

EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

INSPECTOR CULLEN, AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

I have the honour to submit for your information the following report upon police matters in the Auckland District during the year ended the 31st March, 1912.

The criminal statistics for the year ending the 31st December, 1911, were forwarded to you in due time, and show that there has been no appreciable increase in crime notwithstanding the fact that the population of the district is increasing steadily.

The casualties in the Force here during the year have been as follows: 1 sergeant and 1 constable died, 2 constables were discharged on superannuation on reaching the age-limit, 1 sergeant was superannuated as medically unfit, 1 constable was discharged as medically unfit, 4 constables resigned to better their positions, 2 constables were called upon to resign for unsatisfactory conduct, and 1 sergeant was dismissed for failing to tender his resignation when called upon to do so for unsatisfactory conduct. I have much pleasure in stating that the general conduct of the members of the Force under my charge has been better during the past year than during any corresponding period since I took charge of this district.

New stations have been opened at Grey Lynn and Mount Albert, and the station at Eden Terrace has been closed and a new one opened in the same locality, which is now known as Mount Eden Station. The district constable at Mangawai has been replaced by a regular constable.

As Auckland City and suburbs are steadily increasing in population, it will be necessary to increase the police here proportionately, so as to give the various localities where the population is growing most rapidly the amount of police supervision they are entitled to.

Nearly all the country townships, more especially those along the main line of railway, are also increasing in population, and here again it will be necessary to provide extra police at an early date.

The strength of the district has been increased since my last annual report by 1 sergeant, 8 constables, and 2 acting-detectives, who have been posted as follows: 1 sergeant was placed in charge of Ponsonby, where a constable had charge previously; 4 constables and the 2 acting-detectives were attached to Auckland Station; and a constable was sent to each of the following stations: Grey Lynn, Mount Albert, Cambridge, and Mangawai, the man going to the latter station replacing a district constable. As the foregoing increase, although fairly substantial, has not been sufficient to meet the ever-growing police requirements of the district, it will be necessary to make provision for a further substantial increase to the strength of the Force here during the current year.

New buildings have been completed at Frankton Junction, Parnell, Wellsford, and Mount Eden, and sites with residences thereon suitable for police-stations have been purchased at Grey Lynn and Mount Albert, and a site without buildings has been purchased at Huntly on which station buildings should be erected without delay.

Sites with suitable residences thereon are still needed at Mount Roskill, Kingsland, Northcote, Devonport, Takapuna, Owen's Road (Mount Eden), Mount Eden Road South, and Herekino. Sites suitable for police-stations should also be acquired at Hobsonville, Ohaeawai, and Houhora.

INSPECTOR WRIGHT, THAMES DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1912, the strength was as follows: 1 Inspector, 3 sergeants, 31 constables, 1 detective sergeant, 2 district constables, and 3 Native constables; the only alteration on last year's figures being an increase of 1 constable at Waihi.

Increases are now required at Te Aroha, Rotorua, and Waihi East, 1 constable at each place. At Te Aroha the work has increased to such an extent that I have to send a constable there every week-end and on every holiday to assist, and, as I have no spare man in the district for such duty, it means depriving other stations of the protection they are entitled to.

No new stations have been opened and none closed during the year. A police camp has been established at Kerepehi, and has proved very useful, the police now having a place to put up at when on duty in the locality. It will suffice for the present.

There were no deaths or retirements on pension during the year, but 3 constables resigned.

The offence return for the year ending 31st December last discloses that 842 offences were reported, as compared with 726 the previous year, showing a net increase of 116 offences. The principal increases were—Drunkenness, 45; petty thefts, 64. The increase in the number of arrests for drunkenness has no significance, as they mostly occurred in districts where considerable public works have been carried on during the year, and where casual labour is employed to any extent there is always more drunkenness than among the settled population. The increase under the heading "Thefts (undescribed)" is almost entirely accounted for by a gang of youthful desperadoes, who, in imitation of picture-show heroes, dressed themselves in feathers, &c., armed themselves with revolvers, and stole from all and sundry. They were committed to the Industrial School.

Sly-grog selling in the prohibited areas is still carried on to a limited extent, 25 persons being prosecuted during the year, of whom 20 were convicted. Fines amounting to £340 were inflicted, as compared with £267 10s. the previous year. The sergeants and constables have shown considerable ability in dealing with this troublesome subject, and have succeeded in keeping illicit trading in check without resorting to objectionable methods.

There have been no serious crimes calling for special mention during the year.

The conduct of the members of the Force in this district has, on the whole, been very satisfactory, and punishments have been exceedingly rare. The new scale of pay for the constables has, so far as I can hear, given great satisfaction, and I trust that the increase will soon be extended proportionately