

INSPECTOR CARROLL, NELSON DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in this district on the 31st March was thirty-seven. The authorized strength is thirty-eight, the deficiency being accounted for by the retirement on superannuation of the detective who was stationed at Blenheim and the non-arrival of a man to replace him. This man has since arrived, but he is being kept in Nelson as it was found that there was not enough work in Blenheim to keep a detective fully employed, while, on the other hand, there is too much for one man in the Nelson end of the district. We are thus reverting to the position existing before the transfer of the detective to Nelson in November, 1938, when the whole of the detective work in the district was attended to from Nelson. This I consider the better arrangement.

I would again draw attention to the growing necessity for the opening of a station at Renwicktown, on the main Blenheim - Nelson Highway, about eight miles from Blenheim. Renwicktown is close to the Woodbourne Aerodrome, where there are at present between four and five hundred men residing or employed. I am given to understand that when the present building programme has been completed there is every likelihood of this number being considerably increased.

For the year ended 31st December, 1939, the total number of offences reported was 965, an increase of 119 over the number reported during 1938. There were increases in cases of drunkenness, being found on licensed premises, and selling or exposing liquor for sale during closing-hours, but the principal increase was under the heading of "Carnally knowing girls under sixteen years of age." For this offence there were forty-one prosecutions, there being only one case reported during the previous year. The increase is accounted for by the prosecution of a number of young men and youths at Blenheim as a result of their association with four young girls who had got out of control. In all, nineteen males were charged with a varying number of offences, sixteen being dealt with in the Children's Court and three in the Supreme Court. Three of the girls concerned were also dealt with and committed to institutions.

The conduct of members of the Force during the year has, on the whole, been good. One constable was dealt with for breaches of the Police Regulations.

INSPECTOR MACLEAN, GREYMOUTH DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1940, the strength of the Force in this district was forty-seven, the actual strength being one under the authorized strength.

The total number of offences reported during the year is 1,067, compared with 914 reported during the previous year. Of all the offences reported, 1,034 were dealt with by arrest or summons. The principal decreases were drunkenness and breaches of the Arms Act. The principal increases were theft from dwellings, house and shop breaking, failing to maintain wives or children, and offences by publicans and persons found illegally on licensed premises.

The conduct of members of the Force in this district has been very good during the year, a fairly high standard of efficiency being maintained, and both branches of the service performing their duties satisfactorily.

SUPERINTENDENT RAWLE, CHRISTCHURCH DISTRICT.

On the 31st ultimo the authorized strength of the Force in this district was 169, the same as the previous year. The actual strength on the same date was 166.

A new police-station was opened at Rolleston on the 15th December last. This was found to be necessary on account of the establishment of the large military camp at Burnham.

The total number of offences reported during the year was 5,133, compared with 4,834 for the previous year, being an increase of 299. Of all offences reported 4,514 were detected.

The principal increases appear under the following headings: False pretences, house or shop breaking, failing to maintain, selling or supplying liquor at unauthorized times, illegally on licensed premises, and breaches of Motor-vehicles Act and Traffic Regulations.

The increased activity of the police has been responsible for the detection of the larger number of licensing offences. This has had the effect of a general improvement in the conduct of licensed premises throughout the district.

The principal decreases appear under the headings: Theft, drunkenness, unlawful conversion of vehicles, &c., mischief, and reckless and negligent driving.

The decrease in offences caused through liquor, or as a result of over-indulgence in liquor, is no doubt due to the stricter enforcement of the licensing laws.

The decrease in reckless and negligent driving is partially due to the reason shown above and partially due to the fact that in many cases of a minor nature action is taken under the Traffic Regulations.

During the year a man was convicted of the murder of his wife at Claverly in October, 1938. The work of all members of the Force engaged on this case was of a very high standard, and was favourably commented on by the trial Judge.

A serious outbreak of burglaries occurred during the year, necessitating considerable extra work on the part of the detective staff, whose efforts were ultimately successful in apprehending the criminals, who were subsequently convicted at the Supreme Court.

The conduct of members of the Force on the whole has been good. Six constables were dealt with during the year for breaches of Police Regulations, mostly of a minor nature.

Both branches of the Service have carried out their duties efficiently and with credit to themselves individually.

The work of members of the Force in country districts, which has increased considerably since the declaration of war, has been well done, and they have worked long hours ungrudgingly.