

skirmishing has been conducted on the principles and according to the instructions laid down in Circular No. 157, dated Wellington, 16th October, 1874; and all available spots of broken ground, bush, and scrub have been selected for these exercises, in order to accustom, as far as may be practicable, the younger hands in the Force to their probable movements in the field.

The regulation annual course of musketry instruction was commenced on the 1st November, and completed on the 15th December, 1874, at head-quarters, under the supervision of the officer then commanding the district, Inspector Scannell. Of the practical results of this course of instruction you have already been informed in the ordinary manner, but it may not be out of place for me here to mention that it was so far creditable to the district that, out of 73 men who went through, many of whom were recruits, not less than 23 qualified as marksmen.

3. *Operations in the Field.*—Owing to the extremely peaceable conduct of the Natives there has been no necessity for any operations of this nature during the past year.

4. *Patrolling and Scouting.*—For the same reason, no duty of this description had to be performed.

5. *Conveying Mails and Despatches.*—There is a subsidized service for the conveyance of the public mails, of which there is a delivery from Napier and Tauranga twice a week, so that no men of the Force have been engaged on this duty; but a mounted orderly leaves head-quarters daily *en route* to Tapuaeharuru, the nearest telegraph station, eleven miles distant, and returns thence the same evening. His duty it is to carry to and fro any telegraphic or other despatches that may arise, and by this means the transaction of the public business is greatly facilitated. Communications are forwarded to the several posts, in the intervals between the delivery of the mails, by the mounted men of the Force.

6. *Escorts and Guards.*—No necessity has arisen for the furnishing of any escorts during the past year. A non-commissioned officer and 3 men mount guard, at each post, at 9 p.m., and come off duty the following morning at 6 o'clock, whenever the strength of the respective stations will permit; but when, as is sometimes the case, large bodies of men are camped out at roadwork, and the number of men actually doing camp duty is thus rendered extremely limited, a night-watchman only is put on to keep a look-out in case of fire or other unusual occurrence. A non-commissioned officer is also invariably on general duty at each station throughout the day.

7. *Making and Improving Target Ranges.*—The target range at each station being now complete, but little duty of this nature has been required. However, at Tapuaeharuru the range has been considerably improved, cleared of fern and tea-tree, new firing butts erected, and the mantlets repaired.

At Opepe the range has been repaired in a like manner. The firing butts on this range have been greatly strengthened by placing slabs all round them, and thus preventing the earth, which is of a very loose and sandy nature, from working away when men lie down to fire.

8. *Telegraph Linesmen.*—Mounted Constable George Crossman acted as linesman to the Telegraph Station at Tapuaeharuru during the preceding year, up to the 21st September. He was then discharged at his own request, for the purpose of being permanently placed on the Telegraph Department. Mounted Constable Andrew Craig was then appointed linesman, and he is acting in that capacity at the present time. The man who performs this duty is only available for Armed Constabulary orderly work under extraordinary and extremely urgent circumstances, and when no other man can be obtained. He attends parades, drills, and mounts guards only when not required by the Telegraph Department.

9. *Issuers and Storekeepers.*—Constable R. B. Vincent acted as sub-storekeeper for the district up to 23th February, 1875, when he was discharged for the purpose of being appointed in the Inspector of Stores' Office at Wellington. Foot Constable Donald Blyth was then posted in his stead, and continues to fill the duties now. Constable Maycock was employed as issuer to Captain Mair's Native Contingent, at Te Niho-o-te-Kiore, until October, 1874, when he was transferred to the Tauranga District on the occasion of the amalgamation of the Native Contingent with the Armed Constabulary.

10. *Erection of Redoubts and Stockades.*—The palisading and breastwork round each redoubt have been repaired and improved as occasion required, the parade grounds enlarged and levelled, and the whole kept in a thorough state of cleanliness and repair.

CIVIL DUTIES.

1. *Steps taken for the Prevention of Crime.*—On the 24th November, by direction of Inspector Scully, of the Napier Police Force, a man named Charles H. Pope was arrested at Tapuaeharuru on a charge of forgery; he was taken to Pohui, in the custody of a mounted constable, and there handed over to the civil authorities.

2. *Attending Civil Courts.*—A sitting of the Resident Magistrate's Court has been held fortnightly at Tapuaeharuru, presided over by the Resident Magistrate of the district, and on these occasions two men of the Force have always been in attendance. A non-commissioned officer acts in the capacity of clerk to the Bench, and the men of the force are employed as required, serving summonses and other processes of the Court.

3. *Taking Census.*—Two mounted orderlies and one non-commissioned officer were employed in February collecting agricultural statistics in the portions of the provinces of Auckland and Hawke's Bay detailed by Lieut.-Colonel Haultain and Mr. T. Begg.

PUBLIC AND USEFUL WORKS.

1. *Nature and Extent of Roadwork.*—At Opepe all the available men have been employed since January forming a new road on the sections Opepe and Tapuaeharuru, and Opepe and Runanga. On the former section 90 chains of road have been repaired, heavy rains rendering this constantly necessary; and 61 chains of new road completed—37 chains consisting of formation 20 feet wide, and 24 chains of block cutting, containing 2,665 yards cubic of excavation. On the latter section, 121 chains have been completed, 105 chains of which was formation, and 16 chains block cutting and embankment, entailing the removal of 1,611 yards (cubic) of soil.