

The provisions of the Licensing Amendment Acts, 1910, section 37, and 1914, section 8, could with considerable advantage to the enforcement of the liquor law in the King-country be made to apply to that area. At present they apply only to no-license areas, and there appears no reason to differentiate.

Section 24 of the Auctioneers Act, 1908, should be amended to make it compulsory for itinerant auctioneers to have their licenses with them when auctioneering, and produce them at once on demand to any member of the Police Force, instead of within three days, as at present.

Sly-grog selling continues in the King-country, but owing to the successful activity of the police and the number of convictions obtained it is being kept well in check.

INSPECTOR MACKINNON, PALMERSTON NORTH DISTRICT.

During the year an additional constable was stationed at Shannon; the work of the police had increased owing to the influx of men engaged on the Mangahao hydro-electric works, and it was accordingly found necessary to increase the strength at this station.

At Palmerston North, where the inquiry work requiring the attention of the detective staff is ever increasing, I would recommend one additional man for plain-clothes duty. Owing to the circumstance that constables are frequently absent on account of escort and relieving duties, leave, sickness, &c., it is sometimes a matter of some difficulty to arrange to have even one man available for beat duty in town. I therefore recommend that the strength at Palmerston North Station be increased by three constables for street duty.

At Feilding one additional constable is required. Considering the size, population, and importance of Feilding, together with the large number of shops and business houses, I am of the opinion that the time has arrived when the town should have the services of a night-duty constable.

I consider that a new station should be opened at Marton Junction. A large volume of railway traffic passes through, and owing to the distance from the present police-station it is frequently neither expedient nor possible for the Marton police to attend regularly to the duties at the railway-station. A constable stationed at the Junction could be kept fully employed attending to arrival and departure of trains, and prosecuting the many inquiries which are necessary at an important railway junction.

The offences return discloses 1,387 offences reported during the year; of these, 1,320 resulted in either arrest or summons. A large proportion of the undetected offences consists of alleged thefts of bicycles, and it is frequently difficult to determine whether a bicycle reported missing has really been stolen. Compared with last year an increase in the amount of crime to the extent of 214 offences is shown, the total number of offences reported in 1920 being 1,173, as compared with 1,387 in 1921. The reason for this increase is difficult to ascertain or explain. During 1920 the number of offences reported was considerably less than during the previous year, while during the year just ended a wave of offences—fortunately not of a serious nature—appears to have manifested itself over the whole district. The principal increases in crime are noticeable under the following heads: Indecently assaulting males, 7; theft, 46; false pretences, 8; house or shop breaking, 8; drunkenness, 49; vagrancy, 25; gaming with instruments, 52. Decreases appear under the following: Assault, 13; thefts from dwellings, 6; breach of peace, 4; indecent assault, 11. It will be observed that although a substantial increase is recorded, the district has been free of crime of a serious nature.

With one or two exceptions the conduct of the police under my control has been exemplary during the year; all members of the Force have worked together harmoniously, with excellent results.

SUPERINTENDENT NORWOOD, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the Force in the Wellington Police District on the 31st March, 1922, was 184, as against 181 at the end of the preceding year. The only increase to the strength during the year has been an authorized officer under the Arms Act, 1920, at district headquarters, and two acting-detectives to the staff of the Wellington Detective Office.

For the year ended 31st December, 1921, the total number of offences reported was 5,192, as against 5,334 for the previous year—a decrease of 142—and 4,834 prosecutions resulted. The increases were principally under the headings of—Thefts by clerks or servants, 14; house or shop breaking, 27; forgery, 18; vagrancy, 29; offences under the Destitute Persons Act, 168; offences under the Shipping and Seamen Acts, 27; offences under the Licensing Acts, 165. Decreases appear to have been recorded principally under—Theft (undescribed), 25; thefts from dwellings, 18; mischief, 56; breach of the peace, 27; drunkenness, 297; indecent exposure and grossly indecent acts, 18; obscene language, 31; assaulting and obstructing constables, 29; unlawfully using horses, motor-cars, &c., 17; selling and supplying liquor to prohibited persons, 10; breaches of prohibition orders, 29; refusing to quit licensed premises, 12. The district has been fairly free from the commission of serious crime. The increases in thefts by clerks and servants, and in house and shop breaking and forgery offences, cannot be taken as indicating anything beyond a normal fluctuation.

The general conduct of the police in this district has been very good, and the efficiency and high standard of the service has been well maintained.

The population of this area is steadily increasing. That of Wellington City and suburbs is approximately 110,000; Nelson City and suburbs, 11,000; Masterton, 8,000; and Blenheim, 5,000; and the smaller towns and country districts have advanced proportionately.

The provisions of the Arms Act, 1920, and the regulations made thereunder have been found to work very satisfactorily, and with much benefit to the community.

I recommend consideration (when opportunity offers) of an amendment of section 365 of the Crimes Act, 1908, to enable a search-warrant to be obtained in connection with the investigation of any offence under that Act, irrespective of whether the offender may or may not be liable to arrest