

Three young men were convicted of manslaughter at the Supreme Court, Gisborne, for recklessly driving motor-cars resulting in the loss of life ; otherwise there was no serious crime in the district that calls for any special remarks.

It will be noticed with satisfaction that there has been a considerable decrease in drunkenness for the year in this district. This may be ascribed to three causes—namely, six-o'clock closing of hotels, financial stringency, and special police supervision.

The Maoris in the Horouta Native district recently voted and carried restoration of liquor, which appears to give general satisfaction to all concerned. The prohibition of liquor to Maoris was unsatisfactory and a handicap to the police in the district, inasmuch as no special legislation was enacted to cope with the difficulties as in other no-license areas. Recently a very large gathering of Natives occurred at Ruatorea, and from my own observations the removal of the restrictions did not appear to influence drunkenness ; on the contrary, there was an absence of such, and no rowdyism, which usually follows such meetings.

INSPECTOR DEW, NAPIER DISTRICT.

During the year stations have been opened at Nuhaka and Petane. No station has been closed.

Two constables voluntarily resigned during the year.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1922, shows a total of 1,210 offences reported, as compared with 1,393 during the previous year, a net decrease of 183. Of the offences reported, 1,136 were accounted for by arrest or summons, leaving 74 cases undetected. Of the cases dealt with, 99 were committed for trial, 967 summarily convicted, and 70 discharged. Seventy-three of those committed for trial were convicted. The principal increases were—Assault causing actual bodily harm, 4 ; rape, 1 ; carnally knowing girls, 1 ; bigamy, 3 ; theft from dwelling, 5 ; theft by clerk or servant, 36 ; false pretences, 15 ; burglary, 6 ; house and shop breaking, 4 ; offences against rights of property, 4 ; breaches of the peace, 4. The principal decreases are—Manslaughter, 2 ; assaults, 33 ; thefts (undescribed), 12 ; mischief, 33 ; drunkenness, 154 ; drunk in charge of horses and loaded firearms, 3 ; drunk and disorderly, 6 ; exposing person or grossly indecent act, 9 ; profane or indecent language, 29 ; vagrancy, 16 ; assaulting, obstructing, and resisting police, 12.

Police duties in this district have been carried out in a satisfactory manner during the past year, and the conduct of the police, generally speaking, has been very good, only a few being dealt with for minor breaches of the regulations.

INSPECTOR MURRAY, NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT.

During the year the strength was increased by the appointment of a sergeant to New Plymouth Station.

Up to the present it has been impossible to rent a suitable house for use as a police-station at Rahotu. At present an unmarried constable is in charge of that station, and he also finds it difficult to obtain permanent board and lodging. There is a police reserve with lock-up thereon at Rahotu, and it is very necessary that a police-station be built there as early as possible.

During the year new police-stations have been built at Hawera and Inglewood.

The offences return for this district shows that in 1922 a total of 677 offences were reported, as compared with 711 the previous year, a decrease of 34. Of the offences reported, over 96 per cent. were accounted for either by arrest or summons, leaving 30 undetected. 76 cases were committed for trial, and 60 of these resulted in convictions at Supreme Court. 520 were summarily convicted and 51 discharged. Increases appear under the headings—Theft from dwellings, 19 ; forgery, 7 ; uttering forged documents, 9 ; gaming offences, 5. Decreases are shown under—Indecently assaulting males, 2 ; unnatural offences, 2 ; incest, 2 ; theft (undescribed), 56 ; theft by servants, 8 ; receiving stolen property, 12 ; mischief, 9 ; drunkenness, 23.

The conduct of the police has been good, and the duties satisfactorily performed.

INSPECTOR FOUHY, WANGANUI DISTRICT.

Two extra constables each are required at Wanganui and Taumarunui, and one at Taihape. I would strongly urge that at least one constable may be sent forthwith to Taumarunui to allow of a constable for night duty. The population of this district is fast increasing, and all express trains pass Taumarunui between midnight and 3 a.m., which allows a good opportunity for the unlawful importation of liquor to this town, the most important in the King-country.

A new station has been opened at Castlecliff, a fact much appreciated by the residents of this suburb.

The number of offences reported during the year ending 31st December, 1922, was 1,105, as against 1,181 for the year 1921. The principal increases are as follows : Indecently assaulting a male, 2 ; incest, 2 ; carnally knowing girls under sixteen, 4 ; theft from dwellings, 4 ; theft from dwellings (attempted), 8 ; theft of animals, 3 ; house or shop breaking, &c., 53 ; cruelty to animals, 12 ; vagrancy, 12 ; breach of Arms Act, 23. The principal decreases are as follows : Indecent assault, 5 ; assault, 7 ; theft (undescribed), 5 ; false pretences, 5 ; house or shop breaking, &c. (attempted), 16 ; drunkenness, 77 ; drunk and disorderly, 18 ; using profane, indecent, or obscene language, 14 ; gaming with instruments, 12 ; failing to maintain wife or children, 13 ; supplying liquor to Natives in proclaimed areas, 8 ; wilfully ill-treating or neglecting children, 10.

There was one murder case, that of a Chinaman at Long Acre. A man was arrested for the offence and charged, but when the evidence was completed in the Magistrate's Court the Magistrate dismissed the case.