

Owing to the increase in the number of cases of housebreaking, and attempts at such, I have considered it necessary to employ four constables in plain clothes on night duty, in addition to the usual number of constables in uniform.

It would, in my opinion, be more economical to erect police-buildings at nearly all the stations where we at present pay rent.

During the year one constable, who had been reported for misconduct, was allowed to resign; another was fined £2 and transferred to another district; and a second-class serjeant has been reduced to third-class constable. With these exceptions, the conduct of the serjeants and constables has on the whole been satisfactory.

INSPECTOR J. EMERSON, NAPIER AND EAST COAST.

There has been a slight increase of crime in the district for the year just ended, as compared with that for the previous year. Of the fifty cases committed for trial, I am glad to say that only two are of so serious a nature as to call for special mention. The exceptions are that of a man for burglariously entering a dwelling-house and committing a rape therein, sentenced to five years' penal servitude and a whipping. The other case was that of a Maori, for stealing from a store at Te Puke, Bay of Plenty, and afterwards setting fire to the place, sentenced to four years' penal servitude at the criminal sittings in Auckland. The most common offences of the remaining cases are those of forgery, larceny, and horsestealing, the police being fairly successful in prosecuting to conviction. Thirty-three cases resulting in convictions, out of fifty, committed for trial.

The Maoris gave considerable trouble at Whakatane, Port Awanui, and Galatea during the early part of the financial year. At the first-named place, fifteen were sentenced to one month each in Auckland Goal for obstructing surveyors, and were escorted there by Inspector Hickson and party, who went from Auckland for the purpose. Later in the same month, seven other Natives were fined for the same offence, and, in default, warrants of commitment were issued. These warrants, and seven others for arrest, issued against other Natives for destroying trig-station (fourteen warrants in all) remain unexecuted, the offenders having retired into the back country to evade arrest.

At Port Awanui, nineteen Maoris were brought before the Court for pulling down a trig-station, seventeen being fined £40 each, or three months', and two acquitted. The fines were subsequently reduced to £5, and paid.

At Galatea, a row between two factions of Natives took place over the ownership of land, which, no doubt, would have resulted seriously had the Police not arrived there in time to prevent a breach of the peace. The members of the Force engaged in these Maori affairs had to undergo some hardship, and are deserving of praise for the manner in which they cheerfully carried out their duty.

Additions have been made to the accommodation of the Rotorua and Waipukurau Stations, two rooms being added to each. The remainder of the police stations are in fair condition.

With one or two exceptions, the conduct of the members of the Force under my command has been satisfactory.

Three constables (two ordinary and one Native) have been dismissed for misconduct; one discharged on compensation, on medical grounds; and one appointed on transfer from the Permanent Artillery.

A reward of £5 was made to Constable James Ryan, for meritorious conduct, in saving a man from drowning on the Napier beach.

In addition to their police duties, a large proportion of the men are employed in other work—namely, Clerk of Court, Bailiffs, Police Gaolers, Inspector of Weights and Measures, Collectors of Agricultural Statistics, Inspectors of Factories, Inspectors under Beer Duty Act, Registrar of Electors, Returning Officers, and other minor offices.

The settlers in the Hawke's Bay district received a severe blow by the disastrous floods which occurred in December last, when a large number of settlers lost their stock and crops, involving many in ruin. The loss sustained by the settlers and others has naturally had a very depressing effect on trade, &c., in the Hawke's Bay end of the district. Other portions of the district appear fairly prosperous.

INSPECTOR J. B. THOMSON, WANGANUI AND WEST COAST.

Two new police-stations have been opened within this district during the year—namely, Eltham and Waitotara, and the Normanby Station has been reopened after being closed for upwards of two years. The police buildings generally throughout the district are in a fair condition, and with the exception of those at Wanganui, on which I recently reported, will not need much expenditure for repairs during the ensuing year.

The crimes of cattle-stealing and horse-stealing were rampant when I assumed charge of this district in the early part of last year; but, since the gang located about Hawera was broken up, about seven or eight months ago, scarcely any offences of that kind have been reported, notwithstanding the facilities offered by the great extent of forest country in Taranaki, and the extraordinary lenity of the sentences respectively passed on the offenders in question.

No report of illicit distillation being carried on in any part of the district has been received during the year, although the police within the district are constantly on the alert in connection with same.

The usual monthly meeting of Natives continues to be held at Parihaka (the largest being on the 17th March), but for some time past they have led to no trouble. In the month of August last,