they are away from their employment for the purposes of military instruction. In New South Wales and Victoria the remuneration amounts to £12 per annum to each man, and in Queensland and South Australia to about half that sum. It is computed on the basis of a certain number of whole or half-day parades or night drills at the rate of 10s. per day in the first two Colonies named, 6s. a day in Queensland, and 5s. a day in South Australia. In addition to the remuneration the partially-paid, in common with all the other military forces, receive free rations when in camp or on active service. There has been a marked tendency in all the Colonies to discourage the services of volunteers, as the system was found to work unsatisfactorily, especially in the country districts. In New Zealand alone is the volunteer system the mainstay of defence. The following is the strength of the forces maintained by each province :—

Purely volunteer system unsatisfactory.

	Total Forces.	Paid.	Partially Paid.	Unpaid.
New South Wales	8,134	578	4,164	3,392
Victoria*	5,856	326	3,625	1,905
Queensland	3,939	130	2,667	1,142
South Australia.....	2,671	57	1,573	1,041
Western Australia	603	2	601
Tasmania	1,883	35	473	1,375
New Zealand	6,538	137	6,401
Total, Australasia..	29,624	1,265	13,103	15,256

* 30th June, 1890.

Among the Volunteers in New South Wales, Queensland, ^{Rifle clubs.} South Australia, and Tasmania are included the rifle clubs or companies of a strength of 3,516, 1,142, 607, and 1,375 men respectively. By means of a liberal extension of these clubs it is expected that there will be a large number of men, trained to the use of the rifle and not unaccustomed to drill, who in time of need may be available to fill the ranks of the regular forces.

The relative strength of the various arms in the Colonies may ^{Total military strength.} be summarized as follows:—

Staff, Medical Staff, Instructors, Ambulance Corps, &c.....	570
Artillery (Garrison, field and horse).....	4,281
Engineers	749
Cavalry	1,133
Mounted Infantry and Mounted Rifles	3,329
Infantry and Regimental Bands	12,922
Rifle Companies	6,640

or, a total strength of 29,624 men.

In addition to the forces enumerated above, all the Colonies, ^{Marine Forces.} with the exception of Western Australia, have small corps of Naval Volunteer Artillery, or a partially paid force of a similar character, capable of being employed either as a light artillery land force, or to serve on board the local war vessels. In Victoria there is a permanent naval force of 235 men. The marine forces are as follow:—

Colony.	Strength.
New South Wales	633
Victoria	617
Queensland	365
South Australia	170
Tasmania.....	65
New Zealand	1,372
Total	3,222

Thus the combined forces of all the Australasian Colonies on ^{Combined Australasian Defence Forces.} their present footing are 32,846 strong; and of these 22,000 could be mobilised in either of the Colonies of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, or South Australia.

Imperial navy
on the Aus-
tralian station.

No Colony with the exception of Victoria has any navy of its own, the defence of the coast being in the hands of the British ships on the Australian Station. Sydney, the head quarters of the fleet, ranks as a first class naval station ; and extensive repairing yards and store-houses have been provided for the accommodation of the ships of war. There are stationed in the Australasian waters eleven vessels whose armament &c., are as follows :—

Name.	Class.	Displacement.	Speed.	Guns.
		Tons.	Knots.	
Orlando	Twin-screw cruiser, 1st class, armoured.	5,600	18·5	2 9·2-in. 22-ton B.L.R. 10 6-in. 5-ton B.L.R. 16 Q.F. Hotchkiss 7 M., 3 L.
Curacoa	Screw cruiser, 3rd class.	2,380	13·0	4 6-in. 5-ton B.L.R. 8 5-in. 2 ton B.L.R. 1 Q.F. Hotchkiss 9 M., 2 L.
Cordelia	Screw cruiser, 3rd class.	2,380	13·0	10 6-in. 4½-ton B.L.R. 10 M., 2 L.
Rapid	Screw cruiser, 3rd class.	1,420	13·1	2 6-in. 4-ton B.L.R. 10 5-in. 38 cwt. B.L.R. 4 M., 1 L.
Royalist ...	Screw cruiser, 3rd class.	1,420	13·1	2 6-in. 4-ton B.L.R. 10 5-in. 38 cwt. B.L.R. 4 M., 1 L.
Lizard	Screw gunboat, 1st class.	715	12·7	6 4-in. 25 cwt. B.L.R. 4 M.
Goldfinch ...	Screw gunboat, 1st class.	805	13·0	6 4-in. 26-cwt. B.L.R. 2 Q.F. Hotchkiss, 2M.
Ringdove ...	Screw gunboat, 1st class.	805	13·0	6 4-in. 26-cwt. B.L.R. 2 Q.F. Hotchkiss, 2 M.
Swinger* ...	Screw gunboat, 2nd class.	430	10·4	2 64-pdr. 64-cwt. M.L.R., 2 20-pdr. B.L.R., 2 M.
Penguin† ...	Screw sloop	1,130	11·5	2 64-pdr. 64-cwt. M.L.R., 1 L., 2 M.
Dart†	Screw yacht	470	8·8	2 L.

