

1882.
NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND CONSTABULARY

(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Lieut.-Colonel READER to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

New Zealand Constabulary, Commissioner's Office, 31st May, 1882.

I have the honor to submit to you a report on the state of the Constabulary Force for the year ending the 21st March, 1882.

In the police branch, out of a total strength of 447, there have been 59 casualties during the year, viz., by resignation and completion of service 38, by discharge 5, on compensation 4, by desertion 1, by dismissal 9, and by death 2. New police stations have been erected at Te Aroha (Auckland) and Havelock (Napier), and those at Greytown and Manutahi have been reopened. An additional constable has been given to Invercargill, Masterton, Wellington, and Hawera; and two to Christchurch.

The proportion of officers to constables on the 31st March was 1 to 40; of police in boroughs to population (comprising Europeans, Chinese, and half-castes)—Timaru, 1 to 356; Hokitika, 1 to 371; New Plymouth, 1 to 473; Auckland, 1 to 490; Christchurch, 1 to 490; Wanganui, 1 to 516; Dunedin, 1 to 625; Napier, 1 to 639; Wellington, 1 to 663; Nelson, 1 to 752; Invercargill, 1 to 872: proportion throughout the colony, 1 to 1,084. Through the courtesy of the Commissioners of Police in Australia, I have obtained for your information what the proportion of police to population is in the several colonies. I find in Brisbane it is 1 to 272, throughout the colony 1 to 425; in Sydney 1 to 633, throughout the colony 1 to 609; in Melbourne 1 to 609, throughout the colony 1 to 774; in Adelaide 1 to 375, throughout the colony 1 to 745.

From the attached criminal statistics it will be seen that there has been a decrease of 953 general offences in the North Island and of 249 in the South, giving a total throughout the colony of 1,202. The offences return of the North Island for the year 1881 shows 7,567 offences reported, 220 offenders committed for trial, 5,240 summarily convicted, and 1,382 discharged; as against, in 1880, 8,520 offences reported, 309 offenders committed for trial, 6,159 summarily convicted, and 1,611 discharged. The return for the South Island for 1881 shows 9,068 offences reported, 249 offenders committed for trial, 6,852 summarily convicted, and 1,269 discharged, as against, in 1880, 9,317 offences reported, 280 offenders committed for trial, 7,056 summarily convicted, and 1,308 discharged.

In addition to their police duties members of the force are required to act as census enumerators, collect agricultural statistics; act as officers of Customs at inland stations, and as licensing officers under the Arms Act; enforce the Dog Nuisance and Trespass of Cattle Acts; report upon all applications for charitable aid, upon the estates of lunatics and of deceased persons; prosecute all cases for breaches of all railway and municipal by-laws; inquire into the circumstances of persons having children in the industrial schools, and summon those failing to comply with the Magistrates' orders for maintenance; serve all civil summonses; discharge the duties of Inspectors of Weights and Measures; compile the jury lists every year, and serve all jury summonses; assist the Registrars of Electors in revising and compiling the electoral rolls; act as gaolers at the police gaols; and, in the Canterbury District, enforce the provisions of the Contagious Diseases Act. In addition to the above, they have to find orderlies for the Supreme, District, and Magistrates' Courts. The conduct of the force, with few exceptions, has been very good, and that both officers and men have been zealous in the discharge of their duties is amply shown by the criminal statistics of the year.

My last report, dated the 31st May, 1881, showed the strength of the reserve branch to have been 717 of all ranks on the 31st March, 1881. By the 5th November following, in consequence of the threatening attitude of the Natives on the West Coast, the strength was increased to 1,088, of whom 828 were located in the Taranaki District, under Lieut.-Colonel Roberts, N.Z.C. After the investment of Parihaka and removal of Te Whiti and Tohu to New Plymouth the force was reduced, so that by the 31st March, 1882, the number of all ranks stood at 957, distributed as follows: 265 in the Waikato, 30 in the Taupo, and 42 in the Opotiki Districts, under command of Lieut.-Colonel Lyon; 573 in the Patea and Taranaki Districts, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Roberts, N.Z.C.; and 47 at the dépôt. The strength of the Waikato District was increased early in March from 58 to 265 of all ranks, by the transfer of two companies from Lieut.-Colonel Roberts's command for employment in the construction of the Cambridge and Rotorua Road, between Waitaki and Rotorua. By the 18th March I found the working party settled in camp within a mile and a half of the bush, 35 miles from Cambridge, in the direction of Rotorua, ready to commence felling and clearing on the following Monday, the 20th. The work was commenced on that day, and, considering the amount of wet weather experienced, which greatly hindered them, the men have made very fair progress. In all three districts under Lieut.-Colonel Lyon the men have been throughout the year usefully employed in constructing and repairing roads, fencing, &c., as