

SESS. II.—1897.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE POLICE FORCE OF THE COLONY

(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

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

The COMMISSIONER of POLICE to the Hon. the MINISTER of JUSTICE.

SIR,—

Police Department, Commissioner's Office, 1st June, 1897.

I have the honour to submit for your information the annual report on the Police Force of the colony, together with the criminal statistics of the year ended 31st March, 1897:—

1. On the 31st March last the strength of the Force was 516 of all ranks, being an increase of thirty-two during the year. The totals are made up as follows: Inspectors—first-class, 6; third-class, 1; sergeants-major, 3; sergeants—first-class, 21; second-class, 12; third-class, 9; constables—first-class, 119; second-class, 114; third-class, 219; detectives—first-class, 5; second-class, 4; third-class, 3; total of all ranks, 516, with 99 troop-horses. In addition to the above there were 18 district and 8 Native constables.

2. New stations have been formed at Waitekauri, Raetihi, Levin, Mangatainoko; and Kamo Station has been closed. District constables have been appointed at Tokaanu and Cullensville.

3. Increases have been made at the following stations: Auckland, 7; Coromandel, 1; New Plymouth, 2; Stratford, 1; Hawera, 1; Wellington, 3; Mount Cook, 2; Ashurst, 1; Masterton, 1; Christchurch, 6; Akaroa, 1; Ashburton, 1; Rangiora, 1; Sydenham, 1; Temuka, 1; Dunedin, 5. Decreases have been made at the following stations: Ponsby, 1; Tauranga, 1; Te Whaiti, 1; Wanganui, 1; Pahiatua, 1; Kaikoura, 1; Invercargill, 1.

4. The casualties in the Force during the past year have been: Retired on medical grounds with compassionate allowances, 9; resigned, 10; dismissed, 9; died, 4; transferred to Permanent Militia, 1; transferred to Prisons Department, 1; total, 34.

5. A considerable number of transfers from one station and sub-district to another have been carried out during the year, and the efficiency of the Force thereby strengthened. In my reports for the years 1894 and 1895 I referred to the difficulties that are experienced in effecting the removals of constables from one station to another. These difficulties still exist. On the one hand, complaints are made that a constable remains so long in a locality that he becomes prejudiced, while on the other hand a semi-popular outcry is raised immediately it is proposed to move him. Both the public and the members of the Force appear to forget that a constable when he joins the Police Force does so under certain conditions, one of which is that he may be moved from station to station, and, further, that he need not remain in the Force if the conditions of the service do not suit him. The only solution of this difficulty appears to me to be the making of a regulation, which should be rigidly adhered to, providing for the transfer of all sergeants and constables every five years. In selecting men for transfer during the past year care has been taken to alleviate as far as possible any hardship, by placing those transferred in similar stations and circumstances as they may have enjoyed in their former localities, when their qualifications and conduct have deserved such considerations; but I have no hesitation in saying that in carrying out these periodical transfers the department has a right to look for the assistance and support of the community at large, instead of, as is too often the case, their opposition and resistance through ignorance of the circumstances in connection therewith. In one instance during the past year a constable had not been moved for nineteen years, yet when his transfer was ordered considerable local pressure was used to prevent its being carried out.

6. The criticism, and in some cases censure, of the Force continues. I do not think this is to be regretted. "Criticism," Lord Halsbury recently took occasion to remark, "is the salt of the administration of justice." It is therefore a matter of the greatest satisfaction that with all this watching so little can be said against it, and that specific charges are not forthcoming against members of it.

7. In my former reports I have without avail drawn attention to the necessity of assimilating our Licensing Act to section 25 of the English Act. It is easy to write blaming the police for not enforcing the licensing laws. Few persons realise how difficult it is to secure convictions. People as a rule will not give evidence, but will anonymously or under a *nom de plume* write complaining that the police do not do their duty. Here again I say, if there is such a wholesale breaking of the law as is by some people asserted, why do not those people come forward and lay an information, or inform the police, and give evidence on an information laid by the police? But they will do neither.

8. The system of recruiting from the public as well as from the Permanent Militia is working satisfactorily, and there is, of course, a much larger number to select from. I alluded in my last report to the fact that some of the older members of the Force had passed the age of activity required for policemen, and to the hardship that would be entailed if these men were turned adrift, as no superannuation scheme exists; and, as men are being taken on without previous training, it has occurred to me that a scheme somewhat as follows would prove practicable, and would furnish the necessary training for recruits, and at the same time provide for the older men alluded to—viz., that the station at Wellington should be a *dépôt*. Recruits, on joining, should be taken on probation for a period of three months, during which time they should be instructed not only in the necessary drill and their outdoor work, but by means of lectures on various matters which it is necessary, to be efficient, they should know. At the end of their probation period, if their conduct and qualifications were satisfactory, they would be taken on permanently, and then could be drafted where required. The older men who have passed their prime should be stationed in Wellington, and the recruits would join them in their daily work, so that whilst the elder men taught the younger and supplied experience, the younger would, while learning their duties, be able to render their elder comrades the necessary assistance in strength and activity required to efficiently perform police duty. The fact that there is a police-station at Mount Cook would facilitate the training of probationers, for towards the end of the probation term the recruits might, by being sent to that station, where they would, whilst still under *dépôt* control, have at times to act more on their own responsibility, prove their fitness to enter the Force. The Crown owns ground adjoining that station, and it would, I think, be money well spent if married quarters were erected there, where the older constables could reside.

9. The use of an athletic training for the police is generally recognised, and the streets of Wellington have more than once proved its value during the past year. It was found, however, in the past that if the constables were allowed to take part in athletic teams, the interference with their police duty resulting therefrom was unendurable. But at Mount Cook Barracks, adjacent to the police-station, is a good gymnasium, which would be available, and the good that would result from such training would be incalculable. Apart from the mere question of acquiring strength and activity, the knowledge of how to effectively and at the same time humanely deal with a violent and possibly half-mad prisoner is most necessary—not only in the interest of the arresting constable, but also in that of the prisoner himself.

