

1892.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE POLICE FORCE OF THE COLONY

(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The COMMISSIONER of POLICE to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

Police Department (Commissioner's Office), Wellington,
1st July, 1892.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit for your information the annual report on the Police Force of the colony, together with the criminal statistics for the year ended 31st March, 1892.

On the 1st April, 1892, the strength of the Police was 482, as against 486 last year. The totals are made up as follows: Inspectors—first class, 4; second class, 2; third class, 1. Sergeants-major, 4. Sergeants—first class, 19; second class, 22; third class, 15. Constables—first class, 113; second class, 103; third class, 185. Detectives—first class, 2; second class, 5; third class, 4; fourth class, 3. Total, 482. There are also 114 troop horses. In addition to the above quoted strength, there are 12 district and 9 Native constables. The plan of amalgamating stations and districts, by making them fewer and consequently larger, started last year, is working well. New stations have been opened at Moawhanga, Otorohanga, Stratford, Inglewood, Ngakawau, and South Invercargill; while those at Te Kuiti and Normanby have been closed. Increases of strength have been made at the following stations—viz., Eden Terrace (Auckland), 1; Dargaville, 1; Wellington, 3; Nelson, 1; Dunedin, 1; while the strength at Auckland, Russell, Greymouth, Reefton, Westport, Denniston, Hokitika, Christchurch, Rangiora, Oxford, Ashburton, and Temuka, has been reduced in each case by 1.

The casualties in the Force during the past year have been as follows: Retired on compensation, 7; resigned, 10; discharged, 3; dismissed, 2; died, 3: total, 25.

Vacancies in the Force have been almost exclusively filled up by transfers from the Permanent Militia, and no fault can be found with the men so enrolled, who are—in addition to being well set up, drilled, and disciplined—intelligent, zealous, and reliable. This system of keeping up the Force is commendable, from many points of view, and in case of need these men must prove a valuable assistance to the Permanent Militia, as from the training in gunnery, &c., already received, they would be fit to take their places in the batteries at the shortest possible notice, and render material aid to the more expert gunners.

From my experience during the past year, I am more than ever convinced that to have a thoroughly efficient Police Force, it is imperative that the Inspectors, Sergeants, Detectives, and constables should be periodically moved from one station to another. In making these changes I have invariably endeavoured, as far as possible, to put an end to what has existed for some years past, and has rightly been looked upon as a just cause for complaint—namely, young third-class Constables being put in charge of country sub-districts, while their seniors, the older hands, have been kept in towns doing street duty. It will, of course, take some time for this injustice to be entirely worked out; but as sub-districts become vacant, the next senior for a station, provided he is fully qualified, is selected, while his place in the town is taken by the last recruit. It is fully recognised that if transfers are carried out in a capricious and indiscriminate manner unnecessary hardship and considerable discontent may be caused; but no transfers are sanctioned except those the exigencies of the service require, or, perhaps, in a few cases, at the special request of the constable concerned.

The duties performed by the Police, outside of what is understood as strictly constabulary work, are increasing considerably, and there is no objection to such duties as Clerks of Court, Bailiffs, Inspectors of Factories, Registrars of Electors, Agents for Public Trustee, Census Enumerators, Rangers, and such like, being undertaken by this department in some of the smaller sub-districts, as, while the duties are more advantageously and economically performed, the Police are brought in closer touch with the people, and a system of confidence and reliance is thereby established.

The department has given special attention during the past year to the enforcement of the Licensing Act, more especially as regards Sunday trading, and closing licensed houses at stipulated hours. In many cases convictions have been obtained, but not without considerable difficulty. That Sunday trading and selling during prohibited hours are carried on to a great extent throughout the colony cannot be denied, but the department is severely handicapped by the difficulty of obtaining convictions, as the law is so complicated and defective, that, in many cases taken into Court, though the Police feel bound to prosecute, not the slightest hope of a conviction is entertained. When a case breaks down the result is two-fold: the Police of a district are damaged in the eyes of the public, and the law-breaker is encouraged to continue his illegal trade. It may be stated in illustration of what is meant, that, though as many as fifty persons may be seen or known to enter a public-house on a Sunday or during prohibited hours, no prosecution can be instituted with any hope of success, as no sufficient evidence may be obtained to prove the actual sale of liquor. It is almost hopeless to endeavour to successfully enforce the provisions of the Act, unless the Police are relieved of the necessity of proving an actual sale. This might be done by amendment of the Act to provide that admission of persons not being lodgers, or the fact that a bar is found open, during prohibited hours, shall be *prima facie* evidence that the house is being kept open for the sale of liquor. The department is, however, alive to the necessity of the stringent supervision of licensed houses and the suppression of sly-grog selling, and will spare no effort to carry out the law.

