

buildings while land is available, and before the price jumps, as it is expected to do within the next eighteen months. Provision should be made for a sergeant and a third constable, so that there can be patrol of the business portion of this suburb, railway-station, &c., throughout the twenty-four hours.

Hamilton: At Hamilton an additional constable is required. At present, owing to relieving duty, sickness, leave, &c., there is frequently but one constable available for street duty by day. The growth of Hamilton is being well maintained, causing increasing demands on the present staff. The difficulty experienced by married members of the Force in securing accommodation here at a rental within their means is as acute as ever it was. As soon as the financial stringency relaxes, the question of building houses on land owned by the Department will require serious consideration.

During the year the conduct of the men has been good, there being no fines imposed for breaches of regulations.

The offences return for this district shows that in 1921 a total of 2,055 offences were reported, as compared with 1,800 the previous year, a net increase of 255. Of the offences reported 94·5 per cent. were accounted for either by arrest or summons, leaving 112 undetected. 100 offenders were committed for trial, 78 being convicted at the Supreme Court. 1,736 were summarily convicted and 107 discharged. The offences return shows increases under the headings of—Thefts from dwellings, 51; false pretences, 12; house and shop breaking, 16; attempted breaking, 8; breaches of the peace, 17; drunkenness, 157; vagrancy, 18; unlawful use of motor-cars, horses, &c., 21; default of maintenance, 34; licensing offences, 73; failing to comply with conditions of release under First Offenders Probation Act, 14. Decreases under the following heads are shown: Assault, 17; theft (undescribed), 29; burglary, 9; forgery, 18; mischief, 12; drunk and disorderly, 18; assaulting, obstructing, or resisting constables, 9; breaches of prohibition orders, 67. This latter decrease is probably due to the decrease in issue of prohibition orders by the Courts of late years, as such orders have been found to be largely ineffective.

One case of murder occurred during the year, when a European surfaceman named Elliot was shot and killed by a Maori named Te Kahu at Ongaroto. The murderer was convicted and hanged.

The sly-grog evil has been kept well in check. Fines imposed totalled £480, compared with £766 in the previous year. This indicates a decrease in the traffic.

The work thrown upon the police steadily increases. The enforcement of the Arms Act has thrown an enormous amount of work on the Department. To constables in country stations the enforcement of this Act and the collection of agricultural statistics has augmented their duties by quite 20 per cent. The increased work is being cheerfully done, but the increased strain is noticeable.

INSPECTOR HUTTON, GISBORNE DISTRICT.

The establishment of a station is urgently required at Kaiti, a suburb of Gisborne, owing to the rapid growth of the population, but the problem of obtaining a suitable house is a serious drawback in this direction. A Native constable is badly needed at Te Kaha, on the East Coast, there being a stretch of 150 miles of country between Opotiki and Te Araroa containing several small settlements which cannot be properly supervised from the two stations mentioned. Owing to the construction of the main East Coast Road, Ruatorea and Kahukura, situated thereon, have become prosperous townships, while Tuparoa and Port Awanui, being off the road, have gone back, and it will therefore be necessary to transfer the constables stationed at the latter to the former places.

There have been no stations opened, and none closed, in the district during the year.

The total number of offences reported was 1,001, as against 1,153 for the previous year—a decrease of 152. Arrests or summonses resulted in 982 cases, leaving 19—mostly minor offences—unaccounted for. The principal increases appear under the headings—Indecent assault, 7; theft by clerks or servants, 3; forgery, 4; attempted arson, 4; breach of peace, 15; cruelty to animals, 12; inciting violence, lawlessness, 16; gaming with instrument, 13; murder, 2. Decreases appear under—Assaults, 12; theft (undescribed), 22; theft from the person, 6; theft from dwellings, 13; theft of animals, 11; burglary, 4; drunkenness, 42; indecent and profane language, 21; vagrancy, 9; assaulting and resisting constables, 8.

A most brutal murder was committed on the 4th November, 1921, at the Motu River, thirty miles from Opotiki, robbery being the motive. Two Natives were arrested for this offence, but one was released, after the hearing at the Magistrate's Court at Opotiki, for lack of evidence. The other stood his trial in March last at the Supreme Court, Gisborne, where, after an exhaustive trial lasting five days, the jury brought in a verdict of "Not guilty." A charge of manslaughter arising out of a motor accident was heard at the same sittings, and the offender was found guilty and fined £100 and costs.

The conduct of the police in this district has been good, one constable only having been fined for a breach of the regulations, and another given the opportunity to resign; there were no other casualties.

The population of the district at present remains stationary. There are, however, signs of improvement and greater development in the near future, particularly in the back country.

INSPECTOR MARSACK, NAPIER DISTRICT.

No stations were opened or closed during the year.

The need for the subdivision of the Taradale Subdistrict, as mentioned in my last annual report, becomes more urgent each year. I would again strongly recommend the establishment of a station in the vicinity of Petane or Eskdale, which is urgently required to ensure the efficient supervision of the eastern portion of the Taradale district. The reopening of the station at Nuhaka is also urgently required. This portion of the Wairoa district, owing to the railway-construction and harbour-works at Waikopoku, has increased in population, and its supervision from Wairoa is at present insufficient and costly.