

The number of offences reported during the year 1915 was 4,110, as compared with 4,259 for the previous year. Of the 4,110 offences reported, in 3,962 cases persons were apprehended or summoned, leaving only 148 offences undetected. The principal increases in crime during the year were—false pretences, 10; gaming offences, 13; illegally on premises, 23; obscene language, 17; malicious injury to property, 9; sheep-stealing, 5; and vagrancy, 17. The principal decreases were—common assaults, 31; disorderly conduct, 19; indecent exposure, 18; obstructing and resisting police, 16; soliciting prostitution, 17; thefts (undescribed), 43; thefts from dwellings, 14; thefts from the person, 11; and trespass, 18. The decrease in the number of offences as compared with last year's return is spread over the various offences, and calls for no special mention.

The conduct of the men, with a few exceptions, has been very good during the year, and sergeants and constables have shown a desire to honestly discharge the various duties allotted them.

SUPERINTENDENT WRIGHT, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

The authorized strength in the Dunedin District on the 31st March, 1916, was 1 Superintendent, 1 Sub-Inspector, 2 senior sergeants, 10 sergeants, 89 constables, 1 Chief Detective, 1 detective-sergeant, 1 detective, 1 matron, and 1 surgeon. There has been no increase or decrease in the strength during the year, and I do not anticipate that any increase will be necessary during the coming year.

The casualties during the year have been 2 constables retired on superannuation, 1 medically unfit, 3 resigned, and 1 was dismissed.

The offence return for 1915 shows that 2,417 offences were reported, as compared with 2,482 in the previous year, a net decrease of 65. There have been small increases and decreases under different headings, but none of them are of sufficient importance to call for comment. Of the total number of offences reported (2,417) 2,340, or over 96 per cent., were accounted for either by arrest or summons. Of 88 persons committed for trial, 72 were subsequently convicted. There were no serious crimes during the year that call for special mention; in fact, the district has been particularly free from crime of a serious nature, and is, generally speaking, a very orderly and law-abiding community.

Sly-grog selling in this district is kept well in hand, and there is no reason to believe that an extensive trade is carried on. Last year the fines inflicted for this offence amounted to £145, as compared with £170 in 1914.

The conduct of the police during the year has been on the whole satisfactory. There have been some who have had to be punished and otherwise dealt with, and 1 was dismissed for serious misconduct. The present Force is doing good work willingly and well.

INSPECTOR PHAIR, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the district on the 31st March, 1916, was 1 Inspector, 2 senior sergeants, 5 sergeants, 57 constables, 1 detective-sergeant, 2 district constables, 3 Native constables. During the year the strength has been increased by 2 constables—1 at Hamilton and 1 at Taumarunui.

During the past year new and up-to-date station buildings were erected at Hamilton, a new station was opened at Putaruru, and the station at Hikuaui was closed.

Four constables were discharged on resignation, and 1 constable died in this district.

The offences return for 1915 shows that 2,136 offences were reported, as compared with 1,992 for the previous year, a net increase of 144. Increases appear under the following heads: Breaches of the peace, 12; counselling the commission of an offence, 18; disobeying order of Court, 15; disorderly and riotous conduct, 22; vagrancy, 24; malicious injury to property, 12; Neglected children, 24; sly-grog selling, 19; theft (undescribed), 91. Decreases were as follows: Burglary, 16; forgery and uttering, 12; indecent behaviour, 15; receiving stolen goods, 5; theft from dwellings, 17.

Sly-grog selling is still giving the police in the King-country and the no-license areas a good deal of trouble, notwithstanding the heavy fines inflicted upon those detected. The police are using every means in their power to check this illicit dealing in liquor. During the past year £1,775 was inflicted in fines, of which £1,570 was imposed in the King-country. During the previous year the total amount of fines inflicted was £1,157.

The conduct of all members of the Force during the year has, with one exception, been excellent. They have performed their duties in a highly satisfactory manner, and no friction has existed either among themselves or with the general public.

INSPECTOR McGRATH, NAPIER DISTRICT.

On the 31st March last the authorized strength of the district was 66 of all ranks, being an increase of 3 during the year. The total is made up as follows: 1 Inspector, 1 Sub-Inspector, 2 senior sergeants, 4 sergeants, 53 constables, 1 detective-sergeant, 2 detectives, 2 district constables.

During the year the following increases were authorized: Napier, Gisborne, Hastings, and Dannevirke, 1 constable each; a sergeant has been placed in charge at Wairoa, and the district constable there has been appointed a regular member of the Force. At Tuparoa a regular member of the Force has been appointed to take the place of the Native constable who retired. A constable is still required at Te Araroa.