10. It must be borne in mind that the police in New Zealand perform duties such as Clerks of Courts, bailiffs, gatherers of statistics, Inspectors of Factories, Probation Officers, Rangers, &c., that in other countries fall on the shoulders of specially-appointed officials. That the men are able to perform these duties speaks volumes for their intelligence, especially when it is remembered how few opportunities a constable in a country district has of increasing his knowledge. The question of giving members of the Force the means of acquiring information as to the state of the law and trend of judicial decisions has not been lost sight of, and I publish in the *Police Gazette* notes of decisions of the superior Courts, both in England and this colony, bearing on crime or other matters of importance to the police.

11. Extracts from the annual reports of Inspectors in charge of districts are attached, and a perusal of them will be found interesting.

12. A return is attached showing the proportion of police to population, and cost of police per head, in each of the Australasian Colonies.

13. Criminal statistics for the year ending the 31st December, 1896, show an increase of 663 in the total number of all offences reported in the colony. The principal increases are: Arson, 19; assaults, common, 22; assaults, indecent, 10; assaults on police, 12; breaches of the peace, 24; deserting and failing to provide for wives and children, 108; drunkenness, 369; indecent exposure and behaviour, 12; keeping disorderly houses and brothels, 8; lunacy, 13; neglected and criminal children, 31; obstructing and resisting police, 38; rape, 4; smuggling, 9; stowing away on board ships, 12; theft undescribed, 97; theft of sheep, 11; theft from the person, 11; vagrancy, 5. Other offences have decreased, as follows: Abortion, 5; assaults occasioning bodily harm, 7; assaults and robbery, 18; burglary, breaking into shops, dwellings, &c., 112; coinage offences, 7; cruelty to animals, 8; cruelty to children, 7; embezzlement, 9; false pretences, 13; forgery and uttering, 8; gaming offences, 13; illegally on premises, 25; malicious injury to property, 35; murder, 10; obscene and profane language, 5; obstructing railway-lines, 4; perjury, 7; sly-grog selling, 14; theft as bailee, 27; theft of cattle and horses, 9; theft from dwellings, 85; theft by servants, 15.

14. From time to time statements have been published that candidates are enrolled in the Force without proper inquiries being made as to their character and previous history. Now, during the past year 66 recruits have joined the Force—viz., Permanent Militiamen 16, and civilians 50. In the cases of the former, their conduct and bearing during their service in the Permanent Force, and while (as in most cases) they had been doing temporary police duty, were taken into consideration, while the civilians were specially selected by yourself from a long list of applicants, on the recommendations of reliable persons, and their histories for the last two or three years were carefully investigated.

15. In conclusion, I beg to reiterate what I said last year—viz., that by the police regulations made under the authority of "The Police Force Act, 1886," the Commissioner is held responsible for peace and good order, and for the security of life and property throughout the colony, and in general for the discipline, obedience, and organization of the police. I have no desire to lay it down as an axiom that the Force must be controlled entirely by the sole will of one individual; I do say, however, that interference with the administration of the Force without due cause must result in a breaking of the bonds of discipline and a consequent loss of efficiency. New Zealand has at the present moment a smart Force, and one that keeps crime in check throughout the colony, and a body of men who, with very few exceptions, if any, are thoroughly loyal and faithful, and discharge their duties to the best of their ability.

The Hon. the Minister of Justice.

I have, &c.,

A. HUME, Commissioner.

EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

INSPECTOR J. HICKSON, AUCKLAND, WAIKATO, AND BAY OF ISLANDS.

In response to your Circular No. 18, of the 2nd April, I have the honour to report that for the twelve months ended on the 31st ultimo this district has been fairly prosperous, and population has increased considerably, the arrivals from other places having been numerous. This is to be attributed in a great measure to the activity in mining and timber business which has prevailed for some time past.

On reference to the Annual Offences Return for 1896, which was forwarded to you on the 18th February, it will be seen that the number of offences reported shows an increase of 254 over the previous year.

Although there has been a numerical increase in offences, this cannot be looked upon as showing a corresponding increase in what may be termed crimes, or offences of a serious nature. The offences showing the greatest increase are: Drunkenness, 145; disorderly conduct, 47; common assaults and breaches of the peace, 30; brothel-keeping, 22. In all these cases proceedings were taken.

Thefts of all kinds show a net increase of 16, whilst there has been a decrease of 43 in burglary and housebreaking. Thus it will be seen that the increase is chiefly in what may be termed minor offences.

The number of offences reported varies considerably, without any apparent reason; but there can be little doubt that the free circulation of money in prosperous times has a tendency to increase many offences, as, apart from there being more temptation to those who are inclined to err, the fact of money being in circulation more freely than usual acts as an attraction to the idle and vicious from other localities, who live by preying on the hard-earned profits of those who have benefited by a term of prosperity. The increase of population also accounts in a measure for the increase of offences.

There has been a marked increase in drunkenness, but this cannot be taken to infer that the offence is unusually prevalent. The community as a whole is sober and well-conducted. Many of the cases of drunkenness which arose during the year were old offenders, who were found drunk repeatedly on different dates, and no doubt a large proportion of the increase arose from the increase of population previously alluded to.

Sly-grog selling has existed to some extent in parts of the district where there are no public-houses. Several convictions for this offence have been recorded during the year, but there is considerable difficulty in obtaining evidence, owing to the fact that sly-grog sellers are strongly shielded by those who purchase liquor from them, and the greatest caution is observed by those engaged in the traffic, who, as a rule, will not sell to strangers.

In addition to enforcing the law generally, special attention has been given to the Infant Life Protection Act and the Children's Protection Act, with beneficial results.

