

mischievous, 18; soliciting prostitution, 32. Decreases—Bankruptcy offences, 23; breaches of the peace, 34; deserting or absenting from merchant vessels, 57; drunkenness, 261; forgery and uttering, 41; furious riding and driving, 34; keeping disorderly houses or brothels, 13; obstructing police, 17; perjury, 7; receiving stolen goods, 14; sly-grog selling, 10; theft, 32; theft from dwellings, 55; vagrancy, 58.

A number of constables were fined for minor breaches of the regulations, otherwise the conduct of the men in general has been satisfactory.

Owing to the steady increase in population in Whangarei I consider the time has arrived when arrangements should be made for a constable for night duty. At the present time there are only two constables stationed there, and the time of one of them is continually taken up with duty in the country. I beg to recommend that an extra constable be provided for Whangarei.

During the past twelve months the sum of £2,725 has been paid in fines by bookmakers in Auckland City, but regardless of the substantial amount of the fines imposed in each case it cannot be said that illegal betting has in any way diminished. If bookmaking is to be put down the law will have to be amended so as to give the police power of arrest without warrant. The existing law is certainly quite inadequate.

#### INSPECTOR SHEEHAN, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

The strength on the 31st March last was 1 Inspector, 4 senior sergeants, 4 sergeants, 1 detective-sergeant, 59 constables, 2 district constables, and 1 Native constable. During the year the strength of the district has been increased by 5, 1 sergeant and 2 temporary constables being appointed to Hamilton Station, 1 constable to Whakatane Station, and 1 constable to the new station opened at Manunui in July, 1917.

Further additions to the strength are required at Frankton Junction (1 constable) and Rotorua (1 constable). A second constable is required at Frankton so that all express trains may be met and more attention given to the patrolling of the borough. A proper system of night duty cannot be carried out at Rotorua with the present staff, and an extra constable is required.

A new station will be required at Ohura, but can stand over for the present, as the railway-construction works are practically at a standstill. Stations will also be required at Piopio and Matamata in the near future, but can well stand over for the duration of the war.

During the year 1 Inspector retired on superannuation, 2 constables and 1 Native constable resigned, and 1 Native constable died.

The offences return for 1917 shows that 1,556 offences were reported, as compared with 1,871 for the previous year, a decrease of 315. Increases appear under the following heads: Disturbing meetings and congregations, 10; false pretences, 23; manslaughter, 2; murder (attempted), 2; theft, 21; theft from dwellings, 9. Decreases appear under the heads: Abusive and threatening behaviour, 21; arson, 8; assaults (common), 26; breaches of the peace, 33; disorderly conduct, 14; drunkenness, 92; obscene language, 41; sly-grog selling, 12.

Of the offences reported over 95 per cent. were accounted for either by arrest or summons.

Sly-grog selling is still being carried on in the King-country, although the police are active in trying to cope with the illicit trade. The total amount of fines inflicted for sly-grog selling during the year was £693.

Members of the Force have conducted themselves during the past year in a manner that deserves the highest praise, and have performed their arduous duties with credit and without the slightest friction with the public.

#### INSPECTOR McGRATH, NAPIER DISTRICT.

On the 31st March the strength of the district was 68 of all ranks, being an increase of 3 during the year. The total is made up as follows: 1 Inspector, 1 Sub-Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 7 sergeants, 55 constables, 1 detective-sergeant, and 2 detectives. Increases were authorized at Napier, 1 constable; Takapau, 1 constable; and Mohaka, 1 constable.

A new station was opened at Takapau and the station at Nuhaka closed.

Two constables resigned during the year—one at Gisborne and one at Woodville.

The total number of offences reported during the year 1917 was 1,602, as compared with 1,703 for the year 1916, showing a decrease of 101 offences. Of the 1,602 offences reported, 1,524 resulted in a prosecution, leaving a total of 78 undetected offences for the year. The principal increases were—Breaches of the peace, 17; forgery and uttering, 13; furious riding and driving, 34; gaming offences, 16; malicious injury to property, 11; obscene and profane language, 10; theft of pigs, 12. There were decreases in the following: Disobeying orders of Court and summonses, 12; drunkenness, 76; failing to provide maintenance for wives, &c., 19; false pretences, 20; theft (undescribed), 33; vagrancy offences, 22.

Two men who were employed fencing in an isolated place on the East Coast were murdered in their camp, and the prosecution of a young man for the crime resulted in an acquittal. Apart from this case of murder there were no serious crimes calling for special mention during the past year. The offence of unlawfully supplying liquor to Maoris on the East Coast continues to give a great deal of trouble, much ingenuity being exercised in order to evade the law. By continual vigilance, however, the police have succeeded in keeping this nefarious traffic in check. Numerous convictions have been secured, and heavy fines were imposed.

The conduct of all members of the Force has been exemplary. The detective and uniform branches of the service have worked well together, and, although a good many extra duties have