

5. *Conveying Mails and Despatches.*—Until the month of December last, the mail through the district was carried by mounted men of the force. Since then a fortnightly mail carried on by native contract has been established; but to facilitate the transmission of returns, reports, &c., the weekly service by the Force is still retained.

A mounted orderly is despatched daily from Opepe to Tapuaeharuru, and returns the same evening, bringing telegrams received during the day.

Until the telegraph line was extended to Rotorua, all telegrams for Captains Preece and Mair at Te Teko, Fort Galatea and Kaiteriria, distant 75, 40 and 55 miles respectively from Opepe, were carried by orderlies from that post or Tapuaeharuru. On several occasions previous to the extension of the line to Tauranga, telegrams were taken to that post, nearly 100 miles distant.

In January and April, several important telegrams were carried by special orderlies from Tapuaeharuru to Motupuku, distant 15 miles, by direction of the General Government Agent. By order of the Honorable the Defence Minister, on a report of a body of Hau-Haus being in the neighbourhood of Ohinemutu, two mounted men were detached from Opepe to the Ngae, seventy miles, to be at the service of the Telegraph Clerk at that station for conveying despatches; these men were absent on that duty for a month. On the 28th August, 1870, James Bruce, in employment of Ration Contractors, left Opepe at 3 p.m.; was spoken to at the Rangitaiki, and left there for Runanga at 5 p.m.; heavy fall of snow during the night; horse returned to Rangitaiki at 5 p.m. 29th; parties of Armed Constabulary from Opepe and Runanga searching for him for four days; saddle found in a gully leading from bush; no other trace; nothing heard or discovered since. Reward of £5 offered. Natives also searched.

On the 21st October, pursuant to a requisition from F. E. Hamlin, Esq., R. M., Maketu, then engaged in Native matters at Tapuaeharuru, a mounted Non-Commissioned Officer, and two mounted Constables were despatched from Opepe to assist Natives in searching for Mr. Warbrick, acting interpreter to the Telegraph Surveyor, and reported missing between Orakei-Korako and Kaiteriria; they were not required to proceed further than Tapuaeharuru, as one of the Constabulary Orderlies, returning from despatch-carrying to Tauranga, had seen Mr. Warbrick at Kaiteriria, he having lost his horse on the way from Orakei-Korako. On several occasions Orderlies have been sent from Napier overland, by the General Government agent with despatches for the Officer Commanding Wairoa, each journey requiring about seven days to go and return to Napier.

6. *Escorts, Guards, &c.*—The Force has been twice engaged in escorting ammunition from Pohui to the several stations, viz: Te Haroto, Tarawera, Runanga, Opepe, and Tapuaeharuru. On each occasion a guard from the Escort was kept on duty during the night, whilst the Ammunition was being conveyed from station to station.

Each Post furnishes at present a guard of one Non-Commissioned Officer and three men daily. Until the commencement of Road-works in November last, a Non-Commissioned Officer and six men mounted daily at Tarawera, Runanga, and Opepe. During the month of November, one hundred and seven medium converted Snider Rifles were issued in lieu of Enfields, Short Sniders and Carbines. To receive these the men at each Post armed with Enfields, &c., marched to Pohui, 12 miles from Te Haroto the nearest post, and about 65 miles from Tapuaeharuru, the most remote. During their absence Detachments were sent from Opepe to Tapuaeharuru and Runanga, to garrison those Posts, and enable them as well as the men from Tarawera and Te Haroto to receive the new arms.

7. *Making and improving Target Ranges.* A Target Range with Marker's Butt and Mantlet has been made at each Station, at Opepe, Tapuaeharuru, Runanga, and Tarawera, within a mile of the Redoubts. At Te Haroto, the nearest available ground was five miles from the Redoubt. Each Range is, or can be made available for practice up to 900 yards. Wooden Targets of the Regulation size, for Colonial and Constabulary prize-firing have been made at each Post, both for the Snider and Carbine competition.

8. *Telegraph Linesmen.*—Mounted Constable Roger Dansey, arrived in this district in September, and has since acted as Linesman at Tapuaeharuru. He does no duty, except under very pressing circumstances, when no other orderly is available. Since his arrival in the district, he has on five occasions been detailed for repairs of telegraph line, viz.—On 4th November, below Runanga, 34 miles; on 6th December, near the same place; on 2nd March, near Paeroa, about 32 miles; on 26th March, between Runanga and Tarawera; on the 18th May, to Rangitaiki, 24 miles, meeting Tarawera linesman, who had repaired the line. This constable attends all parades, except when required by Telegraph Department.

9. *Issuers and Storekeepers.*—Up to the end of September, two men of the Armed Constabulary were employed, one at Tarawera, and the other at Opepe, as Issuers for the Quarter-master's Department. Since then, the senior non-commissioned officer at each post acts as Issuer and Store-keeper of Government property, under the supervision of the officer in charge.

10. *Erection of Redoubts and Stockades.*—No new redoubts or stockades have been erected since 1st July, 1870. The Runanga and Opepe redoubts have been considerably enlarged and improved, to allow room for erection of barracks, stores, officers quarters, &c., and the parapet to each slabbed all round. A Banquette, and gabion loop-holes have been put up round the Opepe Stockade, since the 1st July. The Tarawera Stockade has also been improved, and slabs for lining parapet are ready. The two block-houses at the angles have been lined and floored, and stoves put up in each; they are now occupied as barracks by the detachment at the post. A stove has also been put up in the Te Haroto Block-house. A system of culverts and drains in and around each of the stockades, made during the year, keep them thoroughly dry and clean in wet weather.

CIVIL DUTIES.

1. *Steps taken for the Prevention of Crime.*—Owing to the scarcity of European population, the Force in the district has not been often required to act in a civil capacity. During the year, three cases of illicit sale of liquor have been discovered at Te Haroto, by the Armed Constabulary, and fines of £20 in each case inflicted. In February last a man named Simpson, for a similar offence at