

I suggest that provision be made in the Motor-vehicles Act, 1924, making it a summary offence to make false statements or false entries in respect of motor-drivers' licenses or certificates of fitness, or in connection with the hiring of a motor-vehicle from a garage-proprietor. This would enable offences of this kind to be dealt with summarily instead of going to the Supreme Court.

On 31st March, 1939, there were ten motor-vehicles on charge at the Auckland Headquarters Station—viz., two vans used exclusively for transport of prisoners, one truck for a general runabout and towing motor-vehicles, two Chevrolets in good order, two Fords in good order, one Hillman in satisfactory order, and one Vauxhall showing a mileage of 80,618 miles in indifferent condition, and one motor-cycle in fair order.

The exigencies of the service here make it necessary that the motor transport should be up to a high standard.

The night patrol has been a success in checking and detecting crime.

The police continue to do a very large amount of work for other Departments, and in consequence of the time taken up in performing such work with our limited strength police work proper must suffer.

INSPECTOR LOPDELL, HAMILTON DISTRICT.

On 31st March, 1938, the strength of the staff stood at eighty-four of all ranks, and the strength remained the same throughout the year. The senior sergeant was replaced by a Sub-Inspector at Rotorua.

Steps are being taken to establish a new station at Mount Maunganui, Tauranga, and also a new station at Piopio, where the growing needs of the district make such an increase necessary. The increase in the strength of the Force at Te Awamutu, recommended in my last year's report, is receiving attention.

The appointment of a Sub-Inspector at Rotorua will relieve the Inspector here of a good deal of travelling and inspection in the area remote from Hamilton which is placed under him.

A necessary increase of one constable at Putaruru Station is under consideration.

Last year 2,925 offences were reported. This year there were 3,059. The increases are spread over quite a number of offences and call for no special mention, except in the case of intoxication in charge of cars. This serious offence is on the increase. Last year there were 77 charged and 74 convictions; this year 103 convictions out of 107 persons charged. This, of course, is only a portion of such offenders who are on the road. All the laudable efforts to make the road safe for road-users will fall short of accomplishing the end desired whilst intoxicated men are driving.

Two Hindu storekeepers in a remote Native locality called Taharoa were living together and one disappeared under circumstances which created suspicions that he had been murdered and his body disposed of. A large body of police was employed searching for the body, but without success. The continued absence of the missing man confirms the original suspicions, but as the body cannot be found no actual crime has been established.

The conduct of the police has been of a high standard and duties are being performed in an efficient manner. Two minor disciplinary offences were dealt with.

I think there should be some legal machinery to control drinking at dances, which, besides being a scandal and destroying the social pastime, is, in its relation to car-driving, becoming an increasing danger.

In connection with offences of intoxication while in charge of motor-vehicles, we have evidence where serious accidents have occurred, and in one case fatalities, that intoxication was the cause and that the liquor was procured from licensed hotels after hours; there is strong suspicion that this is so in many cases. I suggest that during closing-hours in hotels there be a total prohibition of the supply of liquor.

INSPECTOR EDWARDS, GISBORNE DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the Force in the Gisborne district on 31st March, 1939, was forty-two. There has been no increase during the past year.

A section of land has been obtained at Te Kaha, and it is hoped to have a police-station erected thereon in the near future.

The offences return for the year shows a total of 1,589 offences reported, as compared with 1,560 the previous year, an increase of 29. Arrests and summonses resulted in 1,536 cases being dealt with, leaving 53 undetected.

The most noticeable increases were assault, theft of animals, drunkenness, illegal supply of liquor to Natives, intoxicated in charge of motor-vehicle, and other breaches of Motor-vehicles Act.

The principal decreases were false statements and declarations, theft (undescribed), false pretences, and house and shop breaking.

The only serious crime committed was that of a man charged with murdering his wife. Accused was alleged to have seriously assaulted his wife, who died two days later from the injuries she sustained. The husband was charged with murder, and the jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter, accused being sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

During the year the general conduct of the members of the Force has been good and their duties have been satisfactorily performed, there being only two defaulters for minor breaches of the regulations.

INSPECTOR CAMERON, NAPIER DISTRICT.

On 31st March, 1939, the actual strength of the Force in this district was sixty-six. There has been no change since last return.

I recommend an increase of one constable at Napier and two constables at Hastings. It would give better police supervision as a result of the forty-eight-hour week and the growth of the business area in Hastings.