During the year I have visited the various distant parts of my district as frequently as other duties would permit, and found the police in the country to be attentive, and discharging their duties in a satisfactory manner.

Some of the stations will require repairs and painting, which will be duly brought under your notice in detail. New buildings are required at several places where rent is now being paid, as well as at Coromandel, where the police building is too old and decayed to be worth repairing. I would recommend that new buildings be erected as soon as possible at Coromandel, also on the site lately purchased at Hikurangi, with the view of opening a station at that place at an early date.

The station at Kamo was closed in July. A new station was opened at Waitekauri, and no doubt further stations will be required very soon in the mining district of Upper Thames. A second constable has been added to Paeroa Station, and also one to Coromandel. These additions were much needed at those places.

On the 31st March the Police Force in this district consisted of 107 of all ranks, made up as follows: One inspector, six sergeants, one detective, eighty-nine constables, seven district constables, and three Native constables. These are distributed amongst fifty-one stations.

The casualties during the year have been one death, six dismissed, and six resigned.

About the average number of constables have been punished for breaches of police discipline, and one constable was brought before the Magistrate's Court for undue violence when making an arrest. One case calling for special mention was a complaint made with regard to the wrongful arrest of a gentleman at Auckland, which was duly reported, and was dealt with by the Hon. the Minister of Justice. With the foregoing exceptions, the conduct of the men in this district has been good.

INSPECTOR J. EMERSON, NAPIER AND EAST COAST.

I have the honour to report on the Napier and East Coast District for the year ended 31st March, 1897, as follows:—

The criminal statistics for the year ended 31st December, 1896, show 1,225 offences of various kinds to have been reported, and 1,147 arrests made, 89 cases being submitted to the Supreme Court for decision. This is a decrease of 135 cases for the year 1896 as compared with the number of offences reported during the previous year.

The only very serious case which occurred during the past twelve months is a charge now pending against two young men for the murder of an old man at Napier, the latter having been assaulted and robbed, and, according to medical evidence, his death was the result of violence used on that occasion.

The strength of the district on the 31st March last was one inspector, two sergeants, thirty-eight constables, one detective, two district constables, five Native constables, and fifteen troop-horses.

The casualties are as follows: One death, one discharged as medically unfit, and one by resignation.

The conduct of the non-commissioned officers and constables has, with one or two exceptions, been satisfactory.

Tauranga and Te Whaiti Stations have been reduced in strength by the transfer of the sergeant at each place, and leaving a constable only in charge. A district constable has been appointed at Tokaanu, and a Native constable at Tuparoa. The Moawhango Sub-district has been taken from this district and attached to Wanganui and West Coast District, access to Moawhango from the latter district being much easier and more convenient than from Napier, the only means of communication from Napier being by coach, a distance of over ninety miles.

Several stations require extensive repairs. A separate report will be furnished on this subject.

The uniform clothing worn by the men in this district during the hot summer months appears to be far too heavy for comfort, and I would respectfully recommend that a fine and serviceable serge be issued for summer wear, in lieu of the heavy tweed now worn summer and winter.

INSPECTOR F. MCGOVERN, WANGANUI AND WEST COAST.

In compliance with your Circular No. 18, of the 2nd April, requesting a report on the Wanganui and West Coast Police District during the twelve months ended the 31st March, I have the honour to state, for your information, that the strength at present is one Inspector, three sergeants, thirty-one constables, and two district constables.

On the 13th March a new station was opened at Raetihi; and Moawhango Station, formerly in the Napier District, has been transferred to the Wanganui and West Coast District. I am pleased to say that during the past year there has been little or no trouble caused by the Natives in this district.

In the month of October last there was a dispute between Te Whiti's and Tohu's people over the cropping of some land near Oeo, a place situated between Opunake and Manaia. A number of Natives from Parihaka assembled, with their ploughs, &c., to crop some land in the occupation of Tohu's people; the latter resisted, and made out Te Whiti's followers were trespassers, and for some days there was great uneasiness amongst the peaceable Natives in the locality. At the request of Mr. Fisher, agent for the Public Trustee under the West Coast Settlements Act, I accompanied him, together with Constable Twomey, to the place in dispute. The contending parties seemed pleased at our arrival. Mr. Fisher explained matters to them, and pointed out the position they would be in providing they caused a disturbance, or broke the peace, &c. I am glad to say both sides took Mr. Fisher's advice, for since that time there has been no disturbance caused, and doubtless the land in dispute has been arranged by the Public Trustee.

The monthly meetings still go on at Parihaka, but, owing to Te Whiti and Tohu being bad friends, the Natives do not assemble in large numbers. While attending these meetings the behaviour of the Natives is generally very good, and European visitors receive every attention and kindness from Te Whiti, &c.

With regard to the notoriety of the King-country for illegal trafficking in sly-grog selling, and which, I believe, is still carried on to a certain extent amongst the Natives and Europeans, in the month of March last Mr. Inspector Hickson kindly sent some of the Auckland police to Kawhia, which is in this district, and they cleverly succeeded in detecting a number of Native sly-grog sellers in and around Kawhia, also one European. If cases are proved, and the Bench inflicts substantial fines, it may probably go a great way in preventing the illegal liquor traffic in out-of-the-way places like Kawhia.

Referring to your Circular No. 4, current *Police Gazette*, page 14, in reference to supplying liquor to female aboriginal Natives, to prevent this evil in a Native district like this is a most difficult task. Native men will obtain liquor and smuggle it to their wives in all shapes and forms;

therefore I have little hope of the police being successful in preventing Native women from getting drink. It would considerably strengthen the hands of the police if section 26 of "The Alcoholic Liquors Sale Control Act Amendment Act, 1895," was amended and made to include Maori women. It would at least get rid of them from hanging round and entering hotels.

