

I beg to report on each corps in detail, and have placed a number with each corps, corresponding with a like number on the parade states, the whole of which I attach hereto.

(1.) *Stoke Rifles*.—This company paraded at Richmond, six miles from Nelson, the head-quarters of the corps, on Saturday, the 15th March. I found the arms and accoutrements in excellent order. They were practised in company drill and skirmishing, and both officers and men acquitted themselves to my satisfaction. I may mention that Lieut. Paynter, the ex-rifle champion, is an officer in this corps.

(2.) *H Battery of New Zealand Artillery*; (3.) *Artillery Cadets*.—I inspected this battery on Monday, the 17th March, together with the cadets. There was a very good muster of each corps. The guns, arms, and accoutrements were in excellent order. The gun-drill was very steady and good. I was much pleased with the way the cadets worked the 6-lb. Armstrong. I had to find fault with both corps for unsteadiness in the ranks when at marching drill. This battery are dressed in the regulation artillery uniform, with helmets instead of busbies. It is a smart-looking serviceable dress.

(4.) *Nelson City Rifles*; (5.) *City Cadets*.—These two companies were inspected by me on Wednesday, the 18th March. Their arms and accoutrements were in good order, but I discovered that one or two rifles had been cleaned with emery powder, and I would suggest that a circular should be sent to each district warning Volunteers against using this, for I feel sure that it is only ignorance of the bad effect upon the weapon that induced the men I speak of to use it. Their drill was very creditable.

(6.) *Nelson Naval Volunteers*.—Of this corps there was a remarkably good attendance, considering it was a very wet night. Their arms were in very good order, and on parade their appearance is most smart-looking and effective. The drill they went through was well done, but owing to the noise of the rain on the roof of the shed it was impossible to hear anything. I went out one afternoon in the boat belonging to this corps, when the crew appeared to be well up in their work.

(7.) *Nelson College Cadets*.—At noon on Thursday, the 20th March, I inspected the College Cadets. They have no uniform at present. Their carbines were in very fair order, but a great deficiency of snap-caps and stoppers. Captain Mackay, the commanding officer of this corps and second master, suggested to me that when the new carbines arrived, if he were allowed twelve, he would be personally responsible for their being kept in good order, and that they should be kept only for a squad of boys for the purpose of rifle practice, as no more than that number would be allowed to go out at once. The boys were drilled for some time by Staff Sergeant-Major Alborough, and acquitted themselves very well.

Normanby Hussars.—This corps I did not inspect, as I was informed by Major Pitt that he had already recommended that they should be disbanded. This ended my inspection in Nelson. And, in conclusion, I beg to report to the Hon. Colonel Whitmore most favourably upon the general efficiency of Major Pitt, commanding the district, and the officers under his command; also upon the good feeling existing between the officers and volunteers of the different corps, and upon the general interest in the Volunteer movement taken by the public of Nelson. Whilst in Nelson I inspected in numbers as follows:—

					Officers.			Volunteers.
Stoke Rifles	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	44
H Battery	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	58
City Rifles	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	41
Naval Brigade	...	...	...	...	3	..	...	39
					—			—
Total	...	...	...	...	11	...	...	182
					—			—
Artillery Cadets	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	29
City	..	...	...	...	2	...	...	33
College	..	...	...	...	3	...	...	48
					—			—
					6			110
					—			—

I arrived in Auckland from Nelson on Monday, the 24th March, and commenced on Tuesday, the 25th, by inspecting the corps marked in the margin.

(8.) *Victoria Rifles*; (9.) *Auckland Scottish*; (10.) *Hobson Rifles*.—I regret to say that a heavy thunderstorm with torrents of rain prevented a very full muster. The arms and accoutrements were in very good order. The companies were put through company drill by their respective officers, after which Major Derrom, the officer in charge of the district during the absence of Major Withers, took over the battalion, and put it through the usual evolutions. With the exception of the Victorian Rifles, I had some fault to find with the want of steadiness, but I must commend the steadiness in the ranks and the wheeling of the Victorian Rifles, showing the attention paid to their drill and discipline by their commanding officer, Major Derrom.

(11.) *Auckland Engineers*.—On the following evening I inspected the Engineers, of whom there was a very good muster. The arms and accoutrements were in very good order, and they were put through company drill and bayonet exercise, and acquitted themselves to my entire satisfaction. I was informed that money had been granted to this corps for the purpose of procuring proper engineering tools, &c. I cannot conclude the report on this corps without paying a compliment to their most excellent band, under Bandmaster Impey. It is the best I have as yet heard in this country. On the 27th March the Auckland Artillery paraded for inspection.

(12.) *Auckland Artillery, A Battery*.—The guns, carbines, and accoutrements were in excellent order, and after each officer had exercised the battery in marching drill, detachments were taken without picking out of the ranks, and I was much pleased with the smart manner in which the gun drill, as well as dismantling, was performed. I had to find fault with the marching drill, which was not so steady as it might have been, and also for considerable talking in the ranks.