

so weak as it is at present. With the utmost exertions of the police only the graver cases of crime receive due attention. Petty thefts, breaches of the City By-laws, &c., to a great extent remain unpunished, in consequence of the paucity of constables; and for the same reason those who in other places are known as "larrikins," a rising element here, do pretty much as they like out of Queen Street, and are a continual source of complaint on the part of those who have to traverse the streets at night.

An increase in the pay of the detectives of 2s. per day has been estimated for, as the pay they at present receive is far below the salaries ruling in other places, and not sufficient to induce them to remain in the Force. In the Southern Provinces and throughout the Australian Colonies, detectives are paid at the rate of from 12s. to 15s. per diem, while here they receive only 10s., a salary which will never induce really clever detectives to remain long in the Force; and the employment of any except really able and trustworthy men is worse than useless. Detectives are often put to considerable expense in the detection of crime for which they are never recompensed, and upon the commission of any crime are harassed and worried, in a manner none but a police-officer can well understand, in their endeavours to secure the arrest of the offender.

The estimate provides for one mounted constable in the city, and three for Otahuhu, Papakura, and Mercer. Mounted constables are not only much wanted in these places, but are likewise required in many of the outlying districts, as foot constables, in being confined to the townships, afford but slight protection to the settlers at a distance.

The sums set down for the conveyance of prisoners, travelling expenses of constables, rations of prisoners, &c., do not exceed the actual cost of these services during the year 1874; and, as the requirements of the Force are daily increasing, an increase in these charges from year to year must be anticipated.

Provision has also been made in the estimate for the erection of stations at Papakura, Mercer, Northern Wairoa, and Mongonui. From the first, the constable at Papakura has resided in a cottage rented by the Provincial Government, and situate about half a mile away from the lock-up, no cottage being available at a nearer distance. It is absolutely necessary that police stations should be within the shortest possible distance of the lock-ups; otherwise escapes are likely to be made, and the cost of re-capture, as sometimes happens, may be as great as the expense of erecting police quarters. The constables at Mercer and Mongonui also live in private cottages, and, as permanent populations have settled in all these places, it would be a saving to the Government, apart from other considerations, to have stations erected forthwith.

A station and lock-up are urgently required at the Northern Wairoa, to which place a constable has recently been sent by order of his Honor the Superintendent. No cottage can be rented for the constable's use, as there are none to be let there, and the constable must, in consequence, reside at an hotel until a station is built. I need scarcely state that all hotels are unfit places for constables to reside in.

The gaol at Russell consists of a single cell of about fifteen feet square, and often contains as many as twenty prisoners. The sides of the cell, which are of weatherboards, are quite rotten and crumbling to pieces, necessitating immediate repairs. An additional cell is absolutely required.

The sum set down under the heading "Contingencies" would be required for the purchase of forage, shoeing of horses, payment to constables for destruction of clothing, &c.

The Newcastle Gaol is much in need of repairs, and the cost would be at least the sum estimated.

Many other necessities, besides those estimated for, require to be brought under your notice, the more prominent of which are the want of police stations in the suburbs, at Parnell, Newton, and Freeman's Bay, at which places cottages have up to the present been rented for the use of the police, but, no lock-up being attached, the constables lose half their usefulness, and the cost in rent being 11s. per week for each, it would be both more economical and expedient that cottages were purchased at once and lock-ups erected; otherwise the cost in rent will become greater year by year as the suburbs increase in population, and property in value.

The city police occupy quarters in the Albert Barracks, but, as the Improvement Commissioners may require the removal of the cottages at any moment, it is desirable that some provision should be made to meet such a contingency.

In the event of police constables being employed to replace the special constables in the districts which have been mentioned, provision would also require to be made for their accommodation, and for the erection of lock-ups.

A new station was formed at Freeman's Bay in the early part of the year, and within the last month constables have also been sent to form stations at Mongonui and Northern Wairoa, by order of His Honor the Superintendent.

It would have afforded me great satisfaction to have been able to furnish an estimate which would not have exceeded the provincial vote of last session, but for years past the vote for police has been quite inadequate, and, although within the last five years the population has been largely increased, no increase whatever has been made in the vote for this department. The vote for police in Otago during last year was some £25,000, and in Canterbury about £18,000, while for the Province of Auckland for the same period the vote was £7,504. These figures require no comment, and clearly show that the estimate now furnished is not unreasonable, but far below the cost of police in the Southern Provinces.

It affords me great satisfaction to be able to state that the conduct of the Thames Constabulary, under Sub-Inspector Bullen, has been everything that could be desired during the year, and that Sergeant-Major Pardy and the sergeants and detectives throughout the district have given very general satisfaction, while the constables, notwithstanding the numerous resignations which have taken place, have upon the whole performed their duties in a very satisfactory manner.

I have, &c.,

T. BROHAM,

Inspector A.C.

The Commissioner, Armed Constabulary, Wellington.