

SUPERINTENDENT O'DONOVAN, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

I beg to submit my annual report for the Dunedin District.

The strength of the district on the 31st March last was 1 Superintendent, 1 Sub-Inspector, 2 senior sergeants, 10 sergeants, 90 constables, 1 chief detective, 2 detective-sergeants, 2 acting-detectives, 1 matron, and 1 police surgeon. One sergeant on the strength at Oamaru retired from the service on superannuation, and 1 constable was added to the strength of that station instead.

No stations have been opened or closed during the year.

One Superintendent, 1 sergeant, and 2 constables retired on superannuation; 5 constables resigned voluntarily, 4 were called on to resign, and 1 was dismissed from the service.

The total number of offences reported was 2,482, as against 2,006 for 1913. The increases are mainly made up as follows: Abusive, insulting, or threatening words or behaviour, 24; detaining postal packets, 29; disobeying orders of Court, 116; disobeying orders on ships, 14; drunkenness, 124; gaming offences, 12; stone-throwing, 18; thefts, 124; vagrancy, 22. Of the total number of offences reported (2,482) arrests and summonses resulted in 2,305 cases.

Eleven constables were fined for breaches of the regulations; one of that number was also removed from charge of a station and placed on beat duty.

A new police residence was erected for the sergeant in charge at North Dunedin, also a new residence for the constable at Kaitangata. At the latter place a new lock-up has just been completed.

A list of new buildings required and additions and repairs to old buildings was furnished by my predecessor on the 29th July, 1914. In view of the altered circumstances due to the war I cannot urge that all of these works should be carried out at present. Owing to the urgent necessity of providing quarters at Port Chalmers I must recommend that provision be made for the purchase of a site and the erection of buildings. This will involve considerable expense. As soon as a suitable site is offered further recommendation will be made on this matter.

The station at Oamaru, to be built on the very suitable site recently acquired, should be put in the hands of the builder.

The office accommodation for the detective staff at Dunedin is quite inadequate, and the office-work is carried on under very objectionable conditions. If no improvement can be effected by rearrangement I shall be obliged to make further representation on this subject.

INSPECTOR WILSON, WANGANUI DISTRICT.

I have the honour to submit for your information the annual report on the Police Force in this district.

The authorized strength is 1 Inspector, 2 Sub-Inspectors, 2 senior sergeants, 7 sergeants, 3 detective-sergeants, 68 constables, 1 acting-detective, and 1 district constable.

I am glad to say my recommendations for additional sergeants at Wanganui and Palmerston North have been given effect to, so that with the extra supervision we may expect increased efficiency and zeal.

At Hawera the town and subdistrict continues to grow, and the work has so increased that another constable is urgently required. I understand the Te Roti-Opunake Railway works are starting, so that will mean a big influx of population while the work is in progress.

An additional constable is also required at Ohakune. The population of that borough and Rangataua is estimated at about 2,500, and there are about 250 men working on the Ohakune-Raetihi Railway construction. These men as a rule are a rough class, and require constant supervision.

I would again recommend that the erection of the proposed police-station at Kaponga be proceeded with.

The casualties were—1 senior sergeant, 1 sergeant, and 1 constable retired on superannuation, 3 constables dismissed, and 1 constable retired as medically unfit.

The offences return shows 2,277 offences reported in 1913, and 2,611 in 1914, an increase of 334 during the year. It will be seen, on comparison of the two returns, that the increase is almost all attributable to the number arrested for drunkenness, as that offence alone is responsible for an increase of 299 charges. No doubt the war and the general prosperity of the farming industries, as well as increased vigilance of the police, have contributed towards this result. The other offences under the different heads show a remarkable uniformity in yearly numbers. Of the 2,611 offences reported, 2,513 were dealt with by arrest or summons, leaving 98 offences of all descriptions unaccounted for, the average undetected being about 3.5 per cent.

With the exception of the three constables who were dismissed the conduct of the men has been good, and they have shown a keen interest in the discharge of their duties.

I regret that I have to report the commission of a most serious crime. On the 28th December last a triple murder was committed at Ruahine on a settler named James McCann and his wife and infant child by a German named Arthur Rottman, who has since been tried and convicted, and has paid the penalty.