

INSPECTOR WRIGHT, THAMES DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1911, the strength of the Force in this district was : 1 Inspector, 3 sergeants, 30 constables, 1 detective, 2 district constables, and 3 Native constables. During the year the strength at Opotiki and Tauranga has been increased by a constable at each place, and the district constable at Tokaanu has been replaced by a regular constable ; at Waihi the strength has been reduced by 1 constable.

Increases are now required at Waihi, Te Aroha, and Rotorua, 1 constable at each station.

No new stations have been opened and none closed during the year.

There have been no deaths, retirements on pension, dismissals, or resignations during the year.

The return of offences for the year ending 31st December last does not call for special remark. There were 726 offences reported, as against 719 the previous year ; of these, 700 were accounted for either by arrest or summons, thus showing the satisfactory result of 96·41 per cent. of offences detected.

There were 265 persons arrested for drunkenness, as compared with 245 the previous year, and considering that the district extends from Cape Colville to the East Cape, and includes such towns as Thames, Rotorua, Waihi, Tauranga, and Opotiki, I think the figures show that the district is a particularly sober one.

Of 51 persons committed for trial for indictable offences, 45 were subsequently convicted.

The conduct of all members of the Force during the year has, with so few exceptions as are not worth mentioning, been highly satisfactory ; all are working together well, and seem well satisfied with the conditions under which they serve. The increased house allowance granted in January last has been much appreciated by the married constables unprovided with quarters.

I am not aware of any marked increase of population in any particular part of the district, but the Hauraki Plain is being steadily drained and settled, and there is now quite a number of settlers in that district who are bringing a considerable volume of trade to the Thames.

Work is also about to commence on the Rangitaiki Swamp. - This will open up some 85,000 acres of what has the reputation of being extremely fertile land, which will no doubt attract close settlement.

The district shows every indication of being in a prosperous state, and the unemployed are an unknown quantity. The deep levels at the Thames are now being tested, and should payable gold be discovered a large increase in population can be expected.

There have been no serious crimes of a violent nature during the year that deserve special mention.

The Licensing Amendment Act, 1910, has still further strengthened the hands of the police in dealing with sly-grog selling in no-license districts, but there still remains an important amendment to be made as regards sly-grog selling in licensed areas ; in the former it is an offence for any person to keep liquor for sale (section 146 subsection (a) ii), and under subsection (d) of same section the onus of showing that liquor proved to be kept is not intended for sale lies upon the accused. In licensed areas there is no such offence as keeping for sale (see section 195), and no such provision as that contained in subsection (d) of section 146 ; consequently, although the police may know that a person is getting more liquor than he would reasonably want for his own use, and is no doubt selling it in a discreet manner, yet they are helpless unless they can prove an actual sale, which is in most cases very difficult to do, and can only be done by adopting objectionable methods.

If the provisions regarding sly-grog selling in no-license areas were applied to licensed areas the police would be able to put down a class of sly-grog selling that there is every reason to believe obtains in some parts of the Dominion.

INSPECTOR DWYER, NAPIER DISTRICT.

The offences return submitted to your office for the year ending 31st December last shows there were 2,070 offences of all classes reported, and of this number 2,027 were detected. The return shows an increase of 76 offences as compared with the previous year. The offences were of the usual class, none of them calling for any special remark.

There has been little or no sly-grog selling, and the licensed houses throughout the district, with few exceptions, have been conducted in a very satisfactory manner.

During the year the police-station at Waikaremoana was closed, and a station opened at Mohaka, where it was much more needed.

The casualties during the year were : 1 sergeant and 1 constable retired on pension, 1 constable voluntarily resigned, and 1 constable called upon to resign.

The conduct of the sergeants, detectives, and constables during the year was, on the whole, very good, and greater vigilance and activity in the detection of crime was shown. The percentage of arrests made to the number of offences reported reflects credit on all hands.

The men fully appreciate the late increases in lodging and travelling allowances, and these concessions have helped to create a feeling of satisfaction and contentment among them.

The legislation dealing with the supply of liquor to Natives for consumption off licensed premises is evaded in every conceivable form by the Natives, and I would suggest that the law be amended by making it an offence for Natives to be found with liquor in their possession.

INSPECTOR WILSON, WANGANUI DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force is 79—1 Inspector, 1 Sub-Inspector, 8 sergeants, 64 constables, 3 detectives, 1 acting-detective, and 1 district constable.

New stations have been formed at Fitzroy and Whangamomona. The latter is the site of the principal railway-works on the Stratford-Ongarue Railway. At the present time there are some 600 men employed on these works.