

EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

SUPERINTENDENT KIELY, AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

On the 31st March last the authorized strength of the Force in this district was 183 of all ranks, made up as follows: 1 Superintendent, 1 Inspector, 1 Sub-Inspector, 3 senior sergeants, 21 sergeants, 147 constables, 1 Chief Detective, 2 detective-sergeants, and 6 detectives. In addition there were 5 district constables, 4 Native constables, 3 special constables, 1 matron, and 1 surgeon. The actual strength on the 31st March last was 178, there being 5 constables under strength.

The police-station at Herekino has been closed. The watch-house building adjoining the Auckland Station has been demolished and a new three-story building, including further cell accommodation, is being erected in its place. This building is a very real necessity, as the office and cell accommodation in the old building was quite inadequate.

During the year 1 constable retired on superannuation, 1 constable was discharged medically unfit, and 11 constables resigned.

Twelve constables were fined for minor breaches of the regulations, otherwise the conduct of the men in general has been very good.

The total number of offences reported for the year 1916 was 5,105, as compared with 6,375 in the previous year, a net decrease of 1,270. Of the total number of offences reported, over 95 per cent. were accounted for by either arrest or summons. The following are the principal increases and decreases: Increases—Bankruptcy offences, 14; carnally knowing girls, 14; deserting or absenting from merchant vessels, 45; forgery and uttering, 29; gaming offences, 46; keeping disorderly houses or brothels, 13; rape, 4. Decreases—Abusive, insulting, or threatening words or behaviour, 23; common assaults, 83; breaches of the peace, 20; disobeying orders of the Court, 44; drunkenness, 709; failing to provide for wives, &c., 48; false pretences, 50; illegally on premises, 25; mischief, 15; obscene language, 42; soliciting prostitution, 26; theft by servants, 15; theft from dwellings, 42; and vagrancy, 4. The remarkable decrease in drunkenness alone is very gratifying indeed, as is also the marked decrease in serious crime. No doubt the War Regulations dealing with anti-treating have to some extent helped towards the reduction of drunkenness. These regulations have been rigidly enforced throughout the district as far as practicable, and I am pleased to be able to report that their provisions are being more generally observed of late. The salutary fines imposed on offenders brought before the Court have helped considerably towards attaining that very desirable end. The War Regulations, too, dealing with houses of ill fame, and particularly one-woman brothels, have been most effective in their general application. They have helped to rid the City of Auckland in no uncertain way of the one-woman-brothel pest, which was, unfortunately, so much in evidence previous to their introduction. It is to be hoped when the war is over and these regulations expire by effluxion of time that steps will be taken to have their provisions embodied in an Act of Parliament. By so doing an embargo will be placed on immorality, and prostitution will not be quite so remunerative an occupation as heretofore.

SUPERINTENDENT NORWOOD, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

On the 6th December, 1916, I arrived at Wellington on transfer from Invercargill, and took over charge of the district.

The actual strength of the Force in this district as on the 31st March, 1917, was 166, viz.: 1 Superintendent, 1 Inspector, 1 Sub-Inspector, 6 senior sergeants, 13 sergeants, 135 constables, 1 Chief Detective, 4 detective-sergeants, 2 detectives, 1 surgeon, 1 matron. The authorized strength is 177, there being a shortage of 1 sergeant, 7 constables, and 3 detectives.

The authorized strength of the district has been increased by 1 sergeant, appointed to charge of the Wharf Police. This sergeant, with 6 constables, has been detailed to take up permanent duty on the waterfront, the use of a room having been obtained from the Harbour Board for a Police office. Prior to this arrangement being made this duty was performed by beat-duty constables, who were changed every fortnight. The present system has proved very satisfactory; it permits the men to thoroughly grasp the requirements of the traffic and become competent to cope with the police-work required to be done about this most important and busy portion of the city.

During the year 1 constable retired on superannuation, and 2 constables were dismissed; 16 constables resigned, the majority of them to proceed to the front.

The total number of all offences reported for the year ending 31st March, 1917, was 6,262. Of this number, 5,957 cases were dealt with by the Courts, 305 cases being undetected or abandoned for the want of sufficient evidence to prosecute. 172 cases were of an indictable nature and dealt with in the Supreme Court. Increases are under the following headings: Absconding from industrial schools, 83; common assaults, 36; furious riding and driving, 25; gaming offences, 32; keeping disorderly houses, 16; neglected and criminal children, 29; theft, 39; vagrancy, 28. The principal decreases were—Burglary, 11; disobeying orders of Court, 14; drunkenness, 782; failing to provide maintenance, 20; illegally on premises, 10; indecent exposure and behaviour, 20; malicious injury to property, 22; obscene language, 33; obstructing and resisting police, 29; sly-grog selling, 13.

It will be noticed that the greatest decrease under any individual heading is that for drunkenness, there being the substantial decrease of 782 cases for the year. Large decreases