

remedy, and within a month after the event mentioned the Finance Act was passed containing a clause (14) making the same provision for the police as for soldiers who had taken part in the war as members of the Expeditionary Forces. This measure has given great satisfaction to the Force in general. Under it several cases have already been relieved, its application being retrospective.

Those members of the Force who resigned, joined the Expeditionary Force, and were reappointed constables on their return to the Dominion, have been restored to their former position on the seniority list, and their superannuation rights have been revived, as authorized by the Police Force Amendment Act, 1919, in fulfilment of the assurance of the Department given in my report for 1919. The Government, with characteristic generosity, contributed the amount of their superannuation premiums which were payable during their absence.

The same Act made permanent provision for the appointment of temporary constables when required. Advantage has been taken of that power to appoint recruits as temporary constables for a period of probation—generally three months—and in that way the Act has given relief to the Department. This course was expedient owing to the fact that the training-depot has been closed since December, 1916. Arrangements are now being made to reopen it, and the former and more satisfactory method of training recruits for several months before approval and appointment will be followed.

The Act also enabled temporary constables appointed for service during the war and for twelve months thereafter to be retained in their positions indefinitely while fit for service. There are twenty-five of these men still remaining.

The good conduct of the Force in general has been well maintained.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

Extracts from the annual reports of officers in charge of districts are hereto annexed.

J. O'DONOVAN,
Commissioner of Police.

EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

SUPERINTENDENT WRIGHT, AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

The authorized strength on the 31st March last was—1 Superintendent, 2 Inspectors, 1 Sub-Inspector, 3 Senior Sergeants, 21 sergeants, 147 constables, 1 Senior Detective, 3 detective-sergeants, 7 detectives: total, 186. In addition there were 2 matrons, 1 police surgeon, 4 district constables, and 4 Native constables.

The only increase during the year has been 1 Inspector at Whangarei, 1 sergeant for night duty at Auckland, and 1 detective at Auckland.

Since March, 1916, the only increase to the authorized strength has been 1 Inspector, 2 sergeants, and 1 detective. This has been due to the fact that during the war recruiting was so restricted that it was impossible to fill the strength, let alone increase it.

The strength should now be increased as early as possible by the addition of 10 constables and 2 detectives for the city, 1 constable for Mount Eden, 1 constable for Newmarket, 1 sergeant and 1 constable for Freeman's Bay, 2 constables for the wharf, 1 constable for Dargaville, 1 constable for Onehunga, 1 detective and 3 constables for Whangarei, making a total of 1 sergeant, 3 detectives, and 20 constables. This addition will only satisfy the present pressing need. Under prevailing conditions every member of the Force, especially in the city, has to work strenuously, and it is very difficult to arrange for necessary leave being granted. The increase recommended for the city is required to cope with the growing population and work devolving on the police; the same reason applies to Dargaville and Onehunga. The increase at Whangarei is necessitated by the establishing of the Whangarei Police District under an Inspector. A detective is required there to attend to cases arising in the north, as under present conditions considerable delay is occasioned in sending one from Auckland, and his efforts are handicapped accordingly. One of the constables for Whangarei is required as a district clerk, the other two to enable night duty to be performed there and have a constable on reserve for station duty, relieving, &c. I think it is essential that night duty should be regularly performed in a place like Whangarei.

No new stations have been formed during the year, and the only one closed was Panmure. New quarters have been purchased for a police-station at Freeman's Bay and are now occupied.

The casualties during the year have been—Deaths, 2 constables; resigned, 7 constables and 1 detective-sergeant; superannuated, 1 Senior Sergeant, 1 sergeant, 2 constables, and 1 district constable.

The offences return for 1919 shows that 5,532 offences were reported during that year, as compared with 4,534 for the previous twelve months, a net increase of 998. Noticeable increases are observed under the headings of—Assaults (55), theft (166), housebreaking (21), drunkenness (451), obscene language (75), vagrancy (49), gaming (55), failing to maintain (70), and breaches of prohibition orders (128). Decreases are shown under the following headings: Theft from dwellings (20), false pretences (21), burglary (13), receiving stolen property (26), mischief (64),