

Waihi is also in need of an extra constable, there being but one sergeant and two constables to look after a mining population of five thousand, mostly composed of male adults.

The casualties in the Force stationed in this district were as follow : 1 constable and 1 district constable resigned, 1 constable died, 2 sergeants and 2 constables retired on superannuation, and the services of 1 Native constable were dispensed with.

The sly-grog-selling nuisance is still strongly in evidence in the King-country, and will continue so until such time as licensed houses are established by Government, or the introduction of liquor within the proclaimed area is strictly prohibited. During 1903 there were 167 prosecutions for sly-grog selling, as compared with 77 for 1902.

The conduct of the members of the Force has been fair, with the exception of some of the junior hands, who show a marked inclination to avoid doing their duties in a satisfactory manner.

INSPECTOR E. MACDONELL, NAPIER AND EAST COAST DISTRICT.

The return of crime for the year ended the 31st December, 1903, shows that 1,907 offences of various kinds were reported to the police, as against 1,485 during the year 1902. Of these, 1,834 were either arrested or proceeded against by summons, leaving only 73 undetected offences.

The result shows an increase of 422 offences as compared with the previous year, the increase being chiefly in drunkenness (125), gaming (27), obscene language (48), obstructing and resisting police (24), thefts undescribed (47), sheep-stealing (10), and vagrancy (25).

I may say that I attribute the increase to some extent to increased activity on the part of the police for some time back ; at the same time there is no doubt that the prosperity of Dannevirke (due to sawmilling, &c.) is responsible for a good deal of the drunkenness and offences of a disorderly nature.

Forty-five informations for breaches of the licensing laws were laid during the year, resulting in 29 convictions, 13 dismissals, and 3 withdrawn, as against 30 prosecutions and 7 convictions the previous year.

While on this subject I beg to state that, although more successful in these cases than during the previous year, I still experience great difficulty in proving breaches of these laws. I attribute this in a great measure to the serious consequences now of indorsements, which are more dreaded than ever. I venture the opinion that if more discretion were given to Magistrates as to indorsements there would be less difficulty in proving infringements of this law ; at present every possible effort is made to save licenses from indorsements. I am pleased to be able to say that the majority of hotelkeepers, especially in the towns, are conducting their houses very much better than formerly. The case is different with some of the country ones ; but, taken as a whole, there is a considerable all-round improvement.

Several transfers of sergeants and constables were made during the year, which, I am satisfied, has led to increased activity and efficiency.

I am pleased to say that on the whole the conduct of sergeants, constables, and detectives has been good, and, as already stated, increased activity has been noticeable throughout the district for some time.

The sergeants and constables' quarters, with a few exceptions, are in good order and comfortable, and, so far as I can judge, the men appear to be contented with their positions and treatment.

INSPECTOR N. KIELY, WANGANUI AND WEST COAST DISTRICT.

There has been very little crime of a serious nature in this district during the year 1903. Of all offences reported there was an increase of 312 on the previous year.

The licensing laws are enforced strictly throughout the district, and are fairly observed by the publicans.

The successful prosecution of some of the noted sly-grog sellers of Raetihi, resulting in three of them being sentenced to a month's hard labour each, has been a great check on those indulging in that traffic in the back country.

The conduct of members of the Force in this district has been very good during the past year, excepting in one or two instances, where punishment has been inflicted for breaches of the regulations. On the whole, the men are sober and attentive to their duty.

INSPECTOR J. W. ELLISON, WELLINGTON AND MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

The increase of population and general prosperity no doubt accounts for the increase of drunkenness, and the latter to some extent accounts for an increase in certain offences.

During 1903 there was an increase of 363 offences, including 194 of drunkenness, as will be seen by the annual offences return. There was, however, a small decrease in the number of undetected offences, the number being 192, against 204 for 1902. The undetected offences include numerous trivial ones ; in fact, very few of the more serious class remain undetected.

Two juvenile offenders and two adults gave considerable trouble during the year, each pair having committed several crimes of housebreaking and theft. They were, however, discovered, and nearly all the stolen property was restored to the owners.

The most serious offence during the past twelve months was the murder of a man in February at Te Awaite, the motive being personal spite and revenge. As you are aware, the murderer has not yet been discovered, although continued exertions are being made to trace him.