

1900.

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 MINISTER of JUSTICE.

SIR,—

Police Department, Commissioner's Office, 4th June, 1900.

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 last.

STRENGTH OF FORCE.

On the 31st March last the strength of the Force was 586 of all ranks, being an increase of 32 during the year. The total is made up as follows: Inspectors, 6; Sub-Inspectors, 5; sergeants-major, 2; sergeants, 54; constables, 487; detectives, 20; and probationers, 12. In addition to above there were 4 police surgeons, 4 matrons, 19 district constables, 7 native constables, and 96 horses.

STATIONS.

New stations have been formed at Ellerslie, Northcote, Aramoho, Kimbolton, Belfast, Glenavy, New Brighton (temporarily), and Owaka, and a district constable has been appointed at Hobsonville.

AUGMENTATIONS.

Augmentations have been made at: Auckland, 4; Newton, 2; Waihi, 1; Whangarei, 1; Wanganui, 1; Foxton, 1; New Plymouth, 1; Palmerston North, 1; Wellington, 2; Mount Cook, 1; Pahiatua, 1; and Petone, 1.

CASUALTIES.

The casualties have been: Retired on medical grounds with compensation, 7; retired under the Police Provident Fund Act, 2; resigned, 11; dismissed, 3; died, 4; transferred to Justice Department, 1; and services dispensed with, 2: total, 30. This is four less than in the preceding year.

CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

These statistics, which include all offences reported, are made up for the year ended the 31st December last, and show an aggregate increase of 487 as compared with the figures of the preceding year.

The principal increases are: Assaults, common, 47; breaches of the peace, 64; deserting merchant vessels, 66; disorderly and riotous conduct, 47; drunkenness, 757; failing to support parents or near relatives, 42; false declarations, 40; false pretences, 22; gaming offences, 49; indecent exposure or behaviour, 35; keeping disorderly houses or brothels, 18; killing animals with intent to steal the carcasses, 14; maliciously killing animals, 13; manslaughter, 6; obscene and profane language, 67; obstructing and resisting police, 62; obstructing thoroughfares, 41; refusing to quit licensed premises, 22; and theft of sheep, 14.

The principal decreases are: Absconding from industrial schools, 19; burglary, breaking into shops, dwellings, &c., 13; conspiring to defeat the ends of justice, 24; deserters and stragglers from H.M. ships, 32; disturbing meetings and congregations, 32; forgery and uttering, 15; illegally on premises, 30; malicious injury to property, 69; receiving stolen property, 14; selling arms to Natives without license, 17; stowing away on board ships, 19; sureties of the peace, 15; theft, undescribed, 485; theft of cattle and horses, 16; theft from dwellings, 83; and theft from the person, 63.

REMARKS ON CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

Taking the statistics as a criterion of the efficiency or otherwise of the Police Force, as compared with the preceding year I consider them eminently satisfactory, for whereas the increases refer almost exclusively to offences against the person or against public order and decency—which are classed as unpreventable offences—the decreases relate mainly to offences against property, which are considered preventable, the net decrease in offences coming under the heads of “burglary,”