A few years ago sly-grog selling was flourishing at Karioi, Raetihi, &c., but the very great energy and tact displayed by the Wanganui police in detecting and bringing to justice a large number of the grog-sellers, and the good substantial fines from time to time inflicted by the Wanganui Bench, has almost stamped out the notorious sly-grog selling at the places named.

The only crime of a serious nature was the assault committed on a warder by a prisoner in New Plymouth Gaol, who escaped with two other prisoners, but were recaptured and severely punished.

The number of offences reported was 987, showing an increase of twenty-three. This increase principally consists of drunkenness.

The population of this district is increasing rapidly, and likely to continue so, as the district may well be called the Garden of New Zealand.

In reference to the discipline of the Force in this district, I may say, with one exception, it has been good. Police and other duties have been satisfactorily carried out.

INSPECTOR P. PENDER, WELLINGTON AND MARLBOROUGH.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your Circular No. 18, of the 2nd April, I beg to forward the following report upon the Police Force in the Wellington District for the year ending 31st March, 1897.

The strength of the Force on that date was eighty-nine regular members of the Force, three district constables, and one matron.

No new stations have been opened during the year and none closed, but the regular constable at Cullensville has been replaced by a district constable. The total number of stations in the district is thirty-one.

The casualties for the year are as follow: Discharged on compensation, 2; died, 2; resigned, 1.

The conduct of the men, on the whole, has been good, and punishments rare; and the following promotions have been made: One second-class sergeant to be first-class sergeant, four second-class constables to be first-class constables, two third-class constables to be second-class constables, and one fourth-class detective to be third-class detective.

The Offences Return for 1896 shows a decrease of 187 offences as compared with the year 1895, the numbers being 3,357 for 1895 and 3,170 for 1896. Of the latter, 97 cases were sent for trial, 2,299 dealt with summarily, and 431 dismissed; the total number of females dealt with being 393, and males 2,434.

There has been a marked decrease in the crime of burglary, only 51 offences being reported, as against 68 during the previous year; drunkenness shows a decrease of 28; false pretences, 21; malicious injury to property, 25; obscene language, 13; stone-throwing, 10; theft, 17; and vagrancy, 43.

Sheep- and cattle-stealing show an increase of 13, but some of the offences reported are of a doubtful nature, and the animals have probably strayed or died. There have been eight convictions for smuggling, as against two the previous year. Sixty-four neglected and criminal children have been brought before the Court, as against forty-three in 1895.

Wife-and-family desertion and disobeying maintenance orders has increased from 206 in 1895 to 261 in 1896.

I regret to say that on the 27th August, 1896, a horrible murder took place at Petone, two old persons named Joseph Jones and his wife Emma being cruelly stabbed to death during the night in their own house. It is satisfactory to be able to state that, although no clue was left at the time, the police subsequently, by persistent inquiries, collected sufficient evidence to justify the apprehension of Stephen Boshier, who was tried and convicted at the Supreme Court here last month, and sentenced to death. Boshier was executed on the 21st April, having previously confessed he was guilty of the crime.

I also desire to mention the case of Herbert Allandale, one of the most notorious criminals in the colony. Immediately on his discharge from gaol at Lyttelton in December last, after completing a sentence of ten years for theft, &c., he came to Wellington, and at once perpetrated a series of impudent burglaries in the district, but was very soon captured by the police, and at the last criminal sessions here was sentenced to ten years' hard labour.

I mention these cases for the purpose of showing that the Police Force in the district is in an efficient state, prepared to deal successfully with serious cases of crime when the necessity arises.

Larrikinism and other minor offences have also been well kept in hand.

A number of young inexperienced men have been taken on the Force during the year, and are getting on very well indeed.

It is difficult to get satisfactory plain-clothes constables; besides, their pay is inadequate to support them in the position, having to move about so much amongst the public.

I am glad to say that the City of Wellington is going ahead fast, good substantial buildings being erected in all directions; the shipping is also increasing very fast. Under these circumstances it is, of course, very important that the small force of police maintained should be kept in as efficient a state as possible. I would therefore again submit for your consideration the advisability of erecting cottages near the central station, to be let to the married men in the city at reasonable rates. The single members of the Force have nothing to complain of. They are

provided with comfortable quarters, with fuel and light, and have a good cheap mess; but the married men, I submit, are labouring under many disadvantages. The rents are very high in Wellington, and, in order to enable men with families to obtain a dwelling, they are compelled to live long distances from the central station, which detracts very much, in my opinion, from their efficiency. I am aware that many of them, what with high house-rent and paying their life-insurance premiums, have a hard struggle to support their families and to keep themselves in a condition to fit them physically for the arduous duties they have to perform.

As you are no doubt aware, great improvements are being effected in the training and condition generally of the Police Forces in nearly all parts of the United Kingdom and America. It is recently becoming more fully recognised, both in the army and Police Forces, that comfortable homes, with proper training, and a reasonable rate of pay, mean increased efficiency, and in the end economy. I therefore earnestly ask for consideration on behalf of the married members of the Force.

INSPECTOR J. PRATT, NELSON AND WESTLAND.

In compliance with Circular No. 18, of the 2nd April, I have the honour to furnish the annual report *re* Nelson and Westland Police District.

The police strength on 31st March was as follows: One Inspector, one sergeant-major, four sergeants, thirty-two constables, and two district constables, being a decrease of one constable since last annual report, but this vacancy—Seddonville Station—will, I trust, soon be filled.

During the year the following changes have been effected: One resignation, one discharge on compensation, one second-class constable promoted to first-class constable, and one third-class constable promoted to second-class constable.

On the whole, there has been an increase of fifty in the number of offences reported, as compared with the year 1895, but most of the offences are not of a very serious nature.

Thefts from tail-races appear in the same number—four—as in last report, but only one conviction was secured. Unless a tail-race robber is caught red-handed it is hard to obtain a conviction, for the gold stolen cannot be identified.

