

In one case of murder the crime was practically admitted by the solicitor for accused at the Supreme Court trial, but the defence was that the accused was insane when he committed the murder. The jury evidently ignored the defence of insanity, and returned a verdict of "Guilty of manslaughter," and offender was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

The other case of murder was a most unfortunate one for the offender, as he had been struck three times in the street by another man before he actually retaliated by striking the blow that caused death. When the fatal blow was struck the man fell back on the footpath, fracturing his skull. The medical evidence went to show that the skull of deceased was abnormally thin. The accused was committed for trial, but the grand jury returned "No bill."

In the case of attempted murder the jury returned a verdict of "Guilty of assault causing actual bodily harm," and the offender received a sentence of twelve months' imprisonment.

Two constables were dismissed for misconduct, and five constables were fined for breaches of Police Regulations. With the exceptions mentioned the general conduct of the Force in this district has been good.

The Police Offences Amendment Act, 1926, has proved of great assistance to the police in prosecuting offenders under the Act mentioned.

INSPECTOR CUMMINGS, NAPIER DISTRICT.

On the 31st March last the authorized strength of the Force was fifty-two, the same as the previous year.

For the year ended 31st December, 1926, the total number of offences reported was 1,550, as against 1,467 the previous year, an increase of eighty-three, and 1,492 prosecutions resulted. None of the cases call for special mention.

The general conduct of the police has been excellent, only one constable being dealt with for a minor breach of the regulations.

INSPECTOR FRASER, NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT.

On the 31st March last the authorized strength was thirty-four.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1926, shows the total number of all offences committed to be 1,055, compared with 882 for the previous twelve months, being an increase of 173. Of all offences reported, 979 were accounted for by arrest or summons, leaving seventy-six undetected. There were no crimes of a serious nature reported during the year.

The conduct of the police has been very good. During the year only one constable was dealt with for a breach of regulations. The general work has been carried out with efficiency.

INSPECTOR TILL, WANGANUI DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in the district on the 31st March, 1927, was forty-four, an increase of two constables over the previous year at Wanganui Station.

There was a slight decrease in the total of all offences during 1926. The increase was mostly in thefts, false pretences, breaches of probation, vagrancy, and disobeying maintenance orders.

The conduct of the police in this district was good, it being necessary to deal with only two constables for breaches of the Police Regulations.

INSPECTOR SIMPSON, PALMERSTON NORTH DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1927, the authorized strength of the Force in the Palmerston North District was forty-four.

A new station was opened at Marton Junction during the year, which increased the authorized strength by one constable.

The casualties for the year were as follows: Three constables were dismissed, two constables resigned voluntarily, one constable retired on superannuation, and one constable died.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1926, show the total number of offences reported as 1,242, as against 1,033 the previous year, an increase of 209. Of the offences reported 1,121 were dealt with either by arrest or summons.

The most serious crimes committed were three murders, two of which were committed by a poultry-farmer of Levin, who was found not guilty on the grounds of insanity, and ordered to be detained in a mental hospital during the pleasure of the Hon. Minister of Justice. The other was a case of infanticide by a young girl, who was acquitted by the jury at the Supreme Court. The increased crime is of the ordinary class, and calls for no special comment.

The general conduct of the police for the period has been satisfactory, and the standard of efficiency very good.

SUPERINTENDENT EMERSON, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1927, the authorized strength of the Force in this district was 194. During the year the authorized strength of the Wellington District has been increased by a sergeant and a constable at Kilbirnie, a constable at Wadestown, and a constable at Blenheim.

The casualties were—one constable died, three constables resigned voluntarily, one constable resigned compulsorily, and one constable was dismissed.

For the year ended 31st December, 1926, the total number of offences reported was 5,350, being an increase of 641.

There has been no serious crime worth mentioning during the year except a case at Petone, where four children were killed by their mother, who has been committed to a mental hospital.

The conduct of the members of the Force has been satisfactory. Fifteen constables were dealt with for breaches of the regulations during the year.