

1927.

NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND NAVAL FORCES.

REPORT OF THE COMMODORE COMMANDING THE NEW ZEALAND STATION,
FOR THE PERIOD 1st APRIL, 1926, TO THE 31st MARCH, 1927.

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

REPORT.

The Hon. the Minister of Defence, Wellington.

SIR,—

H.M.S. "Diomedé," at Auckland, N.Z., 11th June, 1927.

I have the honour to address to you the following report on the Naval Forces of the Dominion and the proceedings on the New Zealand Station during the year 1st April, 1926, to 31st March, 1927. Until the 9th August, 1926, the station was under the command of my predecessor, Commodore (now Rear-Admiral) Alister F. Beal, C.B., C.M.G., and this period is covered by extracts from his report on supersession. For purposes of reference this report has been divided into seven parts, under the following general headings: I, State; II, Personnel; III, The Naval Base; IV, Reserves; V, Proceedings; VI, Visits of Warships to the Dominion; VII, Drills and Exercises.

I. STATE.

The following is the present composition of the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy: H.M.S. "Diomedé" (broad pendant of Commodore Commanding New Zealand Station), H.M.S. "Dunedin," H.M.S. "Philomel" (non-seagoing depot-ship and training establishment at Devonport, Auckland), H.M. trawler "Wakakura," oiler "Nucula."

H.M. ships "Laburnum" and "Veronica" are also employed on the station under the Commodore Commanding, but at the expense of the Imperial Government.

2. H.M.S. "Dunedin" has been sent to England for refit and to recommission. She is expected to rejoin the squadron at the end of July, after an absence of less than six months from the station.

II. PERSONNEL.

There are at present 299 active-service ratings who have been recruited in New Zealand serving in the New Zealand Division.

2. Recruiting for the New Zealand Division has continued to be satisfactory. During the year forty-nine seamen boys, twenty-two stokers, and one writer have been entered in New Zealand. So far as seamen boys and stokers are concerned there is no shortage of applicants and it is possible to select the best. The number of artisan and artificer candidates is, however, not so satisfactory, and there is inclined to be an insufficiency of competent and experienced workmen. This is doubtless due to the opportunities which are open to skilled men on shore. The following table shows the districts from which the new entries were recruited:—

Regimental District.	Seamen.	Stokers.	Artisans, &c.	Total.
Auckland ..	10	7	..	17
Paeroa ..	5	..	..	5
Whangarei ..	2	..	..	2
Hamilton ..	2	1	..	3
Wellington ..	6	7	1	14
Palmerston North	5	4	..	9
Napier ..	8	1	..	9
Hawera ..	..	..	..	..
Nelson ..	..	..	..	..
Christchurch ..	5	1	..	6
Dunedin ..	1	..	..	1
Invercargill ..	5	1	..	6
Totals ..	49	22	1	72