

Last year I submitted a suggestion that section 278 of the Crimes Act, 1908, be amended so as to include all buildings.

Motor-vehicles for use at District Headquarters are most essential, and in the past have been found of great assistance in checking and detecting crime when used on regular patrol.

Formerly there were two old motor-bicycles, a Hupmobile motor-car, and a Ford motor-car. We are now reduced to the Ford car only.

As recommended last year, a small type motor-car, such as a Standard "9" and a high-powered motor-cycle, would be the most suitable for the work here.

INSPECTOR FRASER, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1931, shows the total number of all offences committed to be 2,036, compared with 2,060 for the previous twelve months, being a decrease of 24.

Of the offences reported 1,868 were accounted for by arrest or summons, leaving 168 undetected. Eighty-eight males and 8 females were committed for trial or sentence, and of these 84 males and 8 females were convicted.

Three serious crimes were committed during the year. A man was charged with murdering another at Kaipaki and was found guilty and sentenced to death, which was later commuted to imprisonment for life. A man charged with murdering his wife was brought in "Not guilty" on the grounds of insanity, and ordered to be kept in strict custody until the pleasure of the Minister of Justice is known. Another man charged with attempting to murder a woman, was found guilty, and sentenced to seven years hard labour.

The general conduct of the members of the Force has been good and their duties have been performed satisfactorily.

INSPECTOR O'HALLORAN, GISBORNE DISTRICT.

During the year the police-station at Kopua Railway construction works was closed owing to the closing-down of the works there. Also the Whataupoko Police-station was closed, and a new station opened at Makaraka, this change being brought about owing to the main highway being at Makaraka and the need of a constable there, and by the move of the population towards Makaraka and Te Hapara. Whataupoko can be easily worked from the Kaiti Police-station, and that area has been included in the Kaiti Police District.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1931, showed a total of 1,196 offences reported, as compared with 1,755 in the previous year, a decrease of 559. Arrests or summonses resulted in 1,124 cases, leaving 72 cases undetected. Of the cases dealt with, 63 were committed for trial or sentence, of which 54 were convicted.

The district has been free from crime of a very serious nature during the year.

The conduct of the police has been good during the year, and there were no defaulters.

INSPECTOR CUMMINGS, NAPIER DISTRICT.

For the year ending 31st December last the total number of offences reported was 1,963, an increase on the previous year of 108. Of the 1,963 cases reported 1,824 were detected. There was a large increase in the number of cases reported concerning dishonesty, particularly theft, house and shop breaking, burglary, false pretences, and fraud, while a decrease was shown in drunkenness, assaults, mischief, profane and indecent language, vagrancy, breach of prohibition orders, and all classes of offences arising out of liquor.

Both branches of the Service did excellent work during the year, and, as a result, the detection of wrongdoers has been very satisfactory.

The conduct of the members of the Force has been excellent, only one offender being convicted of a breach of the regulations.

A new dwelling and office is required at Taradale to replace the premises destroyed by the earthquake on the 3rd February, 1931. This should be done as soon as funds are available. New offices are also required at Wairoa.

With the increase in crime generally in the district and a large number of inquiries from other districts in respect to persons wanted having gone to Hawke's Bay in quest of work in the rebuilding area, as well as numerous inquiries for people who it was thought were injured or killed in the earthquake, made the past year a very strenuous one. We also had a great number of inquiries from the Earthquake Relief Committee in respect to matters arising out of the earthquake. I gave the committee every assistance in that direction.

INSPECTOR RAWLE, NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1931, show the total number of all offences committed to be 1,354 compared with 1,309 for the previous 12 months, being an increase of 45. Of the number reported 1,283 were accounted for by arrest or summons, equal to slightly over 94 per cent.

A serious crime, the murder of an Indian fruiterer, was committed on 31st January, 1931, at Hawera. On the 12th May, 1931, a man was arrested for the crime, and committed for trial, but at the Supreme Court the grand jury found "No bill," and he was discharged. Apart from that there was no serious crime for the year.

The conduct of the police during the past twelve months has been good, and the duties satisfactorily performed. Three members received "Notes in favour" for work well performed. Two were fined for breaches of regulations.