* Relieved by H.M.S. Ringdove, and to be sold. † Surveying Service. M.L.R., muzzle-loading rifled guns ; Q.F., quick-firing guns ; L., light guns under 15 cwt. ; B.L.R., breech-loading rifle guns.

Australasian
naval station.

The boundaries of the Australian Naval Station have been defined as follows :—From 95° E. long. by the parallel of 10° S. lat. to 130° E. long. ; thence north to 12° N. lat., and along that

parallel to 160° W. long, and on the south by the Antarctic Circle, including the numerous groups of islands situated within those limits.

An undertaking has been entered into by all the Colonies, with the exception of Queensland, for the payment of a *pro rata* subsidy for the maintenance of an auxiliary fleet. The total subvention to be paid by all the Colonies amounts to £91,000 per annum, the contributions of each being determined on the basis of population. The fleet will comprise five fast cruisers, and two torpedo gunboats as represented by the "Archer" (improved type) and "Rattlesnake" classes of the British Navy; of these three cruisers and one gunboat will be continuously kept in commission, the remainder being held in reserve in Australasian ports, but ready for commission whenever circumstances may require their use. The agreement is to be for a period of ten years, and shall then, or at the end of any subsequent year, be terminable, provided two years' notice has been given. The vessels will be built by the British Government, but the Australasian Colonies will pay the interest on their prime cost at the rate of 5 per cent., provided such payment does not exceed £35,000. The colonies are also to pay the actual charge for maintenance as mentioned above. On the termination of the agreement these vessels will remain the property of the Imperial Government. The strength of the fleet already in Australian waters will be maintained. The vessels specified in the agreement between Great Britain and the colonies are to be in addition to these. The Australasian squadron will be commanded by the Admiral on the Australian Station, whose headquarters are in Sydney, where a residence is provided for him by the Colony. Some of these vessels have already been launched, and the construction of the others is nearing completion.

New South Wales has no navy of its own, with the exception of the corvette "Wolverene," sixteen 64-pounder M.L. rifled guns, and two small torpedo steam-launches, the "Acheron" and the "Avernus," the defence of its coast being in the hands of the British ships on the Australian station.

Special
Australasian
squadron.

Agreement with
British Govern-
ment.

The
"Wolverene."

Victorian navy. Victoria has a navy of her own for harbour defence, consisting of the following vessels :—

Name.	Class.	Displacement.	Armament.
Nelson	Wooden frigate..	Tons. 2,730	27-in. M.L.R., 20 64-pdrs., 2 Gatlings.
Cerberus.....	Armoured turret ship.	3,413	4 10-in. M.L.R., 4 1-in. Nordenfeldts, 4 barrels.
Victoria	Steel gunboat ...	530	1 10-in. R.B.L., 1 6-in. R.B.L., 2 13-pdr. R.B.L., 2 1-in. Nordenfeldts, 4 barrels.
Albert.....	do ...	350	1 8-in. R.B.L., 1 6-in. R.B.L., 2 1-in. Norden- feldts, 4 barrels.
Childers	First-class steel torpedo boat.	63	2 37-M.M. Hotchkiss guns, 4 13-in. Fiume, 4 14-in. Fiume torpedoes.
Nepean ...	Second-class steel torpedo boat.	12	5 14-in. R.L., also fitted for spar torpedoes.
Lonsdale.....	do	12	do do
Gordon	Wooden torpedo boat "Turn- about."	12	1 1-in. Nordenfeldt, 2 bar- rels, 5 14-in. Fiume.
Batman	Armed steamer..	387	1 6-in. R.B.L., 2 1-in. Nor- denfeldts, 2 barrels.
Fawkner	do ...	387	1 6-in. R.B.L., 2 Gatlings.
Gannet	do ...	347	1 6-in. R.B.L., 2 1-in. Nor- denfeldts, 2 barrels.
Lady Loch	Customs steamer (steel).	300	do do
Commissioner..	Wooden steam launch.	40	4 14-in. Fiume, also fitted for spar torpedoes.
Customs No. 1	do ...	30	do do

