

POLICE BUILDINGS, ETC.

The following works in connection with police-stations have been carried out during the year by the Public Works Department :—

Office accommodation was provided at Dargaville and Tuatapere; lock-ups were erected at Paekakariki and Westport; and sites for police-stations were purchased at Tikitiki and Waitotara.

Repairs, renovations, &c., were effected at Whangarei, Whangaroa, Rawene, Auckland Central, Mount Albert, Otahuhu, Huntly, Gisborne, Waipiro Bay, Ruatoria, Tolaga Bay, Dannevirke, Mokau, Manaia, Wanganui, St. Johns, Taumarunui, Cuba Street (Palmerston North), Wellington North, Havelock, Reefton, Blackball, Christchurch (officers' residences), Akaroa, Rangiora, Cheviot, Oxford, Temuka, Glenavy, Pleasant Point, Waikouaiti, Anderson's Bay, South Dunedin, Woodhaugh, Balclutha, Lawrence, Invercargill, Nightcaps, and Queenstown.

GENERAL.

Recruiting.—The financial stringency has continued to prevent the opening of the Police Training Depot, closed in July, 1930. It is desirable the depot be reopened for the training of recruits as soon as finances permit. Vacancies have been filled by appointing temporary and probationary constables, who, on proving themselves qualified after a probationary period, have had their appointment confirmed.

Buildings.—The need for economy has prevented the erection of several new buildings needed to replace structures no longer serviceable.

Conduct.—Again this year it is gratifying to be able to report the continued good conduct of the members of the Service, their devotion to duty, and the success rewarding their efforts. The increased percentage of arrests and convictions to offences reported indicates the good work being done by the Detective Branch.

Motor-vehicles.—Although it was found possible to provide a new fast car for the use of the Auckland police, the provision of similar motor-vehicles for night patrol in the principal cities is a pressing need.

Social Unrest.—There has been a marked reduction in the social unrest of last year. The small anti-social element in the community is evidently losing its influence with the genuine worker, who has discovered these agitators to be false friends.

Extracts from reports of officers in charge of districts are appended.

W. G. WOHLMANN,
Commissioner of Police.

EXTRACTS FROM THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS.

INSPECTOR O'HARA, WHANGAREI DISTRICT.

There has been an increase of offences reported during the year—viz., 1,366, against 1,164 for the previous year, resulting in 1,264 prosecutions.

There has been an increase in thefts, false pretences, obtaining credit by fraud, and house and shop breaking.

The only serious crime was the murder on 27th May, 1932, of an old-age pensioner, who was living alone in a hut at Ruatangata, near Whangarei. A Maori youth was arrested for the offence. At the first trial the jury disagreed, and on the second trial he was acquitted at the Supreme Court, Auckland.

The conduct of the members of the Force in this district has been good, only two constables being dealt with for breaches of the Police Regulations.

SUPERINTENDENT TILL, AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

I am of opinion that two Sub-Inspectors are required at this station.

There is also the matter of a senior member of the Force being in charge at the Central Station at night. This would involve the appointment of a second senior sergeant here. It is becoming more necessary as time goes on.

There were 12 more offences reported during 1932 than in 1931, the number being 8,461; 934 of these were undetected.

The principal increases were: Theft, receiving stolen property, inciting disorder or lawlessness, unlawfully on premises without intent, found in gaming-houses, opium-smoking, and breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

The principal decreases were: Assaults, thefts from dwellings, false pretences, burglary, house and shop breaking, forgery and uttering, drunkenness, obscene language, vagrancy, and failing to maintain.

It is difficult to attribute to any particular cause any of these increases or decreases in crime. Drunkenness has been on the decrease during the past few years. This is probably a sign of the times.

Thieving in various forms accounts each year for a great number of the offences committed. I can only attribute this to the very hard times so many of the people are passing through.

The outstanding feature in this district was the rioting that occurred in the city on two days in April, 1932. Many of the Police were injured, some of them seriously. I am glad to be able to report, however, that none of the injuries received have proved of a permanent nature. The members of the Force who were on duty during the rioting on those two days behaved splendidly, reflecting great credit on themselves and the Force generally.