Perhaps the next most important question with which the Police have to contend is what is known as the street-larrikin nuisance; but the growth of this undoubted evil must be attributed rather to want of legislation and by-laws for its suppression than to the apathy of the Police. It is easy to detect and punish overt acts of larrikinism; but such objectionable conduct as collecting at street corners, obstructing footpaths, &c., is difficult to deal with, as in such cases proof must be forthcoming of actual obstruction before a conviction can be obtained. Again, a crowd of larrikins may collect and stand in a doorway as long as they please, provided the owner does not object and they are off the street-line; though the nuisance may be great, the police are powerless. In the performance of Constabulary duty strictness must always be tempered with tact and discretion, and were the Police to lay informations under the head of acts of larrikinism indiscriminately, much mischief and hardship would result. What is required is that constables should be legally entrusted with more discretionary powers than they at present possess in these matters. There could be no danger attendant upon giving these, for the department has a right to demand and receive the assistance of the Municipal authorities by absolutely necessary by-laws, clearly defined. Strict orders have been issued by the department for the suppression of this increasing nuisance, but orders are worse than useless when unsupported by properly constituted authority for carrying them out.

Another prevalent crime in the colony is sheep-stealing. Though there has been a decrease during the year, the present high price of sheep renders it probable that the decrease is not likely to last long. In dealing with this class of crime the Police find considerable difficulties. Firstly, the robberies are not discovered and reported till long after they have been committed, as in many cases the flock-owners have no means of ascertaining their losses, except at stated periods; and before the Police have information of the robbery or any chance of capturing the offenders, the stolen sheep are killed, and all traces obliterated. The imperfect and entirely unsatisfactory methods of branding also hold out great temptation to the sheep-stealers. There is an elaborate scheme of registration of brands, but it is its elaboration that makes it workable in theory and not in practice. The production of wool and frozen mutton is of such magnitude in New Zealand that the protection from losses by theft from those engaged in that industry becomes a matter of absolute necessity.

The dastardly offence of arson, is, I regret to say, on the increase, and in many cases the sagacity of the detectives is baffled and the crime has to go unpunished.

There have been practically no promotions in the Force during the past year, owing to the ranks of sergeants and first-class constables being over-crowded. As stated in last year's report, a new classification is required. This has been prepared, and shows that with the colony divided into seven districts, as at present, there would be: Auckland district divided into six sub-districts; Waikato and East Coast district divided into six sub-districts; New Plymouth and West Coast district divided into six sub-districts; Wellington and Marlborough district divided into five sub-districts; Nelson and Westland district divided into four sub-districts; Christchurch and North Otago district divided into ten sub-districts; and Dunedin, Southland, and Lakes district divided into fourteen sub-districts. This dividing and subdividing tends to put an end to centralisation. Each Inspector is intrusted with the entire control of his district as regards discipline and police duties, and each non-commissioned officer or constable in charge of a sub-district is responsible to the Inspector for the subdivision under his charge; he, again, holds the constables in charge of stations responsible for their stations, and thus each link in the chain of responsibility is complete. Directly some offence is committed and no arrest made, the public are eager to blame either the Ministerial or the executive head of the department; and they forget that the responsibility for the detection of crime must attach to the district or sub-district in which the offence is committed. The executive head of the department can merely give those responsible to him the best material at his disposal to work with, but the carrying out of the details of police work must then rest with the local authority. The required strength to work these districts and sub-districts effectually is: 7 Inspectors, 20 first-class sergeants, 21 second-class sergeants, 30 senior constables, 115 first-class constables, 282 second-class constables, 4 first-class detectives, 4 second-class detectives, 7 third-class detectives, 9 district constables, and 9 Native constables. To carry out this scheme would entail an additional expenditure in salaries of about £2,500 per annum on the present estimates, but it would hold out fair hopes of advancement to the men in the Force in the future, would give promotion to many at once

who have been disappointed in this respect for many years past, and, though last, not least, would give sixpence a day increase to all who are now holding the rank of third-class constable. Some of these third-class constables have held that rank since 1879, and, though qualified in all respects for promotion have, through no fault of their own but simply from stagnation by former overcrowding of the senior ranks, never obtained any advancement, either as regards pay or status. The sum of 7s. 6d. a day cannot be considered too high a rate of pay for this rank, as the men cannot hope to have charge of stations, and therefore, if married, have to pay house-rent, which their seniors though drawing higher pay save, by being provided with quarters when in charge of stations.

