

In regard to sly grog-selling, this, owing to the closing of so many publichouses at the last annual licensing meetings, especially in the Clutha Licensing District, where all hotel-licenses were refused, increased to a great extent, as nearly all those houses that were closed continued to carry on the illicit sale of liquor. This caused a great outcry from the temperance party. Every effort was made by the police to bring the offenders to justice, in which they were fairly successful—seven convictions having taken place in the Clutha district, one in the Gore district, and one in the Port Chalmers district, while other prosecutions are pending.

Larrikinism, the scourge of colonial towns, I am happy to state, has been kept well in hand, and consequently there is little to complain of in that respect in this district.

As regards the social evil, a strict surveillance has been kept over immoral houses, and prosecutions, whenever necessary, successfully carried out against them, the result being that the evil is kept well in check.

The Infants' Life Protection Act has been strictly enforced, so far as possible, but in its present form it is little more than a formality, and of little use in checking the abuses it was intended to do, as will be shown in the notorious case now pending before the Courts. For instance, the age, two years, is far too young to be effective in protecting infant life. Again, the fact that it is necessary to prove that money was paid to the baby-farmer alone made the Act abortive, seeing that the greatest secrecy is observed on the part of those who hand over the unfortunate infant to the baby-farmer, consequently the police are not in a position to prove that money was paid, as they have no means of finding out to whom the infant belonged, the receivers of the infants simply refusing to give the police any information, and bidding them defiance with impunity. There are many other defects in the Act, which render it deficient in effecting the object it was intended for—viz., the protection of infant life. All my remarks will be fully borne out by the case before referred to.

With regard to the discipline of the Force in this district, I may say that, upon the whole, the sergeants, constables, and detectives have been well conducted, with the following exceptions—viz., six constables were fined in amounts from 2s. 6d. to £1, two constables were severely reprimanded, and one constable was admonished for offences against discipline, and they have been attentive both as regards their police duties and the numerous other duties they are called upon to perform for other departments of the Government services and for local bodies.

There have been three deaths of members of the Force during the year, and four members of the Force were discharged during the year.

A new police station was opened at St. Clair on the 31st of December, 1894.

In conclusion, I may say that twenty-four constables underwent ten days' artillery drill at the Otago Heads in November and December last.

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