

POLICE BUILDINGS, ETC.

The following works in connection with police-stations have been carried out during the year by the Public Works Department:—

A new police-station has been erected at Eastbourne, offices at Hastings and Stratford, and another story has been added to the Auckland Central Police-station.

Repairs, renovations, and improvements were effected at a number of stations, the principal being Matamata, Mount Eden, Ponsonby, Freeman's Bay, Thames, Waihi, Avondale, Newmarket, Parnell, Newton, Remuera, Wellsford, Waimate, Lincoln, Lyttelton, Fendalton, Waikari, Belfast, Islington, Kaiapoi, New Brighton, Christchurch, North Invercargill, Gore, Bluff, Tuatapere, Waikaia, Patutahi, Greymouth, Westport, Hokitika, Ahaura, Granity, Seddonville, Clive, Napier, Takaka, Manaia, Opunaka, Kawakawa, Wellington Central, Kilbirnie, Taranaki Street (Wellington), and Feilding.

Extracts from reports of officers in charge of districts are appended.

W. G. WOHLMANN,
Commissioner of Police.

EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

SUPERINTENDENT WOHLMANN—AUCKLAND HEAD DISTRICT.

During the year the strength of the district was increased by two constables, at Otahuhu.

Although the decrease in number of defaulters referred to in my last annual report has not been maintained (the number of charges of breaches of regulation this year being thirty-seven, against twenty-eight men, as compared with twenty, against seventeen men, in 1928) this year compares not unfavourably with 1927, when forty-six charges were preferred against twenty-five men. A considerable proportion of the charges were relatively not serious, the conduct of the police on the whole being satisfactory.

I am constrained to repeat my observation in my report of last year, viz: "To enable efficient patrol of outlying areas of the city for the prevention and detection of crime an increase of motor-cycles with side-cars is essential." Our present motor-cycles are worn out, making it impossible to maintain a patrol which has contributed so materially to the safety of citizens and preservation of property. I strongly support the application of the Inspector in charge of the Central District for two new high-powered motor-cycles with side-cars.

It is gratifying to observe that the decrease in crime in the Auckland co-ordinated districts noted last year has been maintained this year. The offences reported in the year ending 31st December, 1929, totalled 7,852, being a decrease of 1,057, or 11·8 per cent., on those of the previous year. Of the total offences reported 7,190 resulted in arrest or summons, leaving 662, or 8·4 per cent., undetected, as compared with 8·5 per cent. for the previous year.

The officers in charge of the Auckland co-ordinated districts desire to repeat their recommendation in last year's report that the age of drivers of licensed taxis should not be less than twenty-one years.

With the object of controlling itinerant auctioneers it is their opinion that the Auctioneers Act should be amended to provide that licenses should not be issued or renewed by the local authority without a recommendation from the police, as is the case with pawnbrokers and others.

INSPECTOR MCILVENY, AUCKLAND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.

There were 1,581 offences reported during the year in Auckland Metropolitan District, compared with 1,943 in 1928. Arrests or summonses resulted in 1,271 cases. A marked decrease in reported offences appears under the headings breach of Motor-vehicles Act, theft, and house and shop breaking. The reason therefor can, I think, be largely attributed to strict vigilance on the part of the police, assisted considerably by the introduction of the motor-patrol service, which assuredly has a most deterrent effect.

Regarding serious crime, there were two murders committed by the one person, the cause being insanity. The offender, who is a female, was arrested, and is now detained in a mental hospital.

The conduct of the police generally has been satisfactory, a few only having to be dealt with under the Police Regulations.

I am strongly of the opinion that the minimum age fixed by the regulations under the Motor-vehicles Act, 1924, for drivers of licensed motor-vehicles should be raised to twenty-one years, owing to the great temptation for lads in charge of public cars to do the wrong thing.

INSPECTOR HOLLIS, AUCKLAND CENTRAL DISTRICT.

During the past year the motor patrol in the suburban areas has been very beneficial, but unfortunately, owing to the condition of the motor-cycle in use, a continuous service cannot be maintained. If this patrol is to be carried on it is essential that two new motor-cycles with side-chairs should be immediately provided.

The total number of all offences and crime reported in Auckland Central District was 5,202. Of this number 4,904 were accounted for by arrest or summons, leaving 298 undetected. There was a decrease of 349 compared with the previous year.