

SESSION II.  
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# NEW ZEALAND NAVAL FORCES.

REPORT OF THE COMMODORE COMMANDING THE NEW ZEALAND STATION, FOR THE  
PERIOD 1ST JULY, 1922, TO 30TH JUNE, 1923.

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

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## REPORT.

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The Hon. the Minister of Defence.

SIR,—

Navy Office, Wellington, 10th July, 1923.

I have the honour to submit the following annual report in regard to the Naval Forces of the Dominion, covering the period 1st July, 1922, to 30th June, 1923.

### I. H.M.S. "CHATHAM'S" PROCEEDINGS.

H.M.S. "Chatham" has continued her primary peace-time duty of visiting the islands of the South Pacific included within the limits of the New Zealand Station, and in affording sea-going training to the locally entered recruits after the completion of their harbour training in H.M.S. "Philomel."

In August, 1922, she visited the main New Zealand ports north of Auckland *en route* for Lautoka, Fiji, where a month was spent in carrying out gunnery, torpedo, and other exercises with satisfactory results. From Fiji she left for Australia for combined exercises with the Australian Fleet, visiting the New Hebrides and New Caledonia *en route*, as, although on the Australian Station, visits of British men-of-war to these places are infrequent. Unfortunately, just before arrival at Noumea an outbreak of influenza occurred, necessitating the cancellation of the Australian visit and a return to Auckland, where the crew went into quarantine at Motuihi. Although of pneumonic type, the cases were mild in character, and all made a good recovery. When clear of quarantine the "Chatham" proceeded to Lyttelton, and thence to Wellington.

At Wellington the ship's company of the "Chatham" carried out their annual musketry course at the military camp at Trentham during November and December. I consider that the benefit to discipline and health derived from the annual course at this splendid camp is of equal value to the instruction in small-arms.

As my visit to Australia had been unavoidably postponed, and as there were several important naval matters, in which the Commonwealth and Dominion were jointly concerned, requiring settlement, I took the opportunity whilst the ship was lying at Wellington to visit Melbourne by mail-steamer, where the various matters were arranged with the Commonwealth Naval Board with satisfactory results.

Shortly prior to Christmas the "Chatham" docked at Auckland, and annual leave to the ship's company was given.

The following month I took the three seagoing units on the New Zealand Station (the "Chatham" and the Imperial sloops "Laburnum" and "Veronica") to sea for gunnery, torpedo, and other exercises in the Hauraki Gulf, the experience being of great value to the young New Zealand seamen and stokers on board the flagship. The latter then proceeded to Australia, where day and night full-calibre squadron firings were first carried out outside Jervis Bay with the Royal Australian Fleet. This was the first occasion in peace-time on which ships maintained by Imperial or different Dominion Governments have co-operated, and it is hoped that it may be the forerunner of many others on a