There has been an increase of no less than sixteen in the number of lunatics, and I am unable to offer any explanation on that score.

Slight increases occur in the following offences: Abusive and threatening language, arson, assaults, false pretences, forgery, gaming offences, illegally on premises, malicious injury to property, obscene and profane language, and rape.

Drunkenness shows a decrease of nineteen, and is not a prevailing vice on the Coast, as any stranger who has visited the large public gatherings, such as races, sports-meetings, &c., could not avoid noticing the absence of drunken individuals. Perhaps the decrease may in a small extent be due to money not being so plentiful as in bygone years, but I am of opinion that the working-classes as a whole are now more saving. And this fact is brought into prominence in mining centres on pay-night: in former days miners were wont to carouse on these occasions, whereas at the present time there is a total absence of anything of the kind on pay-nights.

There is also a decrease in the number of offences that might be classed as the acts of larrikins, and larrikinism, although not unknown, is not so prevalent as in other parts of the colony.

Sly-grog selling is not carried on to any extent, although five convictions for this offence were obtained during the year.

I am happy to say that, as in the past, offences of a serious nature are few and far between.

The police buildings at some stations are in need of repairs and alterations, and I have already furnished a special report dealing with this matter.

I beg to bring under your notice the fact that, owing to the recent mining operations on the Paparoa Range, it is probable that ere long a large number of men will be employed, and I would respectfully suggest that steps be taken with a view of opening a station at Blackball Township. At present all police work at Blackball and the surrounding district is done by the constable stationed at Ahaura, and a good deal of expense in the way of travelling-expenses is incurred in the course of a year. Another portion of the district—Barrytown, some twenty miles north of Grey-mouth—has also been brought into prominence of late owing to capital being invested in mining speculations, and if projected works are carried out additional police supervision will be required.

The conduct of members of the Force has, on the whole, been good, and the numerous extra duties have been faithfully performed.

INSPECTOR T. BROHAM, CHRISTCHURCH AND NORTH OTAGO.

In compliance with the request contained in circular memorandum of the 2nd April, I have the honour to report upon the state of this district for the year ended the 31st March, 1897.

The statistics of crime for the year ended the 31st December, 1896, were forwarded to your office on the 6th March. They show that for that year 3,089 offences of various kinds were reported to the police, and 2,912 persons were taken into custody or proceeded against by summons. In the year ended the 31st December, 1895, 2,743 offences were reported, and 2,559 persons were taken into custody or otherwise proceeded against.

It thus appears that during 1896 there was an increase of 346 in the total number of cases reported, as compared with 1895, and an increase of 353 in the number of arrests, &c., made. The following are the offences in which the largest increase has occurred: Common assaults, arrests, 163, being an increase of 29 on the arrests for the previous year: assaults on the police, 23, an increase of 13: breach of the peace, 61; increase, 13: deserting wives and families, offences

reported, 145; increase, 52: disobeying orders of Court, offences reported, 124; increase, 82: disorderly and riotous conduct while drunk, 90; increase, 44: drunkenness, 1,091; increase, 121: failing to support parents, offences reported, 70; increase, 32: obstructing and resisting police, 42; increase, 19.

On the 14th September last information reached the Kaiapoi police that the dead body of a man was found at Ohoka, and upon the police reaching the place they found the skeleton of a man, probably about a year dead. At an inquest held upon the remains a verdict of "Wilful murder" was returned against some person or persons unknown, and the Government offered a reward of £250 for the arrest of the offender. Beside the remains of the murdered man a swag was found containing such articles as are usually carried by swagsmen. Every possible effort has been made to elucidate the mystery surrounding the case, but so far without success.

No other case of crime requiring special mention occurred here during the year.

In my last annual report I urged the necessity of having second-hand dealers in clothing, &c., licensed. I think it necessary to refer to the matter again. Pawnbrokers are licensed, and have to keep books, which are open to the police at all times for inspection. There is an equal need for licensing second-hand dealers. Many of them are well-known receivers of stolen property, and, owing to their being under no legal supervision, and not compelled to keep books and account to the police for all property coming into their hands, have special advantages for disposing of stolen property. I may state that the number of second-hand dealers is steadily increasing.

The establishment of the Samaritan Home has relieved the town of a large number of drunken old women who paraded the streets at night, and were usually found by the police sleeping upon door-steps, or in deserted houses, or in water-closets. When brought before the Bench for vagrancy they always complained that they had no place to go to and no one to relieve them. This they can no longer do: they are mostly to be found in the Home now, and it is to be hoped the streets will know them no more.

Considerable difficulty has been occasioned of late in the enforcement of the by-laws with regard to bicyclists riding upon footpaths, or without lights at night, and the drivers of vehicles driving over street-crossings at other than a walking pace. In a large proportion of cases it is found that the offending parties give false names and addresses to constables, and thus escape punishment. If the difficulty continues to increase it will be necessary to give the police increased powers, so that they could arrest in all cases where the offender is unknown to the police and his address cannot be ascertained.

The police buildings of the district are in a better state of repair than they have been for many years. A temporary station, to be opened only during the summer months, was established at Sumner in the month of November.

Owing to the long hours of night duty, constables are frequently on the sick-list, and, small as their pay is, it is considerably diminished in the payment of medical bills. Formerly a medical man was employed to attend upon the police, but this was changed some years ago; and now in every instance, except where a constable actually receives an injury while making an arrest, he has to pay for medical attendance. I think it will be found that this is the only colony where the police pay for medical attendance.

Police uniform was also supplied free to the police of Canterbury in provincial days. I am given to understand that railway-servants, letter-carriers, and gaol-warders receive their uniforms now free. It would be a valuable concession to the police if the old system were again reverted to, and they again received a free issue of uniform.

INSPECTOR W. S. PARDY, DUNEDIN, SOUTHLAND, AND LAKES.

