

After serving as coach for the literary subjects of the police examinations for a period of thirty-five years, Mr. Robert Darroch, O.B.E., resigned from the position on 31st December, 1947.

I wish to place on record an appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Darroch so faithfully, thoroughly, and ably throughout his long association with the Police Department.

An event of outstanding importance was the visit to New Zealand of Field-Marshal Montgomery in July last.

This called for a great deal of additional work on the part of the police in affording protection, and regulating the large and enthusiastic crowds which assembled at various points.

At the conclusion of the tour Field-Marshal Montgomery made special reference to the work performed by the police and expressed deep appreciation of the splendid services they had rendered.

The visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen and Princess Margaret to New Zealand in 1949 will be a memorable event.

Heavy responsibilities will require to be borne by the police in affording security to the Royal party during their stay in the Dominion and in dealing with the many problems that arise upon the assembly of vast crowds.

Many expressions of appreciation have been made by citizens regarding the services rendered by the police during the year. In particular the police received the highest commendation for their work, under most distressing conditions, in connection with the disastrous fire at Christchurch in November, 1947, when 41 persons lost their lives, and the fatal railway accident at Blind River, Marlborough, on the 25th February, 1948, when 6 were killed.

Another case in point was the prompt action on the part of the police in frustrating an attempt at safeblowing at the Hutt City Post-office. This and other cases were the subject of complimentary references by the Judiciary.

I desire to express thanks to all those public-spirited citizens who have assisted the police in any way during the year.

*Police Buildings, &c.*—New stations have been erected at New Lynn and Whitianga, and a garage was constructed at Eastbourne.

Houses for use as police-stations are nearing completion at Karamea and Dobson, while one already erected was acquired at Hanmer. Houses have also been purchased at Ngongotaha and Kaikohe.

A new site for a police-station at Greymouth has now been decided upon, and the land has been acquired. The preparation of the plans of the buildings to suit this new site is receiving urgent attention.

Although it has not been practicable to proceed with the erection of many new stations, because of shortage of labour and materials, and in other cases because no tenders have been received, an endeavour has been made to have repairs and maintenance work effected to a large number of the older buildings, many of which have outlived their usefulness, until replacement is practicable.

The difficulties of finding house accommodation at the various centres are still acute. Necessary transfers are often long delayed, and measures to strengthen the Police Force in various centres require to be held in abeyance through the inability of members to secure house accommodation, while potential recruits are sometimes deterred because of these difficulties.

*Transport.*—Several new motor-cars were obtained during the year in replacement of some of the older vehicles which had given good service, but which, on account of age and mileage, had become unsuitable for police work. As further vehicles become available it is hoped to supply motor-cars at more headquarters' stations.