

During the year 1912, 1,013 offences of all kinds were reported, as against 877 for 1911, an increase of 136. The principal increases were gaming offences 13; assaults, common, 21; failing to maintain near relatives, 13; malicious injury to property, 31; opium-smoking, 15; and thefts (undescribed), 36. The increase in the number of offences for gaming and opium-smoking is attributable to more attention having been given by the police to the Chinese quarters in Greymouth and other towns in this district; while the number of cases of maintenance and theft are attributable to the dull times, owing to the miners (about 700) in the Consolidated Group of mines at the Globe and Waiuta being on strike for over six months. The increase in the number of offences for malicious injury to property is difficult to account for, except it be a spirit of mischief which at times prevails among a certain section of this and all other communities. Of the offences reported, 976 were detected and the offenders either arrested or summoned, leaving a balance of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. undetected.

The conduct of the members of the Force in this district during the past year has been generally good, and I have only found it necessary to inflict one fine.

No serious offences were reported during the past year.

I have no recommendations to make as to any amendment in the criminal law, which at present seems sufficient to meet all purposes. There is, however, one matter to which I beg to draw attention, viz.: at present there seems to be no power given to Stipendiary Magistrates to vary their decisions, when given and entered in the criminal-record book, committing an offender to a certain prison, although he may afterwards be arrested a considerable distance from that particular prison, and much nearer another prison, the cost of escort thus being thrown upon the Police Department. Two instances of this kind have lately arisen in this district, the Magistrate holding he had no power to vary the warrant from one prison to another.
