

Twelve constables were dealt with for breaches of the regulations. One constable was dismissed. The population of Auckland city and suburbs continues to increase, and additional patrols by night and day are required.

I recommend that section 188 of the Justices of the Peace Act be amended to give a Magistrate power to deal with all thefts, including theft of animals, where the value does not exceed £50, and that section 189 (b) of the same Act be repealed. It has been found that where a person was previously convicted on indictment and after a lengthy period charged with a trivial theft the necessary machinery, as it now stands, compels him to be charged on indictment again, whereas he could be dealt with summarily by a Magistrate and thus save the country considerable expense. I also recommend that section 278 of the Crimes Act, 1908, be amended to include all buildings.

I again recommend that "enclosed areas" in sections 52 (i) and 54 of the Police Offences Act, 1927, be defined to include that portion of land around a house or building which would in the ordinary manner have been enclosed with a fence. This would deal with schools and dwellings such as State houses where the front portions of the sections are not enclosed within the meaning of the Act.

On the 31st March, 1941, there were nine motor-vehicles on charge at Auckland *viz.*, one van, one truck, four Chevrolet cars, two Ford cars, one motor-cycle. The vehicles are used for general police work and for escort of prisoners. One van, a Hillman car, and a motor-cycle were disposed of during the year. The motor-cycle was replaced by a new machine. The other vehicles were not replaced. The two Ford cars at present on charge have now reached a stage where in the interests of efficiency they should be replaced. The number of vehicles has been reduced during the year, and the public demands require that the remaining vehicles are thoroughly reliable.

The motor patrols continue to prove a success in checking and detecting crime. The necessity for special motor patrols, especially at night, has increased, and two motor-cars are continuously employed on general patrol and inspection of vital industrial points.

The use of privately-owned motor-cars by members of the Force on payment of mileage or annual allowances continues to give satisfaction.

The police continue to perform a large amount of work for other Government Departments. This work has increased considerably on account of the war. The members of the Force work in harmony with officials of other Departments, and they are indebted to Dr. Gilmour (Pathologist) and Mr. K. N. Griffin (Government Analyst) for their valuable assistance in technical matters arising out of police investigations.

A number of experienced men resigned from the Force during the year. Many of them have joined the military Forces. They have been replaced by temporary constables and, although the Service was short of experienced men, it was found that the recruits were keen and energetic. The control and supervision of aliens and persons or organizations likely to hamper the war effort required the attention of a large number of the more experienced detectives and constables. The control of persons at the waterfront necessitated the increase of strength at the Queen Street Wharf Police-station. There are now twenty-six men stationed on the Auckland waterfront, and they are carrying out their duties in a very satisfactory manner.

INSPECTOR EDWARDS, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the Force in the Hamilton District on the 31st March, 1941, was 88, being an increase of 1 over the previous year.

During the year the Sub-Inspector at Rotorua was promoted to Inspector, and he still retains charge of that sub-district with the higher rank.

A detective sergeant was appointed to Rotorua, and this has enabled detective inquiries to be greatly facilitated in that portion of the district.

Police-stations are required at Piopio and at Ngongotaha. Both places are now fair-sized townships with an increasing population. The question of opening stations at these places has been previously discussed, and no doubt will be given effect to when normal conditions return.

One additional sergeant and two constables are required in the Town of Hamilton. At present the strength of the Force is not sufficient to cope with all the duties required of it and allow for provision to be made for escort and relieving duties, sickness, and annual leave.

A new station is in course of erection at Mount Maunganui and is expected to be ready for occupation at an early date.

The offences return for the year ending 31st December, 1940, shows a total of 3,234 which is a decrease of 49 on the total (3,283) for the previous year.

The principal increases were house or shop breaking, theft, unlawful conversion of motor-vehicles, having control of liquor in the vicinity of dance-halls, and being found in common gaming-houses.

The principal decreases were failure to pay maintenance, and breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

I might add that in respect to the offence of unlawful conversion of motor-vehicles the majority of offenders were youths between fourteen and twenty years of age. This leads one to believe that in many cases there is a lack of home control.

The only serious crime committed during the year was the murder of a young married woman at Waikino.

On the evening of 2nd April, 1940, a young married woman, employed at the Waikino Hotel, and a son of the licensee, whilst walking on the main road a short distance from the hotel, were run down by a motor-car. Their bodies were found next day, the boy's about a quarter of a mile from the alleged scene where they were run down and the woman's about four miles away on a side road, in some fern. Medical evidence disclosed the fact that in addition to the injuries received from the car the woman had been criminally assaulted before death occurred, and had also been struck on the head by a blunt instrument. At the time there was very little evidence to show how or by whom the injuries were committed. After extensive inquiries, in which some thousands of motor-vehicles were examined by the police over a wide area, the murderer was located at Waihi. He was later convicted for the murder and sentenced to death, the sentence being later commuted to imprisonment for life.

The conduct of the police in this district has been good, only one defaulter having to be dealt with for a breach of the regulations.

Recent legislation, consisting mainly of regulations dealing with war measures, is working effectively and without undue hardship being occasioned.