

INSPECTOR LANDER, WANGANUI DISTRICT.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1935, shows a total of 1,180 offences reported, as compared with 1,159 for the previous year, an increase of 21. Of the total reported, 1,064 were accounted for by arrest or summons.

The principal increases were house or shop breaking, unlawful use of horses, motor-cars, &c., found illegally on licensed premises, and breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

The principal decreases were assaults, theft (undescribed), found in common gaming-house, and failure to pay maintenance-moneys.

The decrease in undescribed thefts is a satisfactory feature of the return. This is offset, however, by an increase in shop-breaking. I am unable to ascribe any particular reasons for the decrease in one form of theft and an increase in another form of the crime.

Two murders and one attempted murder occurred during the year. In each case the offender was dealt with and found "not guilty" on the grounds of being insane. They were then committed to mental hospitals.

A serious case of rape occurred at Raetihi. The offender was arrested and sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

A woman from Ohakune was also dealt with for arson and sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

The conduct of the police in the district during the year was good, two constables only being dealt with for breaches of regulations.

INSPECTOR CUMMINGS, PALMERSTON NORTH DISTRICT.

I consider that three additional constables are required for this station, and one for Foxton. I find that it is necessary to strengthen the night patrol in view of the increased business premises and population. The police continue to do a considerable amount of work for other Departments, the cost of which comes out of the police vote.

The offences return for the year ending 31st December, 1935, shows a total number of all offences reported to be 1,669, compared with 1,651 the previous year.

Of the offences reported, 1,551 were dealt with by arrest or summons. The principal offences showing an increase are arson, false pretences, house or shop breaking, unlawfully using motor-cars, negligent driving, and offences under the Gaming Act and Destitute Persons Act. Those showing a decrease are theft, obtaining credit by fraud, forgery and uttering, vagrancy, and general breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act. Some of the crime as shown on the increase may be attributed to the depression.

Six persons were committed for trial or sentence for a series of incendiary fires. Five were convicted at the Supreme Court. The detective making the investigation displayed marked ability.

The conduct of the members of the Force throughout the district during the year has been good. There were no defaulters. A satisfactory standard of efficiency has been maintained. Both branches of the Service have performed very good work.

The amendments to the Second-hand Dealers Act and Police Offences Act have been of considerable assistance to the police in carrying out their duties, particularly the section dealing with persons making false complaints to the police that crimes or other offences have been committed.

For some years past only absolute essential repairs to police-stations have been effected. The money provided has not been sufficient to keep all the buildings in a reasonable state of repair. A new Central Station is urgently needed at Palmerston North.

SUPERINTENDENT CUMMINGS, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

An increase in the actual strength of the district is urgently needed. In my opinion it ought to be brought up, as early as possible, to at least 219, an increase of fourteen for the uniform branch and two for the detective branch. We are continually working short-handed owing to sickness, escort, annual leave, special duty having to be performed, and calls made from other districts for assistance, which is readily given.

The time has arrived when a station should be opened in Oriental Bay, so that that portion of the city will be properly policed. It is a very important waterside resort, and during the summer and autumn seasons is crowded every evening and week-end with bathers. A permanent constable stationed there would have ample work to do. He could take in Roseneath and a portion of Hataitai that is seldom patrolled at present.

Northland is also an important locality that is growing very fast and rarely sees a constable. It is somewhat cut off from other portions of the city. A constable should be permanently stationed there.

Another constable at least is required at Kilbirnie; the present staff cannot adequately cope with all the calls made upon them. The bays in the vicinity are favourite resorts for people bathing during the evening and week-ends, and should be patrolled.

An additional constable is also required at Wellington South so that a full-time watchhouse-keeper may be placed on duty there at night. At present there is no watchhouse-keeper at this station after 1 a.m. Wellington South has a very large population, and there ought to be a constable on night duty all night to receive calls and see they are attended to.

The increasing of the strength at Petone and Lower Hutt stations must be undertaken as soon as possible. At least one constable should be added to the strength of each station as early as convenient. The calls made on the present staff cannot be adequately dealt with—they are too numerous.

The remainder of the uniform men asked for are required at the main city stations in order to keep up the beat duty in the business portion of the city.

Two additional men are required for the detective staff. We have frequent calls from other districts for assistance.

The next important question arising is that of transport. We are badly in need of additional transport. At present we have one powerful car in commission; another which has almost outlived its usefulness, but does a certain amount of city work; and a small van for the conveyance of prisoners—