

One attempted murder was dealt with during the year. The trial of the accused resulted in an acquittal. No injury was done to the person against whom the attempt was made. Other offences of breaking and entering and thefts committed by prisoners confined in prison camps at National Park caused a good deal of inquiry, but they were satisfactorily dealt with.

The conduct of the police in the district during the year was good, one constable only being dealt with for a breach of regulations.

INSPECTOR CUMMINGS, PALMERSTON NORTH DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the district was increased by one constable in October, 1936, by the appointment of an additional constable at Foxton, this being necessary on account of the revival of the flax-milling and textile industries there.

I submit that the time has arrived when the strength at Palmerston North Station should be increased. One additional sergeant is required for duty at Central Station for adequate supervision and relieving duty. Three additional constables are required for duty at the Central Station, two for night duty and one for day duty, in order to cope with the many duties requiring the attention of the police. A sergeant is also required to take charge at Pahiatua, where at present two constables are stationed. On the eastern side of the Manawatu River there is no non-commissioned officer,[§] and Woodville, Pahiatua, and Eketahuna districts are controlled by constables. The population on this side of the river is increasing and warrants a sergeant being stationed there.

The question of appointing a sergeant at Otaki or Levin will have to be considered, owing to the increased population and business activities in these towns. At present there is no sergeant stationed between Wellington and Palmerston North. There is also to be considered the question of appointing a sergeant at Marton at an early date in view of the increased population and business activities there and the fact that, in the near future, a constable will have to be stationed at Marton Junction, or an extra constable attached to Marton, to attend to the wants of 1,022 residents at the railway junction.

The police continue to do a considerable amount of work for other Departments, the cost of which comes out of the Police vote. I submit that the time has arrived when the police should be relieved of some of this work, as the Departments concerned have their own officers at places where the police are called upon to perform duties that could well be carried out by the officers of the Department concerned.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1936, contains a total of 1,464 offences reported, against a total of 1,669 for the previous year, a decrease of 205. Of the total reported, 1,369 were accounted for by arrest or summons. The principal increases were misleading Employment Officer for sustenance, being intoxicated in charge of a motor-vehicle, reckless or negligent driving of motor-vehicles, and other breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act. The principal decreases were simple thefts, false pretences, unlawfully using motor-vehicles, and breaches of Arms Act.

The increases in reckless and negligent driving and other similar offences is no doubt due to the vigilance of the police and their endeavours to prevent the toll of the road that has been so much in evidence. I am pleased to say that there has been a decrease in the number of motor accidents this past few months.

The decrease in the offences mentioned is probably due to the improved conditions in the country.

During the year there was one serious assault and robbery in the district. The offender was arrested, due to efficient police service and the use of the motor patrol, and was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

On the 17th April, 1936, a young woman, returning from a dance, was knocked down and killed by a motor-cyclist, who was subsequently charged with causing her death by negligently or recklessly driving a motor-cycle, and convicted and sentenced to six months' reformatory detention.

The night patrol on bicycles in this city has proved very satisfactory and has justified the expense; I attribute the decrease in thefts to its efficiency.

During the year the conduct of the police was quite satisfactory, only one constable having to be dealt with for a breach of the regulations.

A satisfactory standard of efficiency has been maintained. Both branches of the service have performed good work.

The amendments provided in the Statutes Amendment Act, 1936, dealing with section 216 of the Crimes Act, 1908, extending the time for laying informations, persons committed for trial being able to plead guilty before trial at the Supreme Court, and the procedure on charge of offences against corporations will be of considerable assistance.

The repealing of speed-limits at intersections under Regulation 15 of the Motor-vehicle Regulations of 28th February, 1933, has somewhat curtailed the powers of the police in proving speeding at intersections and negligent driving.

Since the Supreme Court decision in the case *Clements v. McGee* the duty of the prosecution under section 28 of the Motor-vehicles Act was a very much lighter one than under the present Act or regulations. It is clear that a good deal more evidence is now required to sustain a charge of negligent driving or speeding at intersections.

SUPERINTENDENT FRASER, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

Since a new police-station has been opened for the Oriental Bay subdistrict there have been very few complaints of the larrikin type causing annoyance to the residents of this suburb. Unfortunately, up to the present, the Department has not been successful in securing a house in this subdistrict. The Oriental Bay Police Office is in the meantime at the Taranaki Street Station.

An increase in the actual strength of the Wellington Police district is urgently needed. The time has now arrived when a new station should be opened at Northland. This is a large suburban area and cannot be properly supervised from the adjoining suburban stations. A rearrangement of the