

INSPECTOR FLANAGAN, TIMARU DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in the district on the 31st March, 1940, was forty-eight, this being the authorized strength.

The Waimate Police-station was destroyed by fire on the 7th July, 1939. A new station is being erected, and is expected to be completed by the 25th April, 1940.

The total number of offences reported for the year ended 31st December, 1939, was 965, as compared with 856 for the previous year, an increase of 109. Arrests or summonses resulted in 840 cases.

The principal increases were in respect of offences relating to house or shop breaking, theft (undescribed), assault, false statements and declarations, offences against provisions in force in no-license districts, intoxicated in charge of motor-vehicles, and other breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

The most notable decreases were false pretences, obtaining credit by fraud, mischief, and drunkenness.

The district has been free from crime of a serious nature during the year.

The general conduct of the police in this district during the year has been very good and their duties have been performed in a satisfactory manner.

SUPERINTENDENT O'HARA, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1940, the actual strength for the district was 122, being an increase of one compared with 1939.

New buildings (residence and office) were erected at Mosgiel, Otarehua, Roslyn, and St. Clair.

A new station was opened at Otarehua, while one station (St. Bathans) was closed.

New buildings are required at Dunedin Central and South Dunedin.

The annual offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1939, disclosed that 3,289 offences were reported, as against 2,963 for the previous year, being an increase of 326 offences for the year.

Of the number reported, 3,160 persons were arrested or summoned, leaving 131 undetected offences, being approximately 96 per cent. detected and 4 per cent. undetected.

Of the persons charged, 92 were committed for trial or sentence, and, of these, 89 persons were convicted.

The principal increases included the following: Thefts, house or shop breaking, receiving property dishonestly obtained, mischief, drunkenness, profane or indecent language, vagrancy, unlawfully using horses or motor-cars, and reckless or negligent driving.

Decreases included the following: False statements and declarations, false pretences, Sunday trading, failing to pay maintenance moneys, and breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

The increases and decreases are just ordinary fluctuations which occur from year to year.

A man who was charged that while in a state of intoxication in charge of a motor-vehicle he caused the death of two persons was found guilty of causing death by negligent driving, and sentenced to six months' reformatory detention. The short facts are that the bodies of two persons (young man and young lady) were found in Duke's Road, Mosgiel. The accused did not report the accident, but was later on located and charged. He had partaken of liquor prior to driving the lorry which caused the death of the two persons, who were riding a motor-cycle at the time.

Another man was convicted on a charge of attempted rape and assault causing actual bodily harm, and was sentenced to three years and nine months' hard labour. In this case a young lady was assaulted in Dunedin. The accused attempted to rape her, but was frustrated in his purpose by the timely arrival of a man who heard her screams. She was badly assaulted, and required medical treatment in hospital. The accused had previously been convicted of a similar offence when sixteen years of age.

On the 10th April, 1939, a man driving a motor-vehicle without a license at Cromwell caused the death of a young man who was a passenger in the car when it collided with another vehicle. He was convicted of negligent driving causing death.

The general conduct of the police has been good during the year. All members of the Force have taken a keen interest in their work, which has been well performed. One sergeant and eight constables were dealt with for breaches of the regulations. One constable was dismissed, while fines were inflicted on the remainder.

INSPECTOR GIBSON, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in this district on the 31st March, 1940, totalled fifty-two. This represents a decrease of one constable under the authorized strength, caused by Constable Crawford, a Naval Reservist, being called up for service by the Naval Authorities.

I again recommend an increase of an additional constable at Gore to provide efficiency, especially when relieving duties require to be performed at out-stations attached to Gore sub-district.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1939, disclosed a total of 1,107 offences reported, this being a decrease of one compared with the previous year.

The principal decreases were breaches of the Arms Act, persons found on licensed premises, breaches of the peace, indecent acts, mischief, and theft.

Increases were shown in obtaining credit by fraud, drunkenness, failing to maintain wife and children, intoxicated in charge of motor-vehicle, and other breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

There has been no serious crime of a particular nature during the year.

The conduct of the members of the Force during the year has been good. Three members were dealt with for breaches of the Police Regulations; in each case a fine was inflicted.

There are still large numbers of men engaged by the Public Works Department at Hollyford Valley, Milford Sound, and Haast Pass. This considerably increases the work and entails long journeys by the constables stationed at Lumsden and Pembroke.