

EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

INSPECTOR J. CULLEN, AUCKLAND, WAIKATO, AND BAY OF ISLANDS.

The conduct of the Force has been very satisfactory during the year just ended.

I regret to say that sly-grog selling is still carried on briskly in the King-country, notwithstanding the fact that there were 104 prosecutions for this offence during 1900, as against fifty-one during 1899. Defendants who have been previously convicted of this offence now claim the right to be tried by a jury, under the provisions of section 6 of the Indictable Offences Summary Jurisdiction Amendment Act of 1900, and have been committed for trial to the Supreme Court accordingly. I feel sure that the Legislature never intended the provisions of the section quoted to apply to sly-grog selling.

There is urgent necessity for the passing of an Act for the licensing of second-hand dealers and compelling them to keep proper books, which should be open to the inspection of the police at any time within reasonable hours. Many of the second-hand dealers are well-known receivers of stolen goods, and do their utmost to frustrate the efforts of the police in bringing offenders to justice. Instances have come under the notice of the police where articles that were worth £4 or £5 were sold to dishonest second-hand dealers for as many shillings. The worst feature about these second-hand dealers is that they purchase stolen goods from small boys, as well as from grown-up thieves of both sexes.

The single constables stationed in the city have now settled down to barrack-life in the very fine new quarters that were finished early last year. They have a good billiard-table (provided by the men themselves), a well-appointed billiard-room, a library containing about seven hundred good readable volumes, and a large well-lighted reading-room, apart altogether from the billiard-room, where a good selection of the leading magazines and illustrated and other papers are kept and subscribed for by all the single men and a good few of the married ones.

INSPECTOR T. O'BRIEN, NAPIER AND EAST COAST DISTRICT.

Sly-grog selling does not exist in this district. Licensed publicans, with very few exceptions, conduct their premises in a very satisfactory manner, particularly as regards Sunday-trading.

It is gratifying to note that a clause has been inserted in the Maori Councils Act of last session empowering such Councils to make by-laws for regulating the proceedings of *tohungas*, and the punishment of persons who practise on the superstition or credulity of the less enlightened portion of the Native race. Those *tohungas* have in the past done a vast amount of harm by their improper practices.

On the whole, the conduct of the men has been good, and a feeling of contentment seems to exist amongst them. There have been no deaths or dismissals, four resignations, and one resignation under the terms of the Police Provident Fund Act.

INSPECTOR R. J. GILLIES, WANGANUI AND WEST COAST DISTRICT.

An increase in crime must be expected owing to the rapid progress of settlement and increase in population throughout this wonderfully progressive and fertile district, and I anticipate that it will be found necessary in the very near future to considerably increase the number of police in this district, as several new stations will require to be opened, and some of the present stations will have to be increased.

The licensing laws have been well enforced during the year, and there is a marked improvement in the way in which licensed houses are being conducted throughout the district.

I consider that the conduct of the members of the Force as a whole has been good, and the numerous duties have been faithfully performed.

The Police Provident Fund continues to give satisfaction, but I would like to point out that the large percentage which has to be paid comes heavy on the men; hence I would strongly urge that each member of the Force may be allowed a suit of uniform a year.

INSPECTOR P. PENDER, WELLINGTON AND MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

The amendment of the law in respect to dealing with persons charged with indictable offences who desire to plead guilty, provided for in "The Indictable Offences Summary Jurisdiction Amendment Act, 1900," has, so far as I can see at present, proved very beneficial; no less than ten such cases have been dealt with here that would otherwise have been tried at the ensuing sitting of the Supreme Court, at great expense to the country. At the same time I think it would be advisable for the Crown to be represented by the Crown Solicitor in the Supreme Court when such offenders come up for sentence, and I have specially reported in that direction.

The police buildings in the district are all in fair order, and no expenditure of consequence will be required during the ensuing year. The barracks at Mount Cook are proving inadequate, and further accommodation for the training depot is required. Several more cells are also needed at this station.

The training depot continues to do good work, and has been conducted to my entire satisfaction. Fifty-four men have passed through during the year, forty-five of whom have been permanently enrolled in the Force.