

1894.
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.

SIR,—

Police Department, Commissioner's Office, 1st July, 1894.

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, 1894:—

1. On the 1st April last the strength of the Police was 485, being an increase of 5 during the year. The totals are made up as follows: Inspectors—first class, 4; second class, 3; sergeants-major, 3; sergeants—first class, 20; second class, 18; third class, 14; constables—first class, 121; second class, 121; third class, 168; detectives—first class, 3; second class, 5; third class, 2; fourth class, 3. Total of all ranks, 485, with 106 troop horses. In addition to the above-quoted strength of the Police proper, there are 13 district and 9 Native constables.

2. New stations have been opened at Panmure, Eltham, Thorndon Quay and Mount Cook, Wellington, and Levin; while Waitotara and Ravensbourne stations have been reopened, and that at Ngakawau closed.

3. Increases of strength have been made at the following stations: Auckland, 1; Waipawa, 1; Hawera, 1; Palmerston North, 1; Wellington, 2; Ashburton, 1; Invercargill, 1. Decreases have been made at the following stations—viz.: Napier, 1; Spit, 1; Reefton, 1; Christchurch, 1; Lyttelton, 1; Dunedin, 2; and Riverton, 1.

4. The casualties in the force during the past year have been as follows: Retired on compensation, 10; resigned, 5; dismissed, 4; died, 3. Total, 22.

5. I stated in my last report that, to have a thoroughly efficient Police Force, periodical changes from one district or station to another, for all ranks, is imperative; and the changes made of the Inspectors in the year 1892 have been most beneficial to the Force, and its efficiency has been thereby considerably improved, more especially in the stricter carrying-out of the liquor laws, the suppression of larrikinism, the abolition of houses of ill-fame, and the suppression of gambling. In making changes it has been my object to alleviate, as far as possible, such injustices as have existed for some years in the Force—viz., married constables being stationed in towns, and thus having house-rent to pay, while single constables had charge of stations and got house-rent, light, and fuel free; and junior constables having charge of stations, while their less fortunate senior comrades were doing street duty; and now, when a station becomes vacant, the senior constable not having charge of one is, when duly qualified, as a rule, promoted to the vacancy.

6. Vacancies in the Force have been, as heretofore, filled by transfers of gunners from the Permanent Militia, and this system continues to work satisfactorily. During the past year forty-seven constables went through a fortnight's course of gunnery in the different centres, and these, with thirty-three who had recently joined, and are proficient with the latest system of gun-drill, gives a total of eighty trained gunners amongst the constables, who, in case of need, would be found a very useful augmentation to the permanent force. It is intended to continue giving this annual course of gun-drill to all constables who have joined, or shall hereafter be appointed, from the Permanent Militia.

7. In February last the Dunedin Social Reform Association reported to you that they had made the startling and unexpected discovery that the Police in Otago were in a state of disorganisation and dissatisfaction. They gave a list of reasons for arriving at this conclusion, and forwarded their views as to how a Police Force ought to be administered; and, strange as it may appear, and somewhat paradoxical, their recommendation No. 2 was: "That there should be no interference with the Police, either for good or evil, on the part of members of Parliament or private citizens."