

## EXTRACTS FROM THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

## INSPECTOR O'HARA, WHANGAREI DISTRICT.

An analysis of the offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1934, shows an increase in offences against rights of property such as thefts, false pretences, and house or shop breaking. Charges of mischief more than doubled, and were largely caused by bands of Maori youths and children wandering at night under no parental or tribal control. The first-mentioned increase indicates no special reason as to cause, and is only a fluctuation of the crime barometer.

Drunkenness shows a marked decrease, and the district is most temperate. The illegal supply of liquor to Natives decreased by over 50 per cent. The decreases are probably caused through the influence of education and other avenues of pleasure now available to all members of the community.

Prosecutions against hotelkeepers for selling at unauthorized times increased, showing a general alertness of members of the Force in seeing that the provisions of the Licensing Act are complied with.

Offences under the Arms Act show a decrease of 75 per cent. The general inspection of firearms has been completed with a few exceptions.

Breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act increased in the minor offences, but there is a decrease in charges of intoxication in charge of motor-vehicle.

The only serious crime in the district was the murder of a relative by a Maori at Waiotemarama, on which charge he was acquitted at the Auckland Supreme Court. There was nothing exceptional in this crime: the parties quarrelled over land rights, and in anger the offender used his spade on the deceased, death occurring two days later from gas gangrene.

The conduct of members of the Force has been good. One constable was fined for breach of Police Regulations.

## SUPERINTENDENT TILL, AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

There was a decrease of 960 in the number of offences reported during the twelve months ended 31st December last. Of the 6,629 offences reported 5,898 were dealt with either by summons or arrest, leaving 731 undetected.

The chief increases were in theft from dwellings, false pretences, house or shop breaking, found in gaming houses, unlawfully selling, supplying, or exposing liquor, and unlawfully on licensed premises.

There were decreases in thefts, obtaining credit by fraud, mischief, drunkenness, obscene language, vagrancy, reckless or negligent driving, intoxicated in charge of motor-vehicle, and other breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

The only serious crime was a charge of murder against a man who was found not guilty on grounds of insanity.

Generally speaking the conduct of the members of the Force in this district has been very good. They showed an aptitude for efficiency in their work, and at all times a perfect willingness to carry out the duty allotted to them, which frequently entailed long hours of extra duty.

A sergeant was dealt with on three charges of borrowing money from his subordinates, and was reduced to the rank of constable. Nine constables were dealt with for breaches of the Regulations of a minor nature.

On my visits of inspection throughout the district I have invariably found the members of the Force smart and tidy in appearance and the police buildings and premises tidy and clean.

## INSPECTOR LOPDELL, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

The strength in the district has been increased during the year by one detective and one constable attached to the Detective Office, thus meeting the need referred to in last year's report.

During the year one constable retired medically unfit for duty, and one constable was murdered while doing his duty.

The conduct of the Force has been excellent. Only one breach of regulations was dealt with.

There were 2,094 offences reported during 1934, being 309 less than the previous year. Of those reported 1,982 arrests or summonses followed, leaving 112 offences recorded as undetected. No doubt a percentage of those recorded as undetected were committed by men who were arrested for similar offences, but the connecting evidence was missing.

The most noticeable decreases in crime are in thefts, forgery, mischief, drunkenness, and converting cars, &c.

The only serious crimes were eight murders.

On the 9th October, 1934, a Maori youth of eighteen years of age killed two brothers, farmers, on a road which leads to their farm at Rangitoto, near Otorohanga. He then went to their home where their aged parents lived and killed them. He robbed the house and set fire to it, the charred bodies of the old couple being found in the debris. Intensive search was made to locate the offender within this district and information circulated to all other districts. On the 20th October Constable Heeps, of Morrinsville, went to see a Maori at a farm near Morrinsville whom he suspected of being the offender. During an interview between them on the farm the Maori who turned out to be the offender shot and mortally wounded Constable Heeps, who died a few days later. The Maori escaped, and all available police were concentrated round Morrinsville, assisted by a detachment sent from Auckland. He was located on the morning of the 21st and surrounded, when he shot himself mortally, dying later that day. His conduct was observed to be somewhat irregular prior to the murders of the 9th October, and those who knew him say he had a mental lapse, from which these crimes resulted. No other reasonable explanation has been found.

On 8th November a young farmer of Horsham Downs, near Hamilton, shot his wife and two young children and then committed suicide. There is no doubt that this was due to a mental lapse.

The eight murders were therefore committed by two men, both of whom committed suicide.