

ing, 13; illegally on premises, 23; indecent exposure, 9; keeping disorderly houses and brothels, 25; malicious injury to property, 72; neglected and criminal children, 48; obstructing and resisting police, 77; perjury, 7; rape, 14; theft, undescribed, 27.

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

17. Extracts from the annual reports of Inspectors in charge of districts are attached, and a perusal of them will be found interesting.

18. By the sudden death of Inspector Thomson, when in the execution of his duty, which occurred at Patea on the 2nd March last, the department was deprived of the services of an experienced, reliable, painstaking officer. This gentleman joined the Southland Police, from Victoria, in 1863, was in due course transferred to the Otago Force, and on the formation of the General Police was appointed an Inspector, and continued to serve in it till his death. During his long career he gained the esteem and respect of those who had served under him, and his death was generally deplored, many feeling that they had not only lost an old comrade but also a true friend.

19. I said in my report last year that one of the main objects aimed at in the administration of the department is to bring the Police in closer touch with the people, and thereby establish and maintain a system of confidence and reliance on each other; but, while still holding those views, I am by no means of opinion that the members of the Force should become too closely identified with the local community among whom they may be stationed. I take this opportunity of pointing out that by the Police regulations, made under the authority of "The Police Force Act, 1886," the Commissioner is held responsible for the peace and good order, and for the security of life and property throughout the colony, and in general for the discipline, obedience, and organization of the Police. I have no desire to lay it down as an axiom that the Force must be controlled entirely by the sole will of one individual. I do say, however, that interference with the administration of the Force, without due cause, must result in a breaking of the bonds of discipline and a consequent loss of efficiency. New Zealand has at the present moment a smart force, and one that keeps crime in check throughout the colony, and a body of men who, with very few exceptions, if any, are thoroughly loyal and faithful, and discharge their duties to the best of their ability.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Justice.

A. HUME, Commissioner.

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#### EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

##### INSPECTOR J. HICKSON, AUCKLAND, WAIKATO, AND BAY OF ISLANDS.

In compliance with circular No. 11/96 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to submit the following report upon the districts under my command for the year ended the 31st March last:—

New stations have been opened at Avondale, Pahi, and Waihi; and Tairua Station has been closed. A district constable has been appointed at Ohaeawai. New buildings have been erected at Kawakawa and Waihi, and a building has been purchased at Pahi for the use of the constable stationed there.

If a building affording accommodation for all the men and officers were provided in a central place in Auckland, similar to the one in Dunedin, much convenience would be afforded to the public and to the Police Department; a constable would be within call at all hours of the day and night, and a considerable saving in the management could be effected. Owing to an increase of population at Coromandel, a second constable is much needed there.

The quarters provided for the married constable at Coromandel are in a dilapidated state. They are not worth repairing. I recommend that new quarters, lock-up, and office be erected as soon as possible. I suggest that a room be added to the office, which would answer as a bedroom for a second constable.

I beg to again refer to the question of augmenting the strength of Auckland Station. The number of constables available for duty is, in my opinion, quite inadequate to exercise sufficient supervision over the city.

Much difficulty has been experienced by the police in enforcing the law against disorderly houses. No power is given the police to demand entrance to such houses. The keepers may lock their doors and refuse—as they have in some instances done—admission to the police; and when the police gain admission and find visitors there, there is no law to compel such visitors to give their names and addresses, consequently the police are in most cases unable to obtain evidence to warrant a prosecution.

In enforcing the licensing laws considerable difficulty has been experienced in cases similar to the following: When passing a hotel after the hour of closing, the bar and rooms adjacent are seen lighted up, and the noise of men drinking is heard; the police enter and find a considerable number of men drinking; the licensee states he believes they are all either lodgers or travellers, or he remains silent; the men refuse to give their names and addresses—there is no law to compel them. In such a case there could be no moral doubt but the law was being violated, but there was no evidence for the prosecution to warrant a conviction. I recommend that the onus of proving they were lodgers or travellers within the meaning of the licensing law should be thrown on the licensee.