

33·69 per cent. of the males and 66·2 per cent. of the females had been previously convicted, and that 13·39 per cent. of the males were not permanent residents of the colony when convicted. I repeat the remarks in my last report anent the futility of attempting to coerce the chronic drunkard into sobriety by the imposition of a monetary penalty or temporary loss of liberty. These unfortunate persons should be treated as if suffering from a disease, and for their own sake as well as for the benefit of the community generally should be placed in some institution, there to be medically treated until they regain their self-control, meanwhile being employed upon some suitable remunerative labour, the proceeds of which should go towards the cost of their maintenance.

RETURN showing the NUMBER of PERSONS charged with DRUNKENNESS during the Year 1902, and the Number of Previous Convictions against same, as far as known.

District.	Not Pre-viously Con- victed.		One Pre-vious Con- viction.		Two Pre-vious Con- victions.		Three Pre-vious Con- victions.		Four Pre-vious Con- victions.		Five Pre-vious Con- victions.		Over Five Previous Convict'ns.		Totals.		Number of within who were Members of Crews of Ves- sels in Port.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Auckland, Waikato, and Bay of Islands	844	10	136	22	117	5	68	8	41	9	28	9	189	69	1,423	132	134
Napier and East Coast	347	13	54	4	27	2	21	5	12	2	10	3	40	7	511	36	14
Wanganui and West Coast	645	29	152	9	79	6	38	..	15	..	4	..	40	4	973	48	19
Wellington and Marlborough	1360	163	93	23	90	20	52	16	27	12	16	10	75	76	1,713	320	554
Nelson and West- land	182	10	44	2	8	1	3	1	..	1	1	2	..	2	238	19	28
Canterbury and North Otago	851	43	189	14	119	8	73	4	42	3	36	7	186	106	1,496	185	108
Dunedin ..	410	14	70	11	57	3	25	5	22	4	12	6	73	63	669	106	122
Southland ..	271	10	35	1	10	2	26	..	10	..	6	..	24	5	382	18	13
	4,910	292	773	86	507	47	306	39	169	31	113	37	627	332	7,405	864	992

SLY-GROG.

There were during the year 122 prosecutions for sly-grog selling, resulting in 64 convictions, against 148 prosecutions and 82 convictions in 1901; the aggregate amount of fines imposed being £762 3s., against £1,164 5s. during the preceding year.

The sly-grog sellers still have the sympathy of those opposed to prohibition, and this sympathy frequently assumes the tangible form of wilful perjury to save the sly-grog dealer from conviction. On the other hand, those in favour of prohibition will not assist the police in procuring convictions, their excuse being that it is the duty of the police to enforce the law without the assistance of the public. It is needless to add that under these circumstances the police experience great difficulty in procuring the necessary evidence to carry a conviction.

The direct cost to the colony in detecting and prosecuting sly-grog cases during the year was £578 5s. 5d.; but owing to the additional prohibited areas after 30th June next, as the result of the recent local-option poll, the expenditure under this head will be much increased in future. It is not, however, likely to exceed the amount of fines imposed, therefore there will be no actual loss to the public funds.

GAMING OFFENCES.

There were 256 prosecutions, resulting in 212 convictions, during the year under the gaming laws, against 104 prosecutions and 83 convictions in 1901.

I reiterate the remarks in my previous reports anent the difficulty the police experience under the existing laws in dealing with the illegal "tote" betting man, and the necessity for amended legislation on the lines of the Bill presented to Parliament a few years back.

The so-called public billiard-rooms are still increasing rapidly throughout the colony, and up to the present the municipal authorities have failed to pass the necessary by-laws giving power to regulate them, with the result that many of them habitually keep open until the early hours of the morning, and occasionally all night. Some of them also open on Sundays. In Wellington quite recently the proprietor of one of these rooms was brought before the Court by the police, charged under "The Police Offences Act, 1884," with keeping his place open on Sunday, but the Magistrate held that the statute did not apply, and the case was dismissed. There were about twenty young men in this saloon when the police visited it on the Sunday in question. As I have before pointed out, the large majority of these billiard-rooms are the resort of spielers and other undesirable characters, who inveigle respectable young men into the rooms for the purpose of gambling.

Some months back, owing to the Australian Commonwealth Federal postal laws interfering with the transmission of money to Tattersall's sweeps, an agency was opened in Wellington for the reception of money in payment of tickets in the various sweepstakes drawn in Hobart. These agents were prosecuted by the police for conducting a lottery against "The Gaming and Lotteries Act, 1881," and a conviction was obtained in the Magistrate's Court. This conviction was appealed against, and the appeal came before a full Court, consisting of four Judges, who held that the statute named did not apply to foreign lotteries, and quashed the conviction accordingly. The position now is that although a lottery cannot be conducted in this colony, it is not illegal to receive money within the colony for a lottery conducted elsewhere. To me this appears an anomaly with which Parliament should be asked to deal.