

1908.

NEW ZEALAND.

DEFENCE FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND:

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL OF DEFENCE, AND EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF THE NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCES, FOR THE YEAR ENDING 29TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

Laid before both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL OF DEFENCE FOR THE YEAR ENDING
29TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

CONSTITUTION.

THE *personnel* of the Council of Defence, as constituted by "The Defence Act Amendment Act, 1906," was completed by the arrival of Major H. D. Tuson (Manchester Regiment), who took over the duties as Second Military Member (Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General) from the 11th September, 1907, with the local rank of colonel.

MEETINGS.

Fifteen formal meetings of the Council have been held, besides fifteen other meetings, at which routine business was disposed of, the matters considered and dealt with by the Council being scheduled, with the decisions arrived at.

POLICY.

The policy of defence disclosed in last report has been followed in every respect. Regulations have been made to further encourage enlistment and maintain efficiency. Provision has been made for forming reserves, for more decentralisation, increasing the powers and initiative of District Commanders, and for the completion of the necessary staffs, and, generally, endeavours have been made to popularise the Force in the eyes of the public.

Coast defence has been considered in conjunction with the naval authorities, and on the lines laid down by the Imperial Defence Committee, and the work proceeded with accordingly.

The R.N.Z.E. has been reorganized to perform duties in connection with electric lighting at fixed defences.

As it has been decided by the Government that the present system (voluntary enlistment and without pay) is to continue, the attention of the Council must be devoted to endeavouring to obtain a higher standard of efficiency under that system. To do this it is absolutely necessary that means may be devised whereby the whole of the Field Force shall do as much work as possible by daylight in the field, the larger units (regiments and battalions) being brought together as often as possible, and the various arms of which the Force is composed working together more frequently than at present in order that all officers, and especially those of the higher ranks, may obtain some knowledge of their work.

It is the intention of the Council to so revise the regulations governing the earning of capitation and payment for daylight parades that this object may be attained.

Attention will also be devoted to encouraging ex-Volunteers to join Reserve Corps, to the affiliation of Reserve Corps and Rifle Clubs to existing Volunteer units, and the payment of capitation or pay for daylight work to such members of the above as actually turn out for field work with the units to which they are affiliated.

A Promotion Board will be established, to deal with promotions above the rank of captain (this course is followed in England and Australia).

The Board will consist of—

The Inspector-General.

The Officer Commanding the District.

The Senior Combatant Officer of the arm of the service to which the officer whose promotion is under consideration belongs.

The Council also strongly recommends for earnest consideration the question of the establishment of a school, on the lines of that at Kingston, Canada, for the training of future officers, civil engineers, and surveyors.

The Council recommends,—

Uniform, Rank and File.—That greatcoats be supplied, a valuation be made for units already supplied, of those serviceable, the value agreed upon to be paid to those units in lieu of issue. Units receiving issue of greatcoats to have 10s. per year, for three years, deducted from capitation. Field service uniform to be maintained as at present out of capitation, but Dress Regulations must be adhered to.