The two dredges (Batman and Fawkner) and the tug (Gannet) mentioned in the table quoted have been specially built to carry heavy guns, and provision is also made by which some of the fast steamers belonging to the port could be fitted as cruisers at very short notice. Guns are kept in readiness in Melbourne in case it should be deemed necessary to put these vessels into commission.

Queensland
naval defence.

Queensland has also two gunboats, one of which, the "Palumah," is employed on survey service at the joint expense of the Queensland and Imperial Governments. The following

are the particulars of the vessels available for the defence of Queensland ports:—

Name.	Class.	Displacement.	Armament.
Gayundah	Steel gunboat (twin screw).	Tons. 360	1 8-in. B.L. Armstrong, 1 6-in. B.L. Armstrong, 4 M.
Palumah	do	360	1 8-in. B.L. Armstrong, 1 6-in. B.L. Armstrong, 2 M.
Otter	Tender (twin screw).	120	2 guns.
Bonito	Barge (twin screw).	450	1 gun.
Stingaree	do	450	1 gun.

There is also one torpedo boat at Brisbane, and South Australia maintains one twin-screw steel cruiser, the "Protector," of 920 tons. Her armament consists of 1 8-in. 11½ ton B.L., 5 6-in. 4 ton B.L., and 5 machine guns. Tasmania owns one torpedo boat, and Western Australia one schooner, the "Meda," of 150 tons, employed on survey service at the joint expense of the Imperial and Colonial Governments.

Most of the Colonies have spent considerable sums in works of defence, and most of the principal ports are well protected by extensive fortifications, erected by the various Governments at great cost. The total expenditure for defence purposes during 1889 was as follows:—

Expenditure of the Australasian colonies for defence purposes.

Colony.	Total.	Per head of Population.
	£	s. d.
New South Wales	207,175	3 9
Victoria	346,623	6 3
South Australia	41,122	2 7
Queensland	36,982	1 10
Western Australia	3,697	1 9
Tasmania	15,340	2 1
New Zealand	57,521	1 10

Or a total expenditure for Australasia of £708,460, at the rate of 3s. 9d. for each inhabitant.

Expenditure
from loans for
defence
purposes.

In all the colonies with the exception of Western Australia a certain amount of money has been spent out of loans on works of defence. The amounts thus spent during 1889 were as follows:—

	£
New South Wales	56,440
South Australia	6,520
Queensland	11,558
Tasmania	7,980
New Zealand	15,752
Total.....	£98,250

Debt for defence
purposes.

The total debt incurred by each colony for defence purposes to the end of 1889 was as follows:—

	Total.	Per head of Population.
	£	s. d.
New South Wales	*775,191	13 10
Victoria	100,000	1 9
South Australia	193,740	11 11
Queensland	160,235	7 11
Tasmania	111,391	14 8
New Zealand	461,395	14 11
Australasia	1,801,952	9 8

* Inclusive of £117,587 for naval station, Port Jackson.

This does not represent the whole cost of the fortifications, as large sums have from time to time been expended from the general revenues of the colonies in the construction of works of defence; the amount of such payments, however, it is now impossible to determine.

Military Defence
Commission.

A military commission has recently been appointed by the Imperial and the different Colonial Governments, to take evidence and report on the fortification of King George's Sound, Hobart, Thursday Island, and Port Darwin; at the joint expense of the various Governments, and it is anticipated that before long these four important strategical points will no longer be left at the mercy of any hostile cruiser that might choose to make a descent upon them.