

*"The Criminal Code Amendment Act, 1905."*

This Act, which provides for the extension of time from one to six months under which proceedings can be instituted against persons having knowledge of girls under sixteen years of age, is a most satisfactory one, and will be productive of good results in minimising this class of offence.

*"The Shipping and Seamen Act, 1903."*

Stowaways continue to arrive in this colony, and are dealt with summarily under this Act then set at liberty after serving a short term of imprisonment. Most of them are undesirables of the criminal class, and if provision were made to prevent the landing of stowaways in the colony we would have less crime to contend with.

*Firearms.*

There is evident need for legislation in respect to persons carrying or possessing firearms. Serious accidents are becoming far too prevalent through the careless use of firearms by both adults and youths. Criminals, drunkards, persons of weak intellect, and bad characters can all carry firearms to the danger of the public, resulting in occasional accidents through carelessness, suicides, murders, and attempted murders. Provision should be made preventing youths under sixteen years of age (except cadets) possessing firearms or ammunition of any description, and all over that age who carry firearms should be licensed (defence forces and members of rifle clubs carrying Government arms exempted). The police could act as licensing officers, a nominal fee charged and applied as considered advisable.

MISCELLANEOUS.

*Transfers.*

In the interests of the service it is imperative to occasionally transfer members of the Force from one district or station to another, but in connection with such transfers I regret to say that influence is frequently resorted to, resulting in appeals being made by the inhabitants of the district concerned to countermand orders issued by the Department. Such action, I need scarcely say, is not conducive to the maintenance of discipline and efficiency, and the less it is indulged in the better for the service. Interference of this description is conspicuous by its absence in well disciplined forces.

PUBLIC COMMENTS.

Misleading comments have been publicly made in respect to alleged non-investigation by the Department of complaints lodged against members of the Force. I desire it to be clearly understood that there exists no foundation whatsoever for any such assertion. Every complaint, no matter how trivial, is thoroughly investigated and dealt with on its merits as records prove, and I think erring members of the service have occasion to know this. Such comments can only be made without consideration or knowledge of facts, and are not applicable to this Department.

*Finger Prints.*

I again direct attention to the necessity of providing a prison by-law enabling warders in special cases to take the finger prints of prisoners awaiting trial or on remand, as several instances have arisen in which prisoners have refused to permit their prints to be taken, and in consequence their previous convictions were not traced until after they had been dealt with. It is only those with previous convictions who decline, hence the necessity in the interests of justice to secure their prints. In England provision is made which enables prisoners' finger prints to be taken at any time.

*Alterations in Districts.*

The transfer on 19th March last of the undermentioned stations from one district to another has resulted in better supervision being maintained, and the executive work being dealt with more expeditiously. The following stations were transferred from Napier District to Auckland District: Katikati, Omapere, Opatiki, Rotorua, Taupo, Tauranga, Te Puke, Te Whaiti, Tokaanu, and Whakatanu. The following from Greymouth District to Wellington District—Collingwood, Motueka, Nelson, Richmond, Spring Grove, Takaka, and the Port.

*Strength and Distribution of the Force.*

Continued demands for additional police protection, principally from outside districts, are received by the Department; and, owing to the increased population, it is evident that a number of them will soon have to be satisfied. I consider that an augmentation of at least 2 sergeants, 15 constables, and 3 detectives is necessary to meet legitimate demands. The proportion of police to population would then be only one to every 1,360 inhabitants.

The augmentation authorised last year of a station-sergeant in each of the four centres to assist the sub-inspector has thus far given every satisfaction and resulted in the better supervision of the men and more efficient performance of police duties generally.

COST OF POLICE, ETC.

A return is herewith annexed (Appendix C) giving proportion of police to the population and the cost of police per inhabitant in each of the Australian States and in this colony.

INSPECTORS' REPORTS.

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

I have, &c.,

W. DINNIE,

Commissioner of Police.