In compliance with your circular of the 2nd April, I have the honour to submit for your information my annual report on the state of the police in this district:—

The numerical strength of the district is 110, made up as follows: One Inspector, thirteen sergeants, ninety-three constables, and three detectives; and, in addition thereto, one district constable stationed at Stewart Island.

The Offences Return for the year ended the 31st December, 1896, which has already been forwarded to your office, shows a total increase in all offences reported on the previous year of 209. In some cases there have been increases, while in some other cases there have been decreases. The principal increases are: Arson, 4; assaults, common, 11; breaches of the peace, 24; deserting and failing to provide for wives and families, 24; disorderly conduct, 19; drunkenness, 47; malicious injury to property, 20; obscene and profane language, 12; thefts undescribed, 174; vagrancy, 17. The principal decreases are burglary and housebreaking, 20; embezzlement, 11; keeping disorderly houses, 12; lunacy, 37; murder, 3; rape, attempted, 5; sly-grog selling, 6; suicide, attempted, 4; thefts from dwellings, 50; and thefts from persons, 17.

The casualties in the Force in this district during the past year have been one sergeant and three constables retired on medical grounds, one constable dismissed, and five constables punished for minor offences. With these exceptions the conduct of the police of all ranks in this district has been very good, and with few exceptions they have been energetic and attentive to their various duties, especially in the detection and prevention of crime.

Every effort has been made to enforce the Infant Life Protection Act, and a large number of houses registered, and now that a matron has been appointed to this district a strict supervision is being kept over them.

A number of the police buildings throughout the district require repairs and additions to improve their appearance and preserve them from further deteriorating, a return of which, with the probable cost, has been forwarded to your office for consideration.

RETURN showing the NUMBER of OFFENCES REPORTED, PERSONS APPREHENDED; and COMPARISON of CRIME during the Year ending 31st December, 1895, and Year ending 31st December, 1896.

Offences.	1895.	1896.										Increase.	Decrease.
	Number of all Offences reported.	Number of all Offences reported.	Persons apprehended or summoned.						Total Number of Persons apprehended or summoned.	Number of Convictions amongst those committed for Trial.			
			Committed for Trial.	Summarily Convicted.		Discharged.		M.		F.			
				M.	F.	M.	F.						
Abandoning children	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Abduction	3	3	1	..	..	..	1	..	2	1	..	..	..
Abortion, procuring	8	3	1	2	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	5
Absconding from apprenticeship ..	..	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	3	..
Absconding from bail	4	3	..	..	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	1
Absconding from industrial schools ..	42	50	..	..	47	2	..	..	49	..	..	8	..
Abusive and threatening language ..	235	283	..	..	164	16	85	16	281	..	..	48	..
Armed, with felonious intent	2	3	2	..	..	..	1	..	3	1	..	1	..
Arson	21	40	13	..	..	..	3	2	18	5	..	19	..
Arson, attempted	10	8	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	..	..	2
Assaults, common	765	787	2	..	447	23	277	27	776	1	..	22	..
Assaults, indecent	15	25	13	..	2	..	9	..	24	10	..	10	..
Assaults occasioning bodily harm ..	42	35	8	..	13	..	12	2	35	4	..	..	7
Assaults on bailiffs	2	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
Assaults on police	57	69	..	..	61	1	7	..	69	..	..	12	..
Assaults and robbery	42	24	8	..	1	..	4	..	13	5	..	..	18
Attempts to commit felony .. ..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Bankruptcy offences	46	23	11	..	9	..	3	..	23	3	..	..	23
Begging	9	13	..	..	11	1	1	..	13	..	..	4	..
Being in possession of house-breaking implements	5	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	4
Bestiality	1	4	1	..	..	..	3	..	4	1	..	3	..
Bigamy	5	4	3	..	..	..	..	..	3	3	..	..	1
Breach of the peace	270	294	..	..	234	13	42	5	294	..	..	24	..
Burglary, breaking into shops, dwellings, &c. ..	458	346	89	..	18	..	29	..	136	56	..	..	112
Carnally knowing girls	5	5	4	..	..	..	1	..	5	2	..	..	..
Carnally knowing, attempted .. ..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Cattle- and horse-stealing (see Theft) .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cattle-maiming	7	3	1	..	..	1	1	..	3	1	..	..	4
Coinage offences	16	9	2	..	..	..	4	..	6	..	..	..	7
Concealment of birth .. ..	..	5	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	..	..	5	..
Conspiring to defraud	8	7	4	..	..	..	..	..	4	4	..	..	1
Conspiring to defeat the course of justice .. ..	..	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	4	..
Contempt of Court	9	8	..	..	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	1
Cruelty to animals	145	137	..	..	104	1	32	..	137	..	..	..	8
Cruelty to children	8	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	7
Cutting and wounding	10	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	3	2	..	..	7
Damaging police uniform	24	25	..	..	23	..	2	..	25	..	..	1	..
Defiling an imbecile woman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Demanding goods with menaces ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Deserting and failing to provide for wives and children ..	479	587	..	..	312	9	190	7	518	..	..	108	..
Deserters and stragglers from H.M. ships	71	56	..	..	45	..	..	..	45	..	..	..	15
Deserting merchant vessels	7	15	..	..	5	..	..	..	5	..	..	8	..
Discharging firearms	13	10	..	..	8	..	2	..	10	..	..	..	3
Disobeying orders on board ships ..	50	58	..	..	48	..	10	..	58	..	..	8	..
Disobeying orders of Court and summonses	191	359	..	..	250	3	80	4	337	..	..	168	..
Disobeying terms of release under First Offenders' Probation Act ..	3	4	..	..	4	..	..	..	4	..	..	1	..
Disorderly and riotous conduct ..	217	355	..	..	316	9	29	..	354	..	..	138	..
Dissuading witnesses from giving evidence	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Distillation offences	1	3	..	..	2	..	1	..	3	..	..	2	..
Distributing obscene literature ..	..	5	1	..	3	..	1	..	5	1	..	5	..
Disturbing meetings and congregations	72	36	..	..	29	..	4	..	33	..	..	..	36
Drunkenness	4,636	5,005	..	..	4,115	809	73	8	5,005	..	..	369	..
Embezzlement	23	14	10	..	1	..	2	..	13	8	..	..	9
Escaping from custody	7	12	2	..	8	..	1	..	11	1	..	5	..
Escaping from lunatic asylums ..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Extortion .. ..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	..
Failing to support parents and near relatives	153	154	..	..	100	2	38	3	143	..	..	1	..
False declarations	2	9	1	1	3	..	4	..	9	..	1	7	..
False pretences	154	141	33	..	59	3	27	2	124	22	..	..	13
False trade-marks	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Fish, illegally taking	21	19	..	..	15	..	4	..	19	..	..	..	2
Forcible entry	7	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	..	..	5
Forgery and uttering	91	83	54	7	1	..	9	..	71	43	5	..	8
Fortune-telling	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Furious riding and driving	80	69	..	..	59	1	9	..	69	..	..	..	11
Game, illegally shooting	18	54	..	..	46	..	8	..	54	..	..	36	..
Gaming offences	76	63	..	..	52	1	10	..	63	..	..	..	13

