

SESS. II.—1884.

NEW ZEALAND.

## VOLUNTEER FORCE OF NEW ZEALAND

(REPORT ON).

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

The UNDER-SECRETARY for DEFENCE to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Defence Office, Wellington, 1st June, 1884.

I have the honour to submit returns showing the strength and distribution of the Volunteers on the 31st March, 1884; and also of all descriptions of ordnance, small arms, and ammunition on issue and in store in the colony.

The new regulations which came into force on the 1st January, 1883, the results of which could not be judged until the commencement of the present year, appear to have worked satisfactorily. The suggestions for amendments received from the staff-officers of the various districts have been slight, but will form a subject for your consideration, as well as the necessity of a few slight amendments in the Act, which, if approved by you, for submission to Parliament, would enable the regulations to work smoothly, and obviate the misunderstandings occasionally raised upon technical points.

The returns show that, under the new regulations issued by you, out of a force of all arms, amounting to 4,332 members, 3,394 fulfilled the conditions and became efficient during the past year, as detailed below:—

	Strength on Dec. 31, 1883.	Efficient.	Non-efficient.
Cavalry ... ..	379	285	94
Naval Artillery ... ..	530	419	111
Artillery... ..	634	513	121
Garrison Rifle ... ..	1,621	1,363	258
Country Corps ... ..	1,168	814	354
	4,332	3,394	938

Samples of Morris's tubes, a recent invention largely patronized at Home for assisting Volunteers to carry out a course of musketry instruction in their drill-sheds, have been forwarded to the several districts, which, if generally adopted, should be a great convenience to the Volunteers, as enabling them to carry out their practice in all weathers at convenient times, and obviating the necessity of members having to travel long distances to their several ranges, with the chance of being interrupted by bad weather.

These tubes, carrying a miniature cartridge, are easily adjusted to any breach-loading arm, and only require a range of 30 feet; the usual sighting is used, and the ordinary extractors act precisely in the same manner on the tubes as on the arm without the tube.

An additional advantage is that, although giving an equal result in the practice, the ammunition costs but one-fourth of the ordinary Snider ammunition.

I have, &amp;c.,

H. E. READER, Lieut.-Colonel,  
Under-Secretary for Defence.

The Hon. the Defence Minister, Wellington.