

Voluntary recruiting has not failed

up

It is largely because undue emphasis has been laid upon the army that disproportionate attention has been directed to the question of conscription for overseas service. The advocates of conscription for overseas service say that the present voluntary system of recruitment has failed or is failing. No doubt mistakes have been made in recruiting, as they have in other aspects of our war effort. The government has never made any claim to perfection. There is equally no doubt that recruiting methods will require to be changed from time to time to meet changing conditions of war. But a method which has already resulted in the enlistment of 230,000 men in the active army, in addition to 100,000 in the air force and the navy in a little more than two year of war can scarcely be called a failure.

And recruits are still offering themselves voluntarily for all three services. Of course it is not so easy to get recruits today as it was two years ago, or even a year ago. There would be something very wrong with our war effort if recruits were still as easy to obtain. We have entered a period not merely of full employment, but of actual scarcity of many kinds of skilled labour. A large proportion of the more adventurous and of those with the fewest ties and responsibilities are already in the