

ation. A form of plea of guilty could be conveniently indorsed on the summons, and defendant could record the plea on the Court copy in the presence of the constable who has served it, or he could take his own copy before a Justice, indorse thereon his plea of guilty, and transmit it direct to the Court. This course need not preclude defendant from attending at the hearing and submitting an explanation or matter in mitigation. The provision at the outset might be made applicable only to offences punishable with a penalty in the first instance, of which breaches of by-laws are typical instances. In case of possible error, the right of rehearing would be available as a remedy.

The new regulations came into force on the 1st March, 1913, and so far I have received no representation respecting any hardship or inequality likely to be caused by them. Like all other regulations in the nature of by-laws, a good deal depends upon a proper discretion in enforcing them, as local circumstances differ widely. The regulations respecting examination for promotion, being an innovation as far as our Force is concerned, have attracted most attention.

I think that, on the whole, the idea of examination is acceptable, though some good men will find a difficulty in preparing for it, owing to their time and attention being engrossed by their official work, as in the case of sergeants in charge of the more important stations where there is no other non-commissioned officer, or constables in charge of busy stations; but I have no doubt that improved conditions will soon adjust this matter.

The provision of an instructor to coach for examination seems to be appreciated. Some of the constables have already applied for his assistance, others are evincing an interest in the subject, and are taking or considering other means to obtain assistance in preparation.

The knowledge that examinations are now compulsory is in itself a stimulating influence, and a marked interest in knowledge of regulations and law bearing on duty is becoming manifest. Hence it follows that whether candidates succeed or fail in their examinations one result will be an access of increased efficiency due to better knowledge. Another important result is that every member of the Force knows now definitely the conditions upon which his promotion depends.

The provision of a regulation for weeding out proved inefficient within a reasonable limit of time after being sworn in is needed as a corollary to the regulations regarding examination for promotion.

During the year a new residence for the sergeant at Hastings was built. At Gisborne new barracks, in brick, are just completed, which will afford good accommodation for a number of unmarried constables, whereby the allowances now granted in lieu of quarters will be saved. Incidentally a cottage for the accommodation of a married constable will be provided by adaptation of the former offices.

A new police residence requires to be built at Patutahi. The lock-up is built on the Police Reserve, and is too remote from the constable's residence (rented).

At Tokomaru Bay, the constable, a single man, lodges at a place remote from the lock-up, with a river, liable to flood, between. A residence for a married constable should be built on the reserve on which the lock-up stands.

#### INSPECTOR WRIGHT, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

On the 1st February last the Thames Police District was extended to take in the following stations, viz.: Cambridge, Frankton Junction, Hamilton, Huntly, Kawhia, Kihikihi, Kirikiriroa, Ngaruawahia, Ongarue, Otorohanga, Raglan, Raurimu, Taumarunui, Te Awamutu, and Te Kuiti; and the headquarters were removed to Hamilton. The district as enlarged is now known as the Hamilton Police District.

The authorized strength on the 31st March was as follows: 1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 6 sergeants, 51 constables, 1 detective sergeant, 2 district constables, and 3 Native constables.

During the year an increase of 1 constable at Hamilton and 1 at Te Aroha has been made. At Opoiki, Taumarunui, and Te Kuiti the constables in charge have been replaced by sergeants, a much-needed alteration, which will provide the necessary supervision for the districts surrounding those stations.

Increases are now required as follows: 1 detective and 1 constable at Hamilton, and 1 constable at Rotorua. There is ample work for a detective at Hamilton and the surrounding stations, and another constable is indispensable, to provide for the proper performance of beat duty in the town. One man's time is almost wholly taken up with escorting and relieving duty, so that the beat duty has to suffer continually. At Rotorua beat duty cannot be kept up as it should be, and another constable is badly needed. The past season has been a very busy one, and the tourist traffic is increasing every year. With the present staff a constable can only be kept on duty during certain hours of the night, and a place like Rotorua should have a constable always on duty.

No stations have been opened or closed during the year.

During the year 2 constables died in the district, 1 constable retired on pension, and 1 resigned.

The offences return for the year ending 31st December, 1912, shows that 971 offences were reported, as compared with 842 the previous year, the net increase being 129. The increase is accounted for as follows: Abusive language and behaviour, 74; assaults, 29; failing to provide maintenance, 27; sureties of the peace, 115. The abusive-language, assaults, and sureties-of-the-peace cases mostly arose through the Waihi strike. There were decreases under the head of drunkenness, 60; mischief, 10; obstructing thoroughfares, 14; sly-grog selling, 13; theft, 52; theft from dwellings, 9.

With the exception of the Waihi cases, there is nothing in the return to call for special mention. Out of 971 offences reported, 961 were accounted for either by arrest or summons.