

threatening behaviour, 25; burglary, breaking into shops and dwellings, 15; drunkenness, 226; failing to provide for wives and families, 14; forgery and uttering, 7; gaming offences, 33; manslaughter, 3; obscene and profane language, 10; obstructing and resisting police, 6; theft (undescribed), 70; theft from dwellings, 11; trespass, 10.

The conduct of the police throughout the year has been good, and both the uniform and detective branches have performed their duties in a highly satisfactory manner.

I have to again recommend that the licensing law be amended in so far as it applies to Natives. I suggest that a Native be placed on the same footing as a prohibited person in so far that it be made an offence for a Native to be found with liquor in his possession; and, further, that authority be granted the police to search Natives who are suspected of having liquor in their possession, and to seize the liquor when found, without warrant.

In the Maori prohibited district of Horouta it is unlawful to sell or supply liquor to Natives on or off licensed premises, but Natives may frequent the bars or any part of such licensed premises. I would recommend that it be made an offence for a Native to be found in a bar and for a licensee to allow a Native in a bar in such district.

INSPECTOR HENDREY, WANGANUI DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the district is 1 Inspector, 2 Sub-Inspectors, 3 senior sergeants, 2 detective-sergeants, 6 sergeants, 73 constables, and 1 district constable.

An increase of 1 constable is required at Ohakune, which is a growing centre, and in the near future a constable will be required at Halcombe, close to which township large freezing-works are being erected. When these works are completed a large number of men will find constant employment, and the population in and around Halcombe will increase largely.

Three constables resigned during the year in this district.

The offences return shows a total of 2,376 offences reported during the year, out of which 2,299 offences were detected and dealt with. This shows an aggregate net decrease of 207 on the number of offences reported in the preceding year. No very serious crimes were reported during the year. The principal increases were: Burglary, breaking and entering, &c., 19; furious riding and driving, 21; indecent exposure, &c., 20; mischief, 16; and vagrancy offences, 28. The principal decreases were: Abusive and threatening behaviour, 18; breaches of the peace, 17; disobeying orders of Court and summons, 20; drunkenness, 201; obscene and profane language, 18. The decrease in drunkenness is no doubt largely due to the War Regulations prohibiting treating.

With the exception of two constables who were fined for neglecting duty, the conduct of the men has been excellent. The sergeants and constables have shown a keen interest in their duties, a large amount of work has been done in inquiring *re* returned soldiers, passports, keeping the alien population under close observation, and the collection of agricultural statistics, &c.

Notwithstanding the vigilance of police, sly-grog selling is still carried on in the Mokau, Awakino, Ohakune, and Raetihi districts. The police have been very successful in dealing with offenders, and during the year fines amounting to £265 have been imposed.

INSPECTOR CRUICKSHANK, GREYMOUTH DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force at the 31st March last was 1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 4 sergeants, 35 constables, and 1 detective; total, 42; the strength having been increased during the year by 1 detective. There were 3 constables short of authorized strength.

One constable was retired on superannuation, and 1 constable was called upon to resign.

The conduct of members of the Force on the whole has been good, very few punishments being inflicted.

There were 571 offences reported during the year, being a decrease of 263 on the number reported the previous year, the decrease being principally under the heading of drunkenness and other offences not of a serious nature.

INSPECTOR FOURY, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1917, the authorized strength of all ranks was as follows: 1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 3 sergeants, 35 constables, 1 detective-sergeant.

An additional constable has been stationed at Invercargill during the year. One constable was discharged on resignation.

The conduct of all ranks of the Force in this district has been good. In only one instance has a fine been inflicted for breach of the Police Regulations.

During the year ending the 31st March, 1917, 735 offences were reported, as against 867 in the preceding year. Of the 735 cases reported, 713 resulted in prosecutions, including 25 cases committed for trial at the Supreme Court. There were increases under the following headings: Failing to provide maintenance, 7; false pretences, 9; mischief, 11; stone-throwing, 11; thefts, 24; thefts from dwellings, 5; thefts of post letters, 9. The increase in the charges of mischief, thefts, and thefts from dwellings is accounted for by an unusual number of youths who were dealt with in the Juvenile Court. A general decrease covers all the other classes of offences to the extent of 145, the most notable decrease being under that of drunkenness—74 cases less than last year.