

INSPECTOR MCILVENEY, WANGANUI DISTRICT.

There were 1,257 offences reported during the year, compared with 1,516 in 1930. Arrests or summonses resulted in 1,189 cases. The principal increases in offences reported appear in respect of theft by clerks or servants, false accounting by officials or clerks, vagrancy, unlawfully using horses, motor-cars, &c., stealing money from postal packets, and failure to pay maintenance money.

There were decreases in respect of assault, theft, false pretences, house or shop breaking, mischief, and drunkenness.

On the 6th January, 1931, a man murdered a woman at National Park. He had been living with a sister of deceased under sordid conditions. A large quantity of wine was consumed by the party during the previous night, and excessive drinking continued on the morning of the murder. Deceased threatened to call in the police on account of offender's behaviour and he then shot her. He was convicted at the Supreme Court, and sentenced to death (later commuted to imprisonment for life).

In December last a woman killed her husband at Wanganui. She was charged with murder and acquitted. The injury causing death was inflicted during the course of a domestic quarrel.

The conduct of the police generally has been good, a few only having to be dealt with under the police regulations.

INSPECTOR HARVEY, PALMERSTON NORTH.

The offences return for the year ending the 31st December, 1931, shows that the total number of all offences reported was 1,478, an increase of 31 over the previous year. Of the offences reported, 1,411 were dealt with by arrest or summons. The figures show an increase of 143 in thefts, and a decrease of 96 in drunkenness offences.

On the morning of the 24th August, 1931, a young man was found shot on the side of the road at Karere, near Palmerston North. After inquiries had been made into the matter for several weeks by the local Force, assisted by a number of detectives from other districts, a youth was arrested and charged with murder. He was convicted at the Supreme Court and sentenced to death. The death sentence was subsequently commuted by the Executive Council to imprisonment for life.

SUPERINTENDENT EMERSON, WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

A sub-district was constituted at Masterton on the 28th July, 1931, comprising the Wairarapa stations, under the immediate control of the Senior Sergeant at Masterton, and a sub-district was similarly constituted at Petone on the 13th June, 1931, comprising the Hutt Valley and Eastbourne Stations, under the control of the Senior Sergeant at Petone.

A detective and constable were appointed to Petone Station as an addition to the strength, while an additional constable was appointed to Lower Hutt and Wellington South Stations respectively.

For the year ending 31st December, 1931, the total number of offences reported was 6,345, being an increase of 288 over last year.

The principal increases were as follows: Carnal knowledge, theft (petty), thefts by clerks or servants, false pretences, house or shop breaking, &c., uttering forged documents, vagrancy, assaulting, obstructing constables, &c., breaches of Arms Act, and breaches of Motor-vehicles Act.

The principal decreases were: Assault, indecent exposure, unlawfully using motor-cars, &c., and failing to maintain.

A girl was brutally murdered at Hataitai, for which a man was found guilty and sentenced to death, the death sentence being duly carried out.

The general conduct of the Force has been good. Thirteen defaulters only were dealt with during the year for breaches of regulations.

INSPECTOR LEWIN, NELSON DISTRICT.

On account of the work being suspended on the East Coast Railway construction works, the temporary station at Wharanui has been closed.

For the year ending 31st December, 1931, the total number of offences reported was 972, compared with 1,182 for the previous twelve months, being a decrease of 210. Of all offences reported, 848 were accounted for by arrest or summons, leaving 124 undetected.

There were increases in indecent assaults on males, carnal knowledge, theft, false pretences, burglary, and mischief. The main decreases were in assaults, taking part in riot, house or shop breaking, forgery, drunkenness, and vagrancy.

The most serious crime which occurred during the year was the murder on or about the 3rd November, 1931, of a single man, aged seventy-six, a retired farmer, residing alone in Picton. The murder was a most brutal one. The deceased received a fractured skull, and, in addition, two severe wounds in the neck practically severing the head from the body. No weapon was found near the body. The motive was apparently robbery, for when deceased's clothing was examined it was found that a wallet, said to have contained about £200 in money, was missing from his coat-pocket. The matter is still under investigation.

The conduct of the police in the district during the past year has been very satisfactory, there being no defaulters.

INSPECTOR FITZPATRICK, GREYMOUTH DISTRICT.

The Tiroroa Station was closed during the year, owing to the closing-down of the railway-construction works and the Public Works employees having been transferred elsewhere.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1931, show the total number of all offences to be 1,462, as compared with 1,840 for the previous year, being a decrease of 378. The principal decrease has been in respect to charges of drunkenness, using profane, indecent, or obscene language, vagrancy, keeping or managing common gaming-houses, failing to maintain wife and children, breaches of prohibition orders, and being found on licensed premises after closing hours. The