

inspector and thirty men from Runanga and Tarawera to Okoromatakiwi. These parties had each two Natives attached to them as scouts. The former patrolled from Arawhata towards the main line of road, and also towards Fort Galatea, visiting and examining Herawiwi and inland. The latter patrolled from Okoromatakiwi and inland, and also to Runanga.

Two men of the Armed Constabulary and four Natives were stationed at Pakiranui at the same time to patrol between Tarawera and Runanga, and to keep a look-out on the country towards Waikare-Moana; two men of the Armed Constabulary patrolled daily between Runanga and Pakiranui at the same time.

On the 9th October, Sub-Inspector Morrison, was recalled from the Arawhata (party being left in charge of the senior non-commissioned officer), and despatched with four men of the Armed Constabulary to Tokanu to raise a small body of Natives for scouting the country at the base of Kaimanawa Range. Twenty Natives were taken on pay, and continued on this duty till the 19th December, when they were struck off at the same time that the detachments at Arawhata, Okoromatakiwi, and Pakiranui, returned to their respective stations.

In January last it was reported that Mr. Dolbell's woolshed on the Maungaharuru had been burned down by some persons supposed to be rebel Natives. Sub-Inspector Northcroft and eight men were despatched immediately from Tarawera to ascertain the truth of the statement. On arrival at the site of the woolshed, no tracks of Natives were visible; after two days' searching and examining the country in the vicinity, the party was joined by twenty friendly Natives from Mohaka, and the day after by four mounted men of the Armed Constabulary, Wairoa District. On the search being extended, tracks of a party of about seven men were discovered, leading into a portion of the Urewera country, almost inaccessible from the Taupo side. Other indications of their presence were also discovered, and after following the tracks as far as possible the party returned, being short of rations (and the Natives unwilling to go any farther), as well as to report what had been seen.

On the 11th May a party of one non-commissioned officer and six men were despatched from Opepe to Arawhata, one sub-inspector and ten men to Okoromatakiwi, and one non-commissioned officer and ten men to Pakiranui, to scout the country in their vicinity; at the same time the detachments remaining at Tarawera and Te Haroto sent parties daily to examine and watch the tracks leading from Waikare-Moana to Kaimanawa and Aripia Valley, keeping up a line of communication from Te Haroto to the Arawhata, a distance of over fifty miles. On the 20th May these parties were withdrawn to resume their ordinary duties, on receipt of intelligence that Te Kooti had escaped to Waikato.

During the year mounted men from Opepe and Runanga have been employed daily (except during January and February) in scouting the Kaingaroa Plains and Waipunga Valley as far as Herawiwi, and in keeping up communication with the Native Contingents under Captains Preece and Mair.

Conveying Mails and Despatches.—Up to the 1st January, a mail from Napier to the several posts in the district was conveyed weekly by mounted men of the force. It was discontinued on that date, when a contract for a bi-weekly mail was entered into by the Government. A mounted orderly is despatched daily from Opepe to Tapuaeharuru, returning the same evening with any telegrams or other despatches which may have arrived.

Up to the 17th March, a mounted orderly was stationed at Napier for the purpose of conveying despatches from the General Government Agent to Wairoa. All communication between the posts (except those now forwarded by mail) are taken by the mounted men of the force.

During the expeditions of the Native Contingents under Captains Preece and Mair, telegrams were continually despatched to and from these officers by mounted orderlies of the Armed Constabulary.

Escorts, Guards, &c.—One escort furnished from each post conveying ammunition through the district. Escorts furnished twice in charge of civil prisoners from Tapuaeharuru to Napier. A guard of one non-commissioned officer and three men mounts daily at each post. Guards of honor consisting of the available men of each detachment were furnished during the recent visit of His Excellency the Governor to the district.

Making and Improving Target Ranges.—New ranges, with markers' butts, &c., erected at Opepe and Tarawera, and the old ones at the other stations improved. Wooden targets for annual course of musketry, Representative and Constabulary prize-firing, made as required.

Telegraph Linemen.—Mounted Constable Roger Dansey, A.C., acts as lineman at Tapuaeharuru, and is not placed on Armed Constabulary duty except under very pressing circumstances. He attends all drills and parades except when required for telegraph duty.

Issuers and Storekeepers.—A man of the Armed Constabulary is employed as sub-storekeeper for the district under the "Public Stores Act."

Erection of Redoubts and Stockades.—No new redoubts or stockades have been erected during the past year. The earthwork redoubt at Tapuaeharuru has been several times repaired, the stockade at Tarawera reduced, and parapet slabbed. The well and covered way leading to it from blockhouse at Te Haroto having fallen in in consequence of the timber rotting, matai slabs are being split, and the whole is in course of reconstruction.

CIVIL DUTIES.

Attending Civil Courts.—On the 12th October, John Lewis was committed for trial at the Supreme Court by J. Murray Gibbes, Esq., J.P., at Tapuaeharuru for having obtained goods under false pretences. Sergeant C. Brown, Armed Constabulary, attended the Court.

Attending Native Land Courts.—A Court was held at Oruanui, on the 28th March; the attendance of members of the force was not required.

PUBLIC AND USEFUL WORKS.

Nature and Extent of Road Work.—At Opepe, 135.31 chains road, 20 feet wide, completed, consisting of 39½ chains formation, remainder block and side cuttings and embankments; 11,866 cubic yards earth removed, one square chain bush felled and cleared, 44 chains mitre drain pyramidically fascined with manuka fascines fastened with heart of matai pegs.