

1874.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE NATIVE CONTINGENT,

(REPORTS FROM OFFICERS OF).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Captain MAIR to the ACTING UNDER SECRETARY, Defence Department.

SIR,— Armed Constabulary Depôt, Wellington, 28th July, 1874.

I have the honor to enclose, for your information, my annual report on the duties performed by the Native Contingent under my command, for the year ending 30th June, 1874.

Average Strength of Officers and Men.—1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant-major, 1 sergeant, 3 corporals, 1 bugler, 3 mounted orderlies, and 38 foot.

Nature of Parades and Drills.—Inspection and Divine Service parade, with arms and accoutrements, every Sunday, at 10 a.m. Marching order parade every Thursday, at 6.30 a.m. Bathing parades every Sunday, Tuesday, and Friday, at 6.30 a.m. Muster parade, last day of every month. Occasional drill.

Operations in the Field.—Nothing has been required from the force, under this head, during the past year.

Conveying Mails and Despatches.—No public mails have been conveyed. The mounted orderlies have performed a large amount of work, conveying telegrams, despatches, &c., to Government officers in the district. An orderly goes to Tapuaeharuru once a week; also to Rotorua, Tauranga, Te Teko, Galatea, Cambridge, and other places as occasion requires. One mounted orderly is stationed at Rotorua Telegraph Station. He carries telegrams, &c., daily to Ohinemutu, Wairoa, and other places.

Escorts and Guards.—Members of the force have frequently given assistance to the Native Police. Guards of honor were furnished at Wairoa on the occasion of the Hon. the Defence Minister's visit, December, 1873, and also at Ohinemutu, Niho o te Kiore, and Wairoa, during His Excellency the Governor's visits in March and April last. Escorts have twice been sent to Tauranga and Taupo with prisoners. A twenty-four-hours' guard of 1 non-commissioned officer and 3 men is posted daily on the redoubt at Niho o te Kiore.

Making and Improving Target Ranges.—A good range was made at Niho o te Kiore, and wooden targets, markers' butts, &c., erected.

Issuers and Storekeepers, &c.—One constable from the Armed Constabulary is attached to the force.

Erection of Redoubts and Stockades.—The old camp at Kaiteriria has been abandoned, and the men stationed there have been moved to Tikitapu Lake, road making. Occasional repairs, a stout palisading round the redoubt at Niho o te Kiore, and building a magazine, is all that has been done under this head.

CIVIL DUTIES.

Prevention of Crime, &c.—Detachments of men have been detailed to attend the various large meetings held in the district during the past year, and have assisted materially to preserve order.

Useful Works.—An officers' mess-hut has been built, also cook-houses and baking oven; orderly room and men's huts repaired, and chimneys built. Two ferry canoes have also been built by the men.

Public Works.—The amount of road work performed by the force is shown in the return attached.

Remarks.—The general character and behaviour of the men have been very good indeed. I have remarked that men who have served some time in the force, upon being discharged, always appear much superior to the other Natives, and evidently profit by being taught habits of cleanliness. The Arawa generally look upon the force with great favour, and any number of good men could be enrolled at a few hours' notice. Great inconvenience has been felt at the want of proper clothing for the men.

I would strongly recommend that the camp at Niho o te Kiore be abandoned, and a post at Parekarangi or Rotorua established.

The huts at present occupied by the men are very bad. There is no material for building good ones. The nearest bush is six miles distant, and firewood has to be carried a number of miles on the men's backs. If the force is to remain at the present camp, it will be necessary to purchase a cart and two horses for their use.