

With few exceptions, the conduct of all members of the Force has been good. The King's Police Medal has been awarded to Constables F. J. O'Donoghue (No. 1768) and R. J. Wilson (No. 1823) for conspicuous bravery in arresting two armed criminals.

Numerous deaths and serious injuries continue as the result of motor accidents. Within the past two years or so no less than four persons have been killed and several seriously injured in this district alone as a result of these accidents. It would appear, therefore, that further legislation is necessary with a view to at least reducing the number of these accidents. As no person has any means of defence in an encounter with a motor, the sole responsibility should, *prima facie*, be upon the driver of the offending motor, who should be liable to pay to the near relatives of the person killed, or to the injured party, as the case may be, a substantial amount, unless he proves that he could not have avoided the accident, or has been convicted criminally.

The arms work continues to occupy the whole time of one constable. There are approximately 10,000 arms registered in the district, and the work in connection with these is very considerable. Members of the Force in charge of out-stations also feel the additional work.

During the year the police in the King-country have been very successful in their endeavours to suppress sly-grog selling, and fines amounting to £489 have been imposed.

INSPECTOR MACKINNON, PALMERSTON NORTH DISTRICT.

I have to draw attention to the necessity for an additional detective for duty at Palmerston North. Three additional constables are also required for this centre; at present it is not possible to fully staff the beats and at the same time make the necessary allowances for escort duties, leave, sickness, &c. At Feilding one additional constable is required so that a night patrol of the town may be performed.

I am also obliged to draw your attention to the necessity for opening a new station at Marton Junction. This is warranted by the large volume of railway traffic and the desirability of having the railway-station and the lower portion of the town of Marton constantly patrolled.

The offences return for the past year discloses a very satisfactory state of affairs: compared with 1,387 in 1921, only 1,119 offences were reported; of these, 1,057 resulted either in arrest or summons. The most noticeable decreases are shown under the headings of—Drunkenness, 133; assault, 52; housebreaking, 14; mischief, 22; vagrancy, 18; gaming with instruments, 20. It is pleasing to report that no crime of a serious nature has been reported during the year.

One sergeant resigned at his own request during the year.

The conduct of the police, with one or two exceptions, has been all that could be desired, all ranks showing praiseworthy zeal and energy in the performance of duty.

SUPERINTENDENT NORWOOD, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

During the year one detective-sergeant died; two constables were discharged on pension, having reached the age-limit; one retired on pension, being medically unfit for further service; twenty constables voluntarily resigned, two resigned compulsorily, and one temporary constable was discharged as inefficient.

The total number of all offences during the year ending the 31st December, 1922, was 4,463, as against 5,192 for the previous year, a decrease of 739; 4,197 prosecutions resulted. This large decrease is mainly brought about by the substantial decrease in the arrests for drunkenness, there being 747 cases less than in the previous year. Increases under the different headings are as follows: Indecently assaulting a male, 9; suicide (attempted), 6; indecent assaults, 9; common assaults, 5; carnally knowing girls, 3; assaults with intent to commit rape, 5; housebreaking, 5; theft from dwellings, 9; thefts by clerks, 7; false pretences, 85; fortune-telling, 10; burglary, 7; receiving property dishonestly obtained, 21; mischief, 50; breaches of the peace, 27; unlawfully using motors, horses, &c., 15; common gaming-house keeping, &c., 16; found in same, 31; gaming with instruments, 33; failing to comply with conditions under First Offenders' Probation Act, 5; opium-smoking, 22; Arms Act, breaches of, 47. Decreases are recorded principally under—Theft, 19; theft from person, 6; forgery, 13; uttering forgeries, &c., 6; drunkenness, 747; exposure of person and indecent acts, 16; using profane, indecent, and obscene language, 38; vagrancy, 26; assaulting police, 10; failing to maintain wife and children, 50; failing to pay maintenance-moneys, 56; seamen absent without leave, 21; stowing away on ship, 23; under Licensing Act—permitting drunkenness, 8; selling to intoxicated persons, 7; selling at unauthorized times, 16; supplying liquor to persons under the age of twenty-one, 23; breaches of prohibition orders, 53; found on licensed premises after hours, 21.

There has been one murder and two attempted murders during the past twelve months. A man named Benjamin Knight was murdered at Johnsonville by a Maori employee named John Tuhi, who was found guilty of the offence and suffered the extreme penalty of the law. In another case a man shot at two constables who were executing a warrant of distress in default of a penalty for a breach of the by-laws (allowing horses to be at large). He was convicted and sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

The general conduct of all ranks has been, with one or two exceptions, very good, the efficiency of the uniform and plain-clothes branches having been well maintained. The detective branch has been largely reorganized by the inclusion of young constables who had shown aptitude and ability when employed on ordinary uniform-police duty. These recruits are becoming very proficient under the careful tuition and guidance of the Chief Detective.

The city and suburbs are steadily increasing in size and population, and in order to meet requirements and secure greater efficiency I recommend that a sergeant be stationed at Lyall Bay to supervise the police-stations and duties at Lyall Bay, Miramar, Seatoun, and Kilbirnie. An