

I quite concur with the suggestion put forward in last year's report that such persons should be sent to some institution where they could be kept from intoxicants for a lengthened period, medically treated, and found suitable remunerative employment, the proceeds of which should go towards the cost of their maintenance.

I have to call special attention to the evident necessity of the law being amended as regards prohibited persons obtaining intoxicating drinks at railway refreshment-rooms, such rooms not being considered licensed premises within the meaning of the Licensing Acts, this fact being known and taken advantage of by many prohibited persons who resort thereto and cannot at present be dealt with. Complaints have also been received in respect to railway refreshment-rooms being kept open on Sundays, Christmas Days, and Good Fridays, and being much frequented by the public, whilst other licensed premises are closed.

The effect of prohibition as regards drunkenness in public places within the areas in which the no-license vote obtained has been marked, a considerable reduction in the number of arrests for that offence having resulted, and less complaints having been received of street brawls or annoyance caused by drunken persons.

On the other hand, it is evident that liquor has been introduced into private houses where it did not previously exist, and a considerable amount of sly-grog drinking is indulged in which is difficult to detect, and more difficult to prove, because of the amount of perjury committed. Travellers also complain of a change for the worse experienced in the comfort and cleanliness of hotels since no license obtained.

The following returns show the number of persons arrested for drunkenness and dealt with in the four large centres, and the number arrested in the colony on Sundays.

RETURN showing the NUMBER of PERSONS arrested for DRUNKENNESS within each Principal Centre during the Year 1903, the Number convicted, and Number discharged or withdrawn (Males and Females shown separately).

Centre.	Number arrested.		Number convicted.		Number discharged or withdrawn.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Auckland and suburbs	812	135	809	135	3	...
Wellington and suburbs	1,623	201	1,621	201	2	...
Christchurch and suburbs	942	195	940	195	2	...
Dunedin and suburbs	546	122	544	121	2	1
Totals	3,923	653	3,914	652	9	1

RETURN showing the NUMBER of PERSONS arrested for DRUNKENNESS on SUNDAYS within each Principal Centre during the Year 1903 (Males and Females shown separately).

Centre.	Number arrested.		Number convicted.		Number discharged or withdrawn.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Auckland and suburbs	25	4	24	4	1	...
Wellington and suburbs	32	3	32	3
Christchurch and suburbs	10	2	10	2
Dunedin and suburbs	11	2	11	2
Totals	78	11	77	11	1	...

In 1902 the number of persons arrested on Sundays for drunkenness was 135, and in 1903 only 89, the decrease (46) being satisfactory, although Sunday trading is still considerably indulged in; and I quite agree with my predecessor that the difficulty in contending with this evil will not be removed until the law is amended in the direction of making it illegal for persons other than lodgers or *bonâ fide* travellers to be on licensed premises during prohibited hours.

There was an increase of one only in the number of prosecutions against publicans in 1903 as compared with 1902, although the convictions increased by 16. There exists at present, however, great difficulty in obtaining convictions against hotelkeepers, owing to the serious consequences resulting therefrom through each record of conviction being endorsed on the license. If discretionary power was given to Magistrates and Justices as regards endorsement of licenses on conviction less perjury would ensue and the ends of justice would be met. The subjoined returns show the number of prosecutions, with results, in districts, and also in the four centres,