As regards the detective branch of the Force, a thorough reorganization is required, and it should be placed under the control of a man experienced in criminal investigation. Competent detectives cannot be obtained by indiscriminate selections from the ranks of the Police Force, as the special qualifications required for detective work are not possessed by the ordinary uniform constables. Detectives must necessarily be experts of the highest degree, and they should be selected from those who have given proof by their integrity, zeal, judgment, intelligence, and of their capacity for such delicate and responsible duties. In the present day, when by means of the Press and the telegraph the fullest information concerning crimes is sent from one end of the colony to the other, thus enabling the criminal to know what is going on, it is the more important that the detective branch should be composed of men prepared and competent to act with promptitude and tact. It is also important that the members of this force should be strongly impressed with the truth of the maxim that "silence is golden." As stated in last year's report, it still seems apparent that many cases are bungled owing to jealousy between individual members as to who shall be credited with commendation for tracing out the facts, instead of all working in the one common cause. But, be this as it may, the time has now come when some very decided action should be taken in the matter of reorganizing this important branch of the Force, and I am quite prepared to suggest the necessary steps to be adopted for carrying out needed radical changes. The rates of pay of the different classes of detectives are sufficiently high to command good men, and there are no apparent reasons why New Zealand should be behind other countries with respect to her detective force.

The criminal statistics for the year ending the 31st December, 1891, show a decrease of 441 in all offences reported—viz., North Island, 71, and South Island, 370. Drunkenness has decreased by 90 in the former, and 360 in the latter Island. There has been an increase in the undermentioned crimes: Arson, 20; coinage offences, 3; disorderly conduct, 30; escaping from custody, 4; keeping disorderly houses, 44; forgery, embezzlement, &c., 53; manslaughter, 3; obscene and profane language, 79; sly-grog selling, 7. Other crimes have decreased as follow: Assaults, 10; burglary, house-breaking, &c., 38; cattle and horse-stealing, 5; forcible entry, 14; offences under the Gaming and Lotteries Act, 74; larceny, 21; perjury, 6; Police Offences Act, 109; riot and assault, 22; sheep-stealing, 17; vagrancy, 89; deserting wives and families, &c., 14.

A return is attached showing proportion of police to population, and cost of police per inhabitant in each of the Australian Colonies.

I have, &c.,

A. HUME, Commissioner.

RETURN showing the PROPORTION of POLICE to POPULATION and COST of POLICE per INHABITANT in each of the under-mentioned Places.

Place.	Proportion of Police to Population.	Cost of Police per Inhabitant.	Remarks.
New Zealand ..	1 to 1,401	2 9	Number of police, 482; net expenditure (<i>vide</i> Appropriation Account for year ended 31st March, 1892), £92,881 10s. 6d. Population, 675,775 (including Maoris).
Victoria ..	1 to 754	5 0 $\frac{3}{4}$	<i>Vide</i> Estimates for 1891-92, viz.: Number of police, 1,535; vote, £293,400. Population, 1,157,804.
New South Wales ..	1 to 700	5 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	Number of police on the 31st December, 1891, 1,665 (<i>vide</i> Inspector-General's report); vote for 1892, £313,258. Population, 1,165,300.
South Australia ..	1 to 829	5 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	<i>Vide</i> Estimates for year ending 30th June, 1892, viz.: Number of police, 387; vote, £84,568. Population, 320,723.
Queensland ..	1 to 509	8 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	Number of police, 806 (exclusive of Native trackers); vote, £165,240 (<i>vide</i> Estimates for 1889-90). Population, 410,345.

NOTE.—Populations are taken from official estimates, as on 31st December, 1891.

RETURN showing the STRENGTH and DISTRIBUTION of the NEW ZEALAND POLICE FORCE on the 31st March, 1892.

