

The casualties in the district amounted to 5, viz.: Death, 1 constable; retirement on pension, 1 constable; voluntary resignations, 2 constables; compulsory resignation, 1 constable.

The offences return for year ended 31st December, 1918, shows that a total of 1,195 offences were reported during the year, of which 1,145 were detected and dealt with; this shows a decrease of 125 on the number of offences reported during the previous year. The principal increases were as follows: Abusive, insulting, and threatening words or behaviour, 19; assaults causing bodily harm, 19; assaults on police 37; burglary, breaking into shops, dwellings, &c., 12; mischief, 10; riot (taking part in), 18; unlawful assembly, 18; while the principal decreases were in drunkenness, 151; failing to provide for wives and children, 23; obscene and profane language, 11; sly-grog selling, 35; and vagrancy offences, 15.

One case of murder is shown on the offences return. This offence is referred to in my report for last year. The offender was convicted of manslaughter, and sentenced to ten years' hard labour and seven years' reformatory treatment.

A rather serious disturbance took place at Rahotu on the 28th March, 1918, when a number of Parihaka Natives attempted to rescue from the local constable a Native who was under arrest. Eighteen of these Natives, including the one who had been under arrest, were prosecuted for causing a riot, assaulting the constable, and causing bodily harm. All these Natives were convicted and punished at the Supreme Court, New Plymouth, and their conviction had a good effect on other Natives who at this time were inclined to be disloyal and disorderly. Since then these Natives have been very quiet. With this exception the district has been quiet and free from serious crime.

During the awful influenza epidemic last November and December the police did good work in assisting sufferers, especially in the outlying districts, and I cannot speak too highly of the manner in which all ranks worked during that time.

With one exception, the conduct of all ranks during the year has been good. Owing to the decrease in numbers the work has been more difficult; but all ranks have done their best in keeping the peace, and preventing and detecting crime, and carrying out the multitude of other duties thrown on the police by other Departments.

Sly-grog selling has decreased largely during the past year. There were only five prosecutions, which resulted in fines amounting to £170 being imposed.

INSPECTOR MACKINNON, PALMERSTON NORTH DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1919, the authorized strength of this district, which was established on the 1st August, 1918, was 1 Inspector, 3 sergeants, 34 constables, and 1 detective-sergeant, but the actual strength was 1 constable short of that.

An increase of at least two constables is urgently required on the authorized strength at Palmerston North Station. At present a constable cannot be spared for street duty on the early shift, and this is a serious matter when the size of the town is considered. It is also at present not possible to attend to the departure of several early trains which leave here for different parts.

The offences return shows a total of 923 offences reported during the year, of which 890 were detected and dealt with. This shows an aggregate net decrease of 229 on the number of offences reported in the preceding year. The principal increases were—Absconding from industrial schools, 34; thefts, 11; and theft of postal letters, 3. The principal decreases were—Abusive and insulting behaviour, 11; drunkenness, 143; mischief, 20; sly-grog selling, 8; vagrancy, 7.

The conduct of members of the Force in this district during the past year has been all that could be desired.

SUPERINTENDENT NORWOOD, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in the district on the 31st March was—Superintendent, 1; Inspector, 1; Sub-Inspector, 1; Senior Sergeants, 6; sergeants, 16; permanent constables, 103; temporary constables, 18; matron, 1; surgeon, 1; Chief Detective, 1; detective-sergeants, 5; detectives, 3; total, 157, being a shortage of 13 constables, 1 detective, and 1 matron.

Land with buildings thereon suitable for police purposes has been purchased at Karori.

I beg to repeat the suggestion previously made regarding the necessity for building a residence for the Senior Sergeant at Mount Cook on the vacant section adjoining the police-station. At present a house is rented, at a high figure, a considerable distance from the station, which affects the efficiency of control.

A new station is badly required at Upper Hutt, and a new lock-up and stable at Havelock.

The following stations were taken from the Wellington District to form part of a new police district to be controlled from Palmerston North: Otaki, Levin, Pahiatua, Eketahuna, and Pongaroa.

The casualties during the year were—Deaths, 1 constable; discharged on pension, 1 constable and 1 matron; resignations (compulsory), 3 constables; resignations (voluntarily), 13 constables; dismissals, 2 constables.

The total number of all offences reported during the year ended 31st December, 1918, was 3,930; dealt with in Courts, 3,701; undetected or abandoned through insufficiency of evidence, 229; indictable cases dealt with in Supreme Court, 108. There was a decrease of all offences reported during the past year to the extent of 1,004 cases as compared with the previous year. The decreases come under the following headings: Assaults (common), 12; breaches of the peace, 11; burglary, breaking, and entering, 37; deserting vessels, 58; disorderly and riotous conduct, 17; drunkenness, 412; failing to provide maintenance, 51; forgery and uttering, 24; illegally on premises, 29; indecency, 12; mischief, 12; obscene and profane language, 57; obstructing and resisting police, 14; receiving stolen property, 10; soliciting prostitution, 24; theft (undescribed), 12; vagrancy, 87. No crimes were of such a serious nature as to require special comment.