

INSPECTOR O'DONOVAN, NAPIER DISTRICT.

I beg to submit my report on the Napier Police District for the year ending 31st March, 1914.

The authorized strength of the Force in the district on that date was 53, being an increase of 3 constables since the 31st March, 1913. This increase is accounted for by the addition of 2 constables to the strength at Napier Station, one being for clerical duty in the district office and one for street duty; the third was appointed to the newly opened station at Motu.

Three constables resigned during the year.

There are now in the district—1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 3 sergeants, 1 detective sergeant, 2 detectives, 45 constables, 4 district constables, 1 Native constable.

A female searcher has been appointed at Napier Station, and arrangement has been made for similar services at Gisborne.

Residents of Takapau and Te Araroa are still pressing for the establishment of stations at their townships. Of the two, the necessity is more urgent at Te Araroa, on account of the local conditions. A considerable settled population, as well as a large floating one, is now in the locality, while the nearest police-station to the south is at Port Awanui—about twenty-three miles distant—and to the north, coastwise, at Opotiki—about eighty miles. Accidents to bushmen and fatalities are frequent in this wide and remote district; a large Maori population is distributed over it; and the endeavour to enforce compliance with the liquor laws in this Native prohibited district is not so effective as desirable.

Owing to the extension of building and residences in Napier South, application has been made for a resident constable within the town district. The necessity for a police-station in a central spot in South Napier is becoming more evident every day.

Last year I recommended increases at Gisborne and Hastings, and I have to repeat that recommendation, owing to steady increase in population and in the volume of police-work. Another constable is also required at Dannevirke. There are two there now, but the time of one of them is taken up principally with the country work, leaving only one constable available for duty in the town with the sergeant. In these circumstances a constable cannot be spared from Dannevirke to relieve or assist, when required, the men in charge of the dependent stations of the sergeant's subdistrict.

The total number of offences reported in the year 1913 was 2,103, as compared with 2,197 for 1912—a decrease of 94. Of the offences reported, 2,029 were prosecuted on arrest or summons, leaving 74 undetected. This gives the percentage of detected crime 96·5. The actual total increase or decrease, however, is of very little significance, as the minor offences may account mainly for that result. The increases in some classes of offences amounted to 214, while the decreases in others were 308. The net decrease therefore was 94. The decrease in drunkenness alone accounts for 43 of these.

Increases in the following offences are recorded: Burglary and housebreaking, 14; false pretences, 18; thefts (undescribed), 48; abusive and threatening language, 14; disobeying orders of Court, 17; vagrancy, 27. The following offences show decreases: Sexual offences against girls, 9; forgery and uttering, 7; mischief, 10; malicious injuries to property, 13; breaches of the peace and common assault, 15; disorderly and riotous conduct, 19; disturbing meetings and congregations, 14; drunkenness, 43; obstructing police, 14; failing to maintain wives, &c., 20; neglected and criminal children, 38.

A high standard of conduct has been maintained by the men in the district. No complaints of misconduct on the part of the police against members of the community have been made during the year. In one or two cases laxity has been observed, and changes made in consequence.

Telephones have been installed during the year in the following police-stations, and have proved to be of very great assistance: Clive, Havelock North, Patutahi, Tekaraka, Tolaga Bay, Taradale.

INSPECTOR WRIGHT, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

I beg to submit the following report upon the Hamilton Police District:—

The authorized strength of the Force on the 31st March last was—1 Inspector, 2 senior sergeants, 54 constables, 1 detective sergeant, 2 district constables, and 3 Native constables.

During the past year increases have been authorized as follows: Hamilton, 1 constable; Taumarunui, 1 constable; and Te Kuiti, 1 constable. The increased strength was urgently required to meet the rapid growth of settlement in the King-country and the Waikato, and is much appreciated.

Further additions to the strength are now, or will be, required during the year, viz.: Hamilton, 1 detective; Frankton, 1 constable; Putaruru, 1 constable; Ohura, 1 constable. At Hamilton the want of a detective is badly felt, and there is ample work for one in the town and surrounding district.

Owing to the large number of trains now passing through Frankton Junction—two of the Main Trunk expresses going through in the early hours of the morning—it is essential that another constable be stationed at that place, so that all express trains can be met. Apart from the railway, the population of the borough is rapidly increasing, and 1 constable cannot do justice both to trains and town.

A constable will shortly be required at Putaruru, a busy sawmilling township on the Rotorua line, at the junction of that line and the Taupo Totara Company's line, which is about to be reconstructed from Putaruru and extended to Taupo. At present there is no police-station between Rotorua and Morrinsville, a distance of sixty-nine miles. Putaruru is about half-way between those places, and a good subdistrict can be formed to take in Tirau, Okoroire, Hinuera, &c., all rising townships and centres of districts that are getting settled rapidly.