RETURN showing the NUMBER of OFFENCES REPORTED, PERSONS APPREHENDED, and COMPARISON of CRIME during the Year ending 31st December, 1895, and Year ending 31st December, 1896—continued.

Offences.	1895.	1896.										Increase.	Decrease.
	Number of all Offences reported.	Number of all Offences reported.	Persons apprehended or summoned.						Total Number of Persons apprehended or summoned.	Number of Convictions amongst those committed for Trial.			
			Committed for Trial.		Summarily Convicted.		Discharged.			M.	F.		
			M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.					
Illegally on premises	104	79	1	..	68	2	6	1	78	..	..	..	25
Indecent exposure and behaviour ..	92	104	..	..	77	3	20	2	102	..	..	12	..
Keeping disorderly houses and brothels ..	37	45	..	..	15	19	6	5	45	..	..	8	..
Killing animals with intent to steal the carcases ..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Libel, criminal	3	3	2	..	1	..	..	..	3	1	..	..	..
Lunacy	355	368	..	..	219	94	43	12	368	..	..	13	..
Malicious injury to property ..	420	385	2	..	275	20	57	6	360	2	..	..	35
Manslaughter	6	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	5
Murder	14	4	3	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	10
Murder, attempted	6	4	3	1	..	..	..	..	4	..	1	..	2
Neglected and criminal children ..	147	178	..	..	90	61	20	7	178	..	..	31	..
Obscene and profane language ..	421	416	..	..	300	45	58	13	416	..	..	..	5
Obstructing Fire Inspectors ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Obstructing Inspectors of Factories ..	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Obstructing and resisting police ..	101	139	1	..	122	4	12	..	139	..	..	38	..
Obstructing railway-lines ..	6	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Obstructing railway officers ..	6	3	..	..	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	3
Obstructing thoroughfares ..	49	34	..	..	34	..	..	..	34	..	..	..	15
Obstructing a mine	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Pawning, illegal	2	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
Perjury	24	17	8	2	..	..	7	..	17	1	1	..	7
Personating electors	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Poison, administering	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Prison offences (loitering about, and communicating with prisoners) ..	3	6	..	..	5	1	..	..	6	..	..	3	..
Prize-fighting.. ..	5	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	..	..	3
Rape	8	12	8	..	2	..	2	..	12	2	..	4	..
Rape, attempted	9	14	5	..	..	..	5	..	10	2	..	5	..
Receiving stolen property ..	25	20	4	1	4	3	8	..	20	4	..	..	5
Refusing to quit licensed premises ..	43	43	..	..	39	..	4	..	43	..	..	..	..
Rescuing cattle from being impounded ..	21	31	..	..	20	..	11	..	31	..	..	10	..
Removing survey-pegs.. ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Sacrilege	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Sheep-stealing (see Theft).	..	3	..	..	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	3	..
Seals, illegally taking	6	2	1	..	..	..	1	..	2	1	..	..	4
Shooting with intent	73	59	..	..	21	9	14	15	59	..	..	..	14
Sly-grog selling	12	21	..	..	21	..	..	..	21	..	..	9	..
Smuggling	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Sodomy	2	2	1	..	..	..	1	..	2	1	..	..	..
Sodomy, attempted	9	10	..	..	..	9	..	1	10	..	..	1	..
Soliciting prostitution ..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Stamps, fraudulently removing..	111	121	..	..	77	1	42	1	121	..	..	10	..
Stone-throwing	41	53	..	..	49	2	2	..	53	..	..	12	..
Stowing away on board ships ..	39	31	7	1	6	1	13	3	31	4	1	..	8
Suicide, attempted	40	55	..	..	25	10	8	2	55	..	..	15	..
Sureties of the peace	1,845	1,942	90	3	830	123	180	24	1,250	53	1	97	..
Theft (undescribed)	37	10	5	..	1	..	2	..	8	2	..	..	27
Theft as a bailee	11	5	1	..	3	..	1	..	5	..	..	..	6
Theft, attempted	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Theft of children	128	119	42	..	10	..	25	..	77	28	..	..	9
Theft of cattle and horses ..	3	9	..	..	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	6	..
Theft of dogs	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Theft of pigs	56	67	21	1	9	..	7	..	38	7	1	11	..
Theft of sheep	336	251	17	1	62	6	20	1	107	13	..	..	85
Theft from dwellings	151	162	16	2	20	2	12	2	54	7	1	11	..
Theft from the person	2	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	2	1	..	1	..
Theft of post letters	17	2	..	..	1	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	15
Theft by servants .. ..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Threatening letters	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Threatening to shoot	17	14	..	..	11	1	2	..	14	..	..	..	3
Travelling by rail and refusing to pay fares ..	84	73	..	..	47	4	22	..	73	..	..	..	11
Trespass .. ..	..	4	..	..	3	..	1	..	4	..	..	4	..
Unlawfully felling timber ..	387	392	..	..	192	124	59	19	394	..	..	5	..
Vagrancy
Totals	14,010	14,673	511	22	9,305	1,440	1,702	191	13,171	305	12	1335	672

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RETURN showing the STRENGTH, &c., of the NEW ZEALAND POLICE FORCE—continued.

