

this station. The present strength permits a relief of four men, but from 8 a.m. till 6 p.m. three fixed points have to be manned, so during that time there is only one constable to work three beats and relieve the pointsman for refreshment. Auckland Station—An increase of twenty constables is required at this station so as to permit all beats and points being filled. With present strength we are unable to do this. One constable is required for a new station at St. Heliers Bay and one constable for a new station at Henderson as soon as buildings can be obtained.

The Manurewa Town Board and the New Lynn Town Board have made applications for stations to be opened in their respective districts, and these applications will have to be considered in the near future.

Casualties during the year were one sergeant and eight constables resigned, and two constables dismissed.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December last shows that the total number of all offences reported was 5,173, a net increase of 91 offences over the previous year. Of the offences reported, 4,634 were accounted for by arrest or summons, leaving 539 offences undetected. Of the cases dealt with, 434 were committed for trial, 4,027 were summarily convicted, and 173 were discharged. Of those committed for trial, 376 were convicted and 68 acquitted. The principal increases shown in the offences return are—Attempted suicide, 12; assault, 32; theft (undescribed), 243; theft from the person, 23; theft from dwellings, 91; burglary, 25; house and shop breaking, 13; attempted house and shop breaking, 13; vagrancy, 65; failure to comply with conditions under, First Offenders' Probation Act, 18; breaches of Arms Act, 77. The principal decreases are—Theft (attempted), 12; theft by clerks and servants, 20; uttering forged documents, 10; breaches of peace, 26; drunkenness, 180; indecent exposure and indecent acts, 29; using profane, indecent, or obscene language, 29; found in common gaming-houses, 12; failure to maintain wives or children, 56; failing to pay maintenance-money, 19; absent without leave from ships, 38; stowing away on ships, 17; breaches of prohibition orders, 13. These figures show a marked increase in offences against rights of property, and a marked decrease in drunkenness and what one might term drink offences, and show that money has been scarce and times hard for a section of the community.

On the 1st January last a seaman was assaulted by a fellow-seaman on board the s.s. "Tredendam." From the injuries received he died the same day; his assailant was charged with murder, but convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. No other serious crime calling for special comment occurred during the year.

The conduct of the police, generally speaking, has been good; sixteen constables were fined for minor breaches of the regulations, while two constables were dismissed for more serious offences. The whole of the police take interest in their work and show keenness in the discharge of their duties.

The police continue to do a very large amount of work for other Departments, and in consequence of the time taken up in performing such work with our limited strength police work proper suffers, and will continue to do so until a large increase is made to the present strength.

The population of the district is steadily increasing; it is estimated that the population of Auckland and suburbs is now about 170,000. There are large numbers of buildings being erected in city and suburbs, including dwellinghouses, but rented houses are difficult to obtain, and there is in consequence considerable overcrowding in houses, two or more families being compelled to live in one small house or in a few rooms. Employment seems to be more plentiful than last year, and indications point to matters improving in the future.

INSPECTOR WOHLMANN, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

Increases in strength are required as follows: Te Kuiti—one constable, as recommended in my previous report. Morrinsville: The suggested increase of one constable at this station can stand over, as arrangements are being made to relieve the constable now in charge of portion of his duties as Clerk of Court. However, this is a growing town, and an increase of police supervision will have to be met later on. Frankton Junction: I would reiterate my recommendation of last year that land be acquired there for police buildings. The increase of police work, the growth of this portion of the borough, and the need of increased supervision and control will necessitate the appointment of a sergeant at this station in the near future. Hamilton: The present strength is just sufficient to enable the eight-hour system to be worked when full-handed, which is not often, owing to sickness, relieving duty, escort, &c. No one is in charge of the station at night to take complaints, look after prisoners in lock-up, &c. The best that can be done at present is to arrange for hourly visits to the station by one of the two constables on night duty. An additional constable is required for duty as night watchhouse-keeper.

The difficulty experienced by married members of the Force in securing accommodation here at a rental within their means is but slightly lessened since my last report: 30 per cent. of a constable's salary—equal to 6s. out of every £1—goes for rent alone. The general cost of living is still greatly above pre-war level. The question of building, on land owned by the Department, houses for members of the Force is one pressing for consideration as soon as the finances of the country permit.

During the year the general conduct of the men has been good, although I regret to say the proportion of breaches of regulations, none of which were of a serious nature, has been higher than usual.

The rapid increase in the number of motor-driven vehicles, with its effect on traffic, draws attention to the need of a better system of registration and control. It also directs consideration to the necessity for the police making increased use of this modern and speedy means of locomotion in the interests of efficiency and true economy.

Bookmaking exists in most towns and villages, the detection and conviction of offenders being very difficult.