

I think my address to this company was thoughtful and considerate in the extreme, and it was my intention to revisit Napier to make the promised inspection; but when *en route* with that intention I discovered at Wellington that, notwithstanding on the 27th of March I found it so inefficient as to refrain from then bringing its condition under the notice of the Government, yet, on the 31st of the same month Major Withers found it to be in the efficient state required by the Volunteer Regulations, clause 36, page 30, and Circular Letter No. 93, of 31st of October, 1871; and upon his certificate to that effect its capitulation claim had been passed for payment.

Under circumstances so extraordinary, any further inspection of this corps, and particularly by me, would no doubt have been regarded by it and by the Officer Commanding the district as a mere burlesque.

I have, &c.,

WM. GORDON, Major,
Inspector of Volunteers.

The Under Secretary for Defence, Militia and
Volunteer Branch, Wellington.

No. 6.

Major GORDON, Inspector of Volunteers, to Major WITHERS, Napier.

SIR,—

Wellington, 9th June, 1874.

Having been placed in possession, by the Government, of your letter No. 15, of 27th April last, with its enclosures from Captain Routledge, of the Napier Artillery Volunteers, dated 25th April, in which that officer has reported "That Major Gordon, at the inspection, stated that he came prepared to make an unfavourable report of the Napier Artillery Volunteers," I have the honor to request that you will be pleased to state, seeing that I detained you beside me during the whole time of my address to that corps in the inspection parade in question, whether the accusation is truthful or otherwise.

I will also ask you to state whether it is not a matter of fact that I informed that corps "that I would *not* take advantage of its then condition, by reason chiefly of the incompetency of its Government drill-instructor, to report upon it in any shape to the Government; and that I would hereafter, in the course of six weeks or two months, again make the annual inspection of the corps, and upon which latter inspection my report would be based."

I will be obliged by your addressing your reply to me at Auckland.

I have, &c.,

WM. GORDON, Major,
Inspector of Volunteers.

Major Withers, Napier.

No. 7.

Major WITHERS, Napier, to Major GORDON, Inspector of Volunteers.

SIR,—

Militia and Volunteer Office, Napier, 16th June, 1874.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, wherein you call on me to state as to the truth or otherwise of the expression said by Captain Routledge, commanding Napier Artillery Volunteers, to have been made use of by you at the inspection of that corps on the 27th of March last.

In reply, I have to inform you that you did distinctly make use of the words in question, as well as those you have called to my notice.

I have, &c.,

E. WITHERS, Major,
Commanding Militia and Volunteers.

Major Wm. Gordon,
Inspector of Volunteers, Auckland.

No. 8.

Major GORDON, Inspector of Volunteers, to Major ROBERTS, A.C., Commanding at Tauranga.

SIR,—

Wellington, 9th June, 1874.

Captain Routledge, of the Napier Artillery Volunteers, having informed the Government that Major Gordon, at the inspection of his corps in March last, intimated to his company that "he came prepared to make an unfavourable report of the Napier Artillery Volunteers," I beg to inquire of you, as you (with Captain Marshall) were standing near me during the period of my address to that corps, whether you consider Captain Routledge's statement truthful or otherwise.

I have, &c.,

WM. GORDON, Major,
Inspector of Volunteers.

Major Roberts, A.C., Commanding at Tauranga.

Returned to Major GORDON.

25th June, 1874.

I did not hear Major Gordon make use of the language quoted in this letter, and I should have done so, if it had been used at the time and place mentioned.

J. M. ROBERTS,
Inspector A.C.