Stations.	Inspectors.	Sergeants-Major.	Sergeants.	Constables.	Detectives.	District Constables.	Native Constables.	Total.	Stations.	Inspectors.	Sergeants-Major.	Sergeants.	Constables.	Detectives.	District Constables.	Native Constables.	Total.
NORTH ISLAND.									NORTH ISLAND—								
Auckland and Bay of Islands,—									<i>continued.</i>								
Auckland ..	1		7	25	3			36	Waikato and East Coast— <i>contd.</i>								
Freeman's Bay ..				1				1	Ngaruawahia ..				1				1
Ponsonby ..				2				2	Opotiki ..				1				1
Newton ..				2				2	Ormond ..				1				1
Surrey Hills ..				1				1	Otorohanga ..				1				1
Eden Terrace ..				2				2	Paeroa ..				1				1
Newmarket ..				1				1	Port Awanui ..			1	1				2
Parnell ..				1				1	Raglan ..				1				1
Devonport ..		1		1				2	Rotorua ..				1			1	1
Onehunga ..			1	1				2	Shortland ..				1				1
Otahuhu ..				1				1	Spit ..				2				2
Howick ..						1			Taradale ..				1				1
Papakura ..				1				1	Taupo ..				1				1
Pukekohe ..				1				1	Tauranga ..			1	1				2
Waiuku ..						1			Te Aroha ..				1				1
Mercer ..				1				1	Te Awamutu ..				1				1
Whitianga ..				1				1	Thames ..			1	4				5
Tairua ..				1				1	Tokaanu ..							1	
Coromandel ..				1				1	Tolago Bay ..				1				1
Warkworth ..				1				1	Waipawa ..			1					1
Mangawai ..						1		1	Waipiro ..							1	
Waipu ..				1				1	Waipukurau ..				1				1
Whangarei ..				1				1	Wairoa ..				2				2
Kamo ..				1				1	Whakatane ..				1				1
Kawakawa ..			1					1	Totals ..	1	1	5	48	1	3	6	56*
Russell ..				1				1	Wanganui and West Coast,—								
Whangaroa ..				1				1	New Plymouth ..	1		1	5				7
Mongonui ..				1			1	1	Waitara ..				1				1
Helensville ..				1				1	Inglewood ..				1				1
Woodhill ..							1		Stratford ..				1				1
Port Albert ..									Hawera ..			1	1				2
Aratapu ..				1				1	Patea ..				2				2
Dargaville ..			1	1				2	Waverley ..				1				1
Rawene ..				1			1	1	Manaia ..				1				1
Totals ..	1		11	55	3	4	3	70*	Opunake ..				1				1
Waikato and East Coast,—									Pungarehu ..				1				1
Hamilton ..	1			3				4	Pukearuhe ..				1				1
Cambridge ..				1				1	Wanganui ..			2	6				8
Clive ..				1				1	Marton ..				1				1
Gisborne ..		1		4				5	Hunterville ..				1				1
Hastings ..				2				2	Bull's ..				1				1
Herbertville ..				1				1	Feilding ..				1				1
Huntly ..				1				1	Palmerston North ..			1	3				4
Katikati ..						1			Ashurst ..				1				1
Kawhia ..						1			Woodville ..				1				1
Kihikihi ..				1				1	Danevirke ..				1				1
Maketu ..				1				1	Ormondville ..				1				1
Moawhanga ..						1			Totals ..	1		5	33				39
Napier ..			1	8	1			10									

* District and Native constables not included in total.

