

whom seven hold appointments for life. It is therefore found necessary to make further present appointments not only for the purpose of passing into law the Bill reforming the Constitution of the Council, but also for due consideration of all legislation submitted to both Houses of Parliament. Inasmuch as the proposed change in the Constitution has been postponed by the Legislative Council until the session immediately preceding a general election, my Advisers, following the constitutional precedent of the Act by which the abolition of the provinces was effected in the year 1875, now propose that the Legislative Council Act shall become law during the present session, but that its commencement shall be postponed until after the session of Parliament to be held in the year 1915.

During the past year the training of the land forces of the Dominion has made satisfactory progress. At the invitation of the Government, General Sir Ian Hamilton, Inspector-General of the Overseas Forces, recently visited the Dominion and inspected every unit of the citizen army and every Cadet company. The units of the field forces were assembled for their annual training, and his inspection in five camps enabled him to observe the organization of the troops, the qualifications of the higher Commanders and staffs, and the practice of the three arms in field operations. The conduct of the men of the citizen army and of the Cadets at the Territorial camps, at the Cadet concentrations, and during the journeys by rail and sea to and from the places of assembly was, as a rule, exemplary. The season was late, the weather was generally unfavourable, yet, notwithstanding these disadvantageous conditions, the spirit of the troops and Cadets was all that could be desired, and afforded a valuable testimony to the benefits of the training. The assembling of the units of the Territorial Forces in camp and all Cadet companies for inspection at the same time taxed the organization and administrative machinery of the Defence and Railway Departments, and it was only owing to the zeal and energy and unceasing hard work of those responsible for district and local arrangements that it was rendered possible.

The valuable criticisms and suggestions which the Inspector-General has made and the advice which he has tendered are receiving the consideration of the Government.

The defence of the Pacific, a problem of great difficulty, has engrossed the attention of my Advisers during the recess, and, in accordance with a decision communicated to you during your last session of Parliament, Captain Hall-Thompson has been appointed to act as Adviser to the Government on Naval matters, and to command the training-ship lent by the Admiralty.

It is probable that during the forthcoming year a conference on Naval affairs, to which the Government of New Zealand has already been invited to send representatives, will be convened by the Imperial Government.

Seven months ago the present General Manager of the Dominion railways commenced his new duties. He has since been engaged in inspecting the various railway-lines throughout the Dominion and in making himself conversant with the railway system and its workings. In the comprehensive report upon this large State undertaking which the General Manager is preparing he is making recommendations which, if given effect to, will make the railways of the country more valuable to the commercial community and more attractive to the travelling public. To carry into effect the important works which must be undertaken to ensure the proper and safe working of the railways of the Dominion, proposals will be submitted for your consideration.

In accordance with the legislation of last session a Board of Agriculture has been constituted, and has commenced its duties. The Board consists of practical and experienced agriculturalists, and it is confidently expected that by its interest and advice the agricultural industry will be greatly benefited.

The system of workers' homes has been extended to the country districts. It is intended to submit legislation providing that the area of land attached to a worker's home shall in all such cases be regulated according to its quality or producing-capacity, the object of my Advisers being to give as many workers as