

INSPECTOR O'HALLORAN, GREYMOUTH DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1927, the actual strength of the district of all ranks was forty-four, being one constable short of authorized strength.

One temporary constable was discharged from the service during the year.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December last shows the total number of all offences reported to be 1,159, as compared with 1,274 for the previous year, being a decrease of 115. The offences generally are much the same as last year, and do not call for special comment.

There were two serious cases of incest during the year, one offender receiving a sentence of five years, and the other a sentence of seven years.

The general conduct of members of the Force in this district has been good, and a high standard of efficiency has been maintained. One constable was fined for a minor breach of the regulations. A temporary constable was also fined, and subsequently discharged from the service.

SUPERINTENDENT EALES, CHRISTCHURCH DISTRICT.

The actual strength of the Force in this district on the 31st March, 1927, was 125.

The casualties in the district during the year were three constables and one temporary constable dismissed; seven constables resigned; one Superintendent and one detective-sergeant retired on superannuation.

The offences reported during the year ended 31st December, 1926, numbered 3,650 as compared with 3,460 in 1925, an increase of 190.

There was one murder charge, where a woman was found dead in an office attached to a blacksmith's shop under suspicious circumstances. The owner of the shop was committed for trial, but was acquitted at the Supreme Court.

Nine manslaughter charges were entered, principally the result of negligently driving