

some years. There were no serious crimes calling for special mention during the year, and the almost entire absence of sexual offences is worthy of notice.

The conduct of the members of the Force of all ranks, with a few exceptions, has been very good. The detective and uniform branches cordially co-operated in the discharge of their duties, with the result that the work has been satisfactorily performed and very few serious offences undetected. The majority of the constables stationed in the city are young men who were placed upon street duty without any preliminary training, and in the circumstances the most of them have done remarkably well. No doubt a term in the training-depot would greatly improve them in every way, but especially in appearance and discipline. Some of them appear to find it difficult to decide whether to remain in the service or not, as is evidenced by the fact that they tendered their resignations and withdrew them shortly afterwards. This is probably due to the increased cost of living and the fact that they could obtain higher wages outside the Force. Dissatisfaction with the rate of pay, however, is not confined to the new hands, but extends to all ranks, and, in my opinion, if the essential efficiency of the Force is to be maintained, increased pay all round is absolutely necessary.

I suggest that section 123 of the Legislature Act, 1908, be amended so as to provide a penalty for selling intoxicating liquors in licensed premises between the hours of 12 noon and 7 p.m. on the day on which an election takes place within the district where such licensed premises are situated. The section quoted declares that it shall not be lawful to sell intoxicating liquors in licensed premises between the hours mentioned on any day on which an election takes place, but provides no penalty. The penalty fixed by the Licensing Act only applies to elections held under the provisions of that Act, so that unless a licensing election takes place on the same day as an election under the Legislature Act no penalty can be imposed.

INSPECTOR FOUHY, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in the Invercargill District on the 31st March, 1920, was as follows: 1 Inspector, 1 Senior Sergeant, 4 sergeants, 34 constables, and 1 Senior Detective. The authorized strength of the district is not sufficient to cope with the work, 3 more constables being required.

The police-station at Gladstone has been transferred to Waikiwi, where the Department has purchased a very suitable station.

A new station is required at Tuatapere, where the population is fast increasing, caused by the large number of new settlers in the district and by the hydro-electric works to be erected at Lake Monowai, the route to which is already under construction, via Tuatapere.

The total number of offences reported during the year ended 31st December, 1919, was 837, as against 564 for the year 1918. The principal increases were—Theft, 46; theft from dwellings, 8; housebreaking, 14; drunkenness, 36; default of maintenance, 27; failing to maintain wife, &c., 26. Of the total number of offences reported nearly 98 per cent. have been accounted for by arrest or summons.

The conduct of the men on the whole has been good, only two having been punished.

During the year 3 constables resigned and 1 retired on superannuation.

Many of the constables at this station are recruits. An instruction class is conducted by the Senior Sergeant as often as circumstances permit—usually once a week—with good effect.

Owing to the difficulty in procuring houses for members on transfer the Department would be well advised to procure as many dwellings as possible—at least for the officer in charge and the sergeant and detective in charge of their respective branches.

A fair number of recruits are offering lately, but many of them have to be turned down as unsuitable. It is a noticeable fact that in stature and other physical dimensions they are not up to the standard of the older members of the service.

Too much work continues to be pressed by other Departments on to the police almost as a matter of right, and sometimes without even asking for the authority of the head of this Department. It has come to such a pass now that some of the other Government Departments look upon the police as their servants, and address correspondence to them accordingly, wanting interim reports, &c. This has a bad effect upon the police, who see some other Departments, whose officers have more time on their hands than the police, pass on work to the police which they could easily attend to themselves, and this very often when the police are short-handed. If life, limb, and property are to have the protection intended, fully three-fourths of the extraneous work now performed by the police will have to be eliminated.

The Police Offences Amendment Act, 1919, section 3, which, shortly, makes it penal for any person to use a horse, motor, vessel, &c., without the owner's consent, broke new ground in legislation, and is giving every satisfaction.

It should be made an offence for brewers or their employees to supply liquor to youths under twenty-one years of age, and youths should be made liable if, for the purpose of obtaining liquor, they represent their age to be twenty-one years or over while they are minors.

It would assist materially the enforcement of the no-license laws if, instead of furnishing notices to the Clerk of the Court of liquor sold to be sent or taken into a no-licensed district, the vendor were required to send the notice to the police-station nearest to the residence of the purchaser or consignee.