

The new police-station at Napier was finished and occupied on 6th March, 1896, the sergeant's quarters being also thoroughly renovated.

One constable was dismissed, the services of a constable and a Native constable were dispensed with, and another constable resigned. The two former were for misconduct. With these exceptions, the conduct of the force in the district has been satisfactory.

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C. W. HENDREY, DISTRICT CLERK, WANGANUI AND WEST COAST.

I respectfully beg to submit the following report on the Wanganui and West Coast District for the year ended 31st March last, for your information:—

The total number of offences reported during the past year was 964, as against 845 reported during the year of 1894, being an increase of 119 offences reported. The principal increase being in bankruptcy frauds, 6; burglary, breaking and entering, &c., 17; deserting wives and families, 9; disobeying orders of Court, 10; disorderly conduct, 10; failing to support parents, &c., 15; illegally shooting game, 13; gaming offences, 12; obscene language, 19; theft, 15; cattle-stealing, 6; sheep-stealing, 9. While the principal decrease was in drunkenness, 18; sly grog-selling, 4; and theft from dwellings, 10. 81 males and 4 females were committed for trial during the year: 61 males and 2 females were convicted; 9 males and 2 females still awaiting trial.

The monthly meetings are still held at Parihaka, but their success has been marred owing to the bitter rivalry between the two Parihaka chiefs, Te Whiti and Tohu. A very large number of Natives gathered at Parihaka during the month of March last, there being quite a number of influential Natives from all parts of the colony present, and I understand great efforts were made to reconcile Te Whiti and Tohu, but without success. As far as can be ascertained, nothing of a political nature took place, only the usual feasting and merry-making usually indulged in by Natives at such gatherings. The behaviour of the Natives generally was very good, and the European visitors were most hospitably entertained.

During the year a new police-station has been formed at Mokau, the Normanby station has been reopened, and the Pukearuhe Police-station has been closed.

A new police-station is much required in the upper portion of the Wanganui district, the most suitable position for which would be Raetihi, about midway between Pipiriki and Karioi. A constable stationed at Raetihi would be very useful in checking sly grog-selling and sheep-stealing, which have been very prevalent in that portion of the district, and also in looking after the members of the criminal class, &c., who seem to have made the Karioi district their headquarters.

A successful seizure of an illicit still was made at Waverley during the year, and the owner of the plant was convicted and fined £50 and costs.

The Police in the Wanganui portion of the district have been very successful in obtaining convictions against noted sly grog-sellers, who, for years past, have been the curse of the country about the Upper Wanganui and Karioi.

During the year the casualties have been by death, 1; discharged, medically unfit, 1; dismissed, 2.

On the 1st March last, Inspector John Bell Thomson, who was in charge of this district, while absent from headquarters on inspection duty, was seized with a sudden illness when near Patea. He was taken to the Patea Hospital where he died after a short illness, and his body was buried at New Plymouth on 4th March, his untimely death being lamented by all ranks.

The conduct of the sergeants and constables throughout the district has, with few exceptions, been very good, and the manner in which they have carried out their ordinary police duties, as well as the numerous other duties they are called on to perform, has been very creditable, and I am aware that the late Inspector was well pleased with the manner the various duties were performed.

A new police-station and quarters for the sergeant in charge have been built at Wanganui; and the rest of the police-station buildings, with one or two exceptions, are all in fair condition, and will require but little expenditure for repairs during the year.

In conclusion, I respectfully beg to state that business people who should know say that this district is one of the most prosperous in the colony. Settlement is rapidly being extended, and there is little or no real poverty in the district.

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INSPECTOR P. PENDER, WELLINGTON AND MARLBOROUGH.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your circular No. 11/96, I beg to submit the following report upon the Wellington Police District for the year ended 31st March, 1896:—

The strength of the force on that date was as per monthly state already forwarded to your office.

No new stations have been opened during the year, and only one closed—namely, Pahautanui—leaving twenty-nine stations as on the 31st March, 1896.

The casualties for the year are as follow: Discharged on compensation, 3; dismissed, 2; discharged, 1; resigned, 1.

The conduct of the men on the whole has been good, and punishments, I am glad to say, have been very few.