RETURN showing the STRENGTH, &c., of the NEW ZEALAND POLICE FORCE—*continued.*

Stations.	Inspectors.	Sergeants-Major.	Sergeants.	Constables.	Detectives.	District Constables.	Native Constables.	Total.	Stations.	Inspectors.	Sergeants-Major.	Sergeants.	Constables.	Detectives.	District Constables.	Native Constables.	Total.
<i>NORTH ISLAND—continued.</i>									<i>SOUTH ISLAND—continued.</i>								
Wellington and Marlborough,—									Canterbury and North Otago,— <i>cid.</i>								
Wellington ..	1	1	4	34	3	2	..	43	Lyttelton ..	..	..	1	5	..	..	..	6
Manners Street	1	..	..	..	1	Methven ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Clyde Quay	1	..	..	..	1	Ngapara ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Wellington South	1	..	..	..	1	Oamaru ..	..	..	1	6	1	..	..	8
Petone	1	..	..	..	1	Oxford ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Lower Hutt	1	..	..	..	1	Papanui ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Upper Hutt	1	..	..	..	1	Phillipstown ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Featherston	1	..	..	..	1	Pleasant Point ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Martinborough	1	..	..	..	1	Rakaia ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Greytown North	1	..	..	..	1	Rangiora ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	2
Carterton	1	..	..	..	1	St. Albans ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Masterton	1	3	..	..	..	4	Sheffield ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Te Nui	1	..	..	..	1	Southbridge ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Eketahuna	1	..	..	..	1	Sydenham ..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Pahiatua	1	..	..	..	1	Temuka ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Johnsonville	1	..	..	..	1	Timaru ..	..	..	1	6	1	..	..	8
Pahautanui	1	..	..	..	1	Waimate ..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	2
Otaki	1	..	..	..	1	Woolston ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Foxton	1	..	..	..	1	Totals ..	1	1	9	76	5	..	..	92
Pieton	2	..	..	..	2	Dunedin, Southland, and Lakes,—								
Blenheim	1	5	..	..	..	6	Dunedin Central ..	1	1	4	28	2	..	..	36
Havelock	1	..	..	..	1	King Street ..	..	..	1	4	..	..	..	5
Cullensville	1	..	..	..	1	Alexandra South ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Totals ..	1	1	6	63	3	2	..	74*	Anderson's Bay ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
<i>SOUTH ISLAND.</i>									Arrowtown ..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Nelson and Westland,—									Balclutha ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Greymouth ..	1	..	1	4	..	..	..	6	Bluff ..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Brunnerton	2	..	..	..	2	Caversham ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Ahaura	1	..	..	..	1	Clinton ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Reefton	2	..	..	..	2	Clyde ..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Lyell	1	..	..	..	1	Cromwell ..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Westport	1	3	..	..	..	4	Gore ..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Denniston	1	..	..	..	1	Green Island ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Ngakawau	1	..	..	..	1	Half-moon Bay ..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Charleston	1	..	..	..	1	Invercargill ..	..	..	1	8	..	..	..	9
Dunganville	1	..	..	..	1	Kaitangata ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Kumara	2	..	..	..	2	Lawrence ..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	3
Stafford	1	..	..	..	..	1	Lumsden ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Hokitika	1	2	..	..	..	3	Mataura ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Kanieri	1	..	..	..	1	Middlemarch ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Ross	1	..	..	..	1	Milton ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Okarito	1	..	..	..	1	Mornington ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Nelson	1	7	..	..	..	8	Mosgiel ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
The Port	1	..	..	..	1	Naseby ..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Richmond	1	..	..	North-east Valley ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Spring Grove	1	..	..	..	1	North Invercargill ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Collingwood	1	..	..	..	1	Ophi ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Takaka	1	..	..	..	1	Orepuki ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Motueka	1	..	..	Otautau ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Totals ..	1	..	5	35	..	2	..	41*	Outram ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Canterbury and North Otago,—									Palmerston South ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Christchurch ..	1	1	4	22	3	..	..	31	Pembroke ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Addington	2	..	..	..	2	Port Chalmers ..	..	..	1	3	..	..	..	4
Akaroa	1	..	..	..	1	Queenstown ..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Amberley	1	..	..	..	1	Riverton ..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Ashburton	1	3	..	..	..	4	Roslyn ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Bealey	1	..	..	..	1	Roxburgh ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Bingsland	1	..	..	..	1	South Dunedin ..	..	..	1	3	..	..	..	4
Coalgate	1	..	..	..	1	South Invercargill ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Culverden	1	..	..	..	1	St. Bathans ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Fairlie Creek	1	..	..	..	1	Tapanui ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Geraldine	1	..	..	..	1	Waikaia ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Hampden	1	..	..	..	1	Waikouaiti ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Kaiapoi	2	..	..	..	2	Waitahuna ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Kaikoura	1	..	..	..	1	Waitati ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Kurov	1	..	..	..	1	Winton ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Leeston	1	..	..	..	1	Woodhaugh ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Lincoln	1	..	..	..	1	Wyndham ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Little River	1	..	..	..	1	Totals ..	1	1	15	91	2	1	..	110*
Totals ..	7	4	56	401	14	12	9	482*	Grand Total ..	7	4	56	401	14	12	9	482*

* District and Native constables not included in total.

Total, North Island 239 } Includes 1 sergeant and 7 constables
 Total, South Island 243 } who act as police gaolers.

RETURN showing CASUALTIES in the NEW ZEALAND POLICE FORCE during the Year ended
31st March, 1892.

Retired on compensation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Resignations	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Discharges	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Dismissals	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Deaths	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
									<hr/> 25

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, nil; printing (1,500 copies), £12 15s.

By Authority: GEORGE DIBSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1892.

Price 6d.]