Stations.	Inspectors.	Sergeants-Major.	Sergeants.	Constables.	Detectives.	Total.	District Constables.	Native Constables.	Stations.	Inspectors.	Sergeants-Major.	Sergeants.	Constables.	Detectives.	Total.	District Constables.	Native Constables.
Canterbury and North Otago—									Dunedin, Southland, and Lakes— <i>ctd.</i>								
Christchurch ..	1	1	3	31	3	39	..	..	Bluff ..	..	..	1	1	..	2	..	..
Addington	1	..	1	..	..	Caversham ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Akaroa	2	..	2	..	..	Clinton ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Amberley	1	..	1	..	..	Clyde ..	..	..	1	1	..	2	..	..
Ashburton	1	6	..	7	..	..	Cromwell ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Bealey	1	..	1	..	..	Gore ..	..	..	1	1	..	2	..	..
Bingsland	1	..	1	..	..	Green Island ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Cheviot	1	..	Half-moon Bay ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Coalgate	1	..	1	..	..	Invercargill ..	..	..	1	7	1	9	..	..
Culverden	1	..	1	..	..	Kaitangata ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Fairlie	1	..	1	..	..	Lawrence ..	..	..	1	1	..	2	..	..
Geraldine	1	..	1	..	..	Lumsden ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Hampden	1	..	1	..	..	Mataura ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Kaipoi	2	..	2	..	..	Middlemarch ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Kaikoura	1	..	1	..	..	Milton ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Kurow	1	..	1	..	..	Mornington ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Leeston	1	..	1	..	..	Mosgiel ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Lincoln	1	..	1	..	..	Naseby ..	..	..	1	1	..	2	..	..
Little River	1	..	1	..	..	North-east Valley ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Lyttelton	1	4	..	5	..	..	North Invercargill ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Methven	1	..	1	..	..	Ophir ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Ngapara	1	..	1	..	..	Orepuki ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Oamaru	1	6	1	8	..	..	Otautau ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Oxford	1	..	1	..	..	Outram ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Papanui	1	..	1	..	..	Palmerston South ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Phillipstown	1	..	1	..	..	Pembroke ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Pleasant Point	1	..	1	..	..	Port Chalmers ..	..	..	1	3	..	4	..	..
Rakaia	1	..	1	..	..	Queenstown ..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	..
Rangiora	2	..	2	..	..	Ravensbourne ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
St. Albans	1	..	1	..	..	Riverton ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Sheffield	1	..	1	..	..	Roslyn ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Sumner	1	..	1	..	..	Roxburgh ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Sydenham	2	..	2	..	..	St. Bathans ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Temuka	2	..	2	..	..	St. Clair ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Timaru	1	7	1	9	..	..	South Dunedin ..	..	..	1	3	..	4	..	..
Waimate	2	..	2	..	..	South Invercargill ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Woolston	1	..	1	..	..	Tapanui ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Totals ..	1	1	7	91	5	105	1	..	Waikaia ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Dunedin, Southland, and Lakes—									Waikouaiti ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Dunedin ..	1	..	4	31	2	38	..	..	Waitahuna ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
King Street	1	4	..	5	..	..	Waitati ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Alexandra South	1	..	1	..	..	Winton ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Anderson's Bay	1	..	1	..	..	Woodhaugh ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Arrowtown	1	..	1	..	..	Wyndham ..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Balclutha	1	..	1	..	..	Totals ..	1	..	13	93	3	110	1	..
									Grand Totals ..	7	3	42	453	12	516	18	8

RETURN showing CASUALTIES in the NEW ZEALAND POLICE FORCE during the Year ended 31st March, 1897.

Retired on compensation ..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Resignations ..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Dismissals ..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Deaths ..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Transferred to Prisons Department ..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Transferred to Permanent Militia ..	..	..	..	..	..	1
						34

RETURN showing the PROPORTION of POLICE to POPULATION and COST of POLICE per INHABITANT in each of the under-mentioned Places.

Place.	Proportion of Police to Population.	Cost of Police per Inhabitant.	Remarks.
New Zealand ..	1 to 1,461	s. d. 2 7½	Number of police, 516; net expenditure (<i>vide</i> Appropriation Account for year ended 31st March, 1897), £99,350 18s. 7d. Population, 754,016 (including Maoris).
Victoria	1 to 832	4 2½	<i>Vide</i> Appropriation of Revenue, 1896-97—viz.: Number of police, 1,412; vote, £247,552. Population, 1,174,888.
New South Wales ..	1 to 692	5 1½	<i>Vide</i> Estimates of Expenditure, 1896-97—viz.: Number of police, 1,873 (exclusive of 70 Native trackers); vote, £332,437. Population, 1,297,640.
South Australia ..	1 to 1,041	4 3	<i>Vide</i> Estimates of Expenditure for Year ending 30th June, 1897—viz.: Number of police, 346; vote, £76,592. Population, 360,220.
Queensland ..	1 to 579	6 9	<i>Vide</i> Estimates for 1895-96—viz.: Number of police, 815 (exclusive of 10 supernumeraries and 100 Native trackers); vote, £159,710. Population, 472,179.

NOTE.—Populations are taken from official estimates as on 31st December, 1896.

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