

stone-throwing, stowing away on board ship, suicides attempted, and vagrancy, all of which may be classed as unpreventible offences, the increase cannot be said to reflect on the efficiency of the Force.

The percentage of arrests, &c., to the number of offences committed against the person for the year, again rose to 98·55, against 98·14 in 1900, 98·01 in 1899, and 97·65 in 1898; while, for offences against property, the percentage likewise rose to 72·98, against 70·86 in 1900, 68·19 in 1899, and 64·62 in 1898, thus showing that as a detective body the Force continues to improve from year to year.

The percentage of cases where arrests or summonses resulted was 93·86 to all offences reported during the year.

Indecent and sexual offences show a net increase during the year of twenty-nine, the figures being 315 (including four for incest, an offence created by "The Criminal Code Act 1893 Amendment Act, 1900," and consequently appearing for the first time in the returns for the year under review), against 286 for the preceding year.

DRUNKENNESS, ETC.

There were 8,057 charges of drunkenness throughout the colony during the year, being an increase of 758 on the figures of the preceding year. The number contributed by each of the four principal centres was: Auckland, 1,529 (1,292 males and 237 females), against 1,289 in 1900; Wellington, 1,172 (924 males and 248 females), against 1,061; Christchurch, 950 (766 males and 184 females), against 720; and Dunedin, 550 (453 males and 97 females), against 626.

There were 168 arrests for drunkenness on Sundays in the four principal centres, against 172 in 1900. This number is made up as follows: Auckland, 29 (20 males and 9 females), against 25 in 1900; Wellington, 35 (27 males and 8 females), against 54 in 1900; Christchurch, 52 (46 males and 6 females), against 45 in 1900; and Dunedin, 52 (47 males and 5 females), against 48 in 1900. The foregoing figures indicate that Sunday trading is still indulged in to an appreciable extent, and the present state of the law renders it difficult for the police to successfully cope with this class of illegal traffic.

As you are aware, I have advocated amending the licensing laws of the colony in the direction of making all persons, except lodgers and *bond fide* travellers, found on licensed premises during prohibited hours liable to prosecution. I can only reiterate that recommendation.

There were 219 prosecutions against publicans during the year, resulting in ninety-one convictions, against 242 prosecutions and eighty-one convictions in 1900. These prosecutions were distributed as follows: Auckland District, 25, with eleven convictions; Napier, 15, with five convictions; Wanganui, 32, with thirteen convictions; Wellington, 13, with seven convictions; Westland, 51, with twenty-six convictions; Christchurch, 44, with thirteen convictions; and Dunedin, 39, with sixteen convictions.

The following table gives particulars of persons charged with drunkenness in the various districts, and shows the number previously convicted of drunkenness. It will be observed that 40·4 per cent. of the males and 75·819 per cent. of the females have been previously convicted. The 1,287 males and 515 females (22·36 per cent. of the whole) with four or more previous convictions may reasonably be classed as chronic drunkards, or persons who require "saving from themselves," and I submit it has become a moot question whether the time has not arrived when these persons ought to be treated as suffering from a disease, instead of vainly endeavouring to coerce them into sobriety by the imposition of a monetary penalty or temporary loss of liberty, as at present. Dealing with these "old drunks" under the present system takes up a very considerable portion of the time of the police, Magistrates, and prison officials, and is a very considerable expense to the community, with no good result.

RETURN showing the NUMBER of PERSONS charged with DRUNKENNESS during the year 1901 and the Number of Previous Convictions against same, as far as known.

District.	Not Previously Convicted.		One Previous Conviction.		Two Previous Convictions.		Three Previous Convictions.		Four Previous Convictions.		Five Previous Convictions.		Over Five Previous Convictions.		Totals.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Auckland, Waikato, and Bay of Islands	817	78	89	13	106	37	71	29	54	28	30	33	375	88	1,542	306
Napier and East Coast	352	15	73	2	38	5	19	4	14	..	8	..	29	6	533	32
Wanganui and West Coast	596	19	106	7	58	3	23	8	15	..	13	..	38	7	849	44
Wellington and Marlborough	838	64	149	37	75	16	43	11	31	10	17	8	92	111	1,245	257
Nelson and Westland ..	157	8	21	5	10	..	2	..	1	..	2	..	..	1	193	14
Canterbury and North Otago	872	32	190	10	111	5	85	4	65	1	52	4	314	153	1,689	209
Dunedin, Southland, and Lakes	588	20	180	14	83	6	42	9	20	5	24	4	93	56	1,030	114
	4,220	236	808	88	481	72	285	65	200	44	146	49	941	422	7,081	976