

Many complaints have been made of sly grog-selling in what is known as the "King-country." Every effort has been made by the police to detect, but as the vendors will not sell to strangers it is almost impossible to obtain evidence to justify conviction. Occasionally a detection is effected, but a conviction at rare intervals has not had a deterrent effect.

On the 19th April, 1895, by directions of the Hon. the Premier, I proceeded, in charge of a party of Police and Permanent Artillery, in all fifty men, to the Urewera-country to protect surveyors who had been obstructed by the Natives in that district. At Whakatane I was joined by Colonel Roberts, S.M., of Tauranga, and in a few days the Hon. Mr. Carroll arrived in camp. Leaving Sergeant Kiely and five constables at the camp, I returned with the remainder of the party on the 3rd of the following month.

On the 3rd of March I received information that a large number of Natives from Hokianga Tribes had formed a camp at Mangatōa, about seven miles from Kaikohe, under a chief named Hone Toia. From their demeanour it was thought they had unlawful intentions, and some alarm was created amongst the settlers from a rumour that the Natives were armed. The constables from Kawakawa, Russell, and Rawene visited the camp and a close watch was kept on the Natives in question. All dealers in arms, ammunition, &c., in Auckland and the Northern District were cautioned not to supply any arms or ammunition to Natives without permit. Subsequently the Natives delivered their arms to Mr. Clendon, Stipendiary Magistrate, and Hone Toia assured him their objects were peaceful.

The offences return for the year ended the 31st December, 1895, which has been forwarded to you shows that during the past year 2,987 offences of all kinds were reported, being an increase of 173 over the previous year. The total number of persons apprehended was 2,358, being an increase of 93 over the previous year. The principal increases were: Common assault, 16; assaults causing bodily harm, 5; assaults on police, 5; burglary and breaking into shops, &c., 6; coinage offences, 9; cruelty to children, 5; deserting wives and families, and failing to provide for children and relatives, 49; neglected and criminal children, 10; deserters from Her Majesty's ships, 27; drunkenness, 48; disorderly and riotous conduct, 20; obscene and profane language, 33; perjury, 7; receiving stolen property, 7; thefts, 62. The principal decreases were: Arson, 5; assault and robbery, 12; breaches of the peace, 43; disobeying orders of Court, 45; malicious injury to property (mischief), 24; obstructing and resisting police, 31; attempted suicide, 6.

The casualties during the year have been one death, four dismissed, and one discharged on compensation on account of ill health.

With the exception of the men who have been dismissed, and a few others who have been punished for minor offences, the conduct of the sergeants, detectives, and constables has been satisfactory.

INSPECTOR J. EMERSON, NAPIER AND EAST COAST.

I have the honour to report on the Napier and East Coast Police District for the year ended on 31st March last, as follows:—

The criminal statistics for the district during the year 1895 show a falling-off of 135 offences, as compared with the previous year. Of this number drunkenness is responsible for the decrease to the extent of 56 cases; disorderly conduct, 20; wife-desertion, 22; and resisting police, 13 cases; but, on the other hand, the offence of forgery increased from 8 cases in 1894 to 27 in 1895; theft, 79 in 1894 to 123 in 1895; and horse-stealing, 14 cases in 1894 to 24 in 1895. All the offences reported in 1895 were of the ordinary character. Of 89 cases committed for trial, 54 resulted in conviction in the Supreme Court.

On the 29th April, 1895, under instructions from the Commissioner, I proceeded to Te Whaiti with a party of eight Police, further strengthened on the 21st May following by Lieutenant Hume and fifty-one rank-and-file of the Permanent Artillery, the expedition being sent to cope with the anticipated trouble with the Urewera Natives in connection with survey and road-making through that hitherto inaccessible country. Tents and equipage were taken to Te Whaiti and a camp formed, the men being afterwards employed in erecting whares for their use, cutting tracks through virgin country, erecting a bridge over the river, and other practical pioneer work, which will be of the utmost service to those engaged, if required at any time for duty in the field.

I returned to Napier on 20th July, the Police party being subsequently withdrawn, and Lieutenant Hume and men of the Permanent Artillery left in charge. These were in turn withdrawn, and a police-station, with a sergeant and four constables, stationed there on 14th September—now reduced to one sergeant and a constable.

After the arrival of the expedition at Te Whaiti the Maoris refrained from causing any further trouble, and the utmost good feeling prevailed between them and the men under my command during our stay there.

On the 19th April a similar trouble to that at Te Whaiti occurred at Ruatoki, near Whakatane, necessitating Inspector Hickson and party being sent from Auckland. After a short stay Inspector Hickson returned to Auckland, leaving Sergeant Kiely, of Tauranga, and six constables in charge of the camp formed at Ruatoki, where they remained until 9th July. The presence of the Police in this case also had the effect of preventing any further obstruction to the survey party.

The Hon. the Minister has since signified his appreciation of the conduct and cheerful bearing of those engaged in these expeditions under unusual and trying circumstances.

On the 18th April, 1895, Maketu Station was closed, and a new station formed at Te Puke. On 21st February, 1896, a new station was formed in Carlyle Street, Napier.