

present staff. Christchurch Station should be increased by at least one sergeant and ten constables in order to carry out the work efficiently. Another constable is also required at Lyttelton Station. These increases were recommended by my predecessor last year.

Bealey Flat Station was closed during the year—the completion of the Otira Tunnel permitted of this being done—and the work of that station is now performed from Otira and Darfield Stations.

Leeston Station is still being worked from Southbridge. This does not make for efficiency, and I recommend that the building of a new station at Leeston be put in hand at the earliest possible moment. Leeston is an important centre, and a constable should be stationed there.

The casualties in the district during the year are as follows: One sergeant and four constables resigned, one constable retired medically unfit, and one Superintendent and one constable retired on superannuation on reaching the age-limit.

The offences reported during the year ended 31st December, 1923, numbered 3,235, compared with 3,445 in 1922, a decrease of 210.

Two cases of murder were reported during the year. In one case an old man named McKenzie was murdered by a youth named Kissell, and in the other an infant was murdered by an imbecile named Jameson. In both cases the accused persons were acquitted on the ground of insanity, and they have been ordered to be detained during His Majesty's pleasure.

The conduct of the non-commissioned officers and constables (including the Detective Branch of the Force) has been good, and all ranks have shown a commendable zeal in the efficient performance of their duties.

The district has enjoyed a fair measure of prosperity, and the population is steadily increasing.

An amendment to the Licensing Act, 1908, in the direction of prohibiting any delivery of liquor from the bar to *any* person after closing-hours would, in my opinion, be of great assistance to the police in suppressing after-hours trading.

INSPECTOR WILLIS, TIMARU DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in this district on the 31st March last was forty.

In accordance with the usual practice, a temporary station has been opened at Parcora, for the period of the killing season, at the local freezing-works, at the end of which it will be closed again.

During the year one Senior Sergeant and one sergeant retired on superannuation, one constable was discharged as medically unfit, and one constable resigned from the Force.

The number of offences reported during the year ended 31st December last was 854, as against 870 for the previous year, being a decrease of 16. The figures generally are very much the same as for the previous year, and do not call for special comment.

No crime of a serious nature was reported during the year, and I am glad to say that the whole district has been remarkably free from serious crime.

The conduct of members of the Force during the year has been satisfactory, nothing more serious than a few minor breaches of discipline having to be dealt with.

The population of the district continues to increase, and most noticeably so in Timaru and Oamaru. Notwithstanding that farmers have had rather a bad year, owing to the abnormally dry season, the district on the whole is very prosperous, and there has been no unemployment.

The several amendments of the law contained in the Justices of the Peace Amendment Act of last session have proved extremely valuable, particularly so the section which extends the jurisdiction of Stipendiary Magistrates in certain cases.

SUPERINTENDENT NORWOOD, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the Force in the district on the 31st March was 105.

No new stations were opened and no stations were closed during the year.

The casualties were—Two deaths (one Chief Detective and one constable, the latter being accidentally drowned); one detective and four constables resigned.

The total number of offences was 1,267, as against 1,196 for the previous period, an increase of 71. 1,196 cases led to prosecutions.

There have been no serious crimes in the district during the year that require special review; the staff has been fairly successful in dealing with all serious crime.

The conduct of the police during the year has been satisfactory; all ranks appear to be cordially working together in the discharge of their duties.

INSPECTOR McNAMARA, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

The present strength of the Force in the district is the same as last year, less one constable transferred, which leaves one constable in excess of authorized strength. During the year one constable resigned, and one sergeant retired.

Three additional constables for Invercargill are much needed. With the present strength only the main streets can be patrolled with regularity; other patrols are needed for the ingress and egress.

For the year 835 offences were reported, as against 751 for the preceding year, an increase of 84. Arrests or summonses followed in 805 cases, leaving only 30 cases undetected. Fifty-six males and 1 female were committed for trial during the year; 48 males were convicted, and 8 males and 1 female were acquitted. The percentage of convictions in connection with the crimes and offences reported is 96.66.

The Detective Branch has been hard pressed during the year. Another detective for the district is much needed.

No stations have been opened or closed during the year. Additions were made at Waikaia Station, and a new office was supplied at Invercargill North.

A residence is required for the Inspector at Invercargill. Police property to build one on is available. A motor-car for police use in the centre is a necessity.

The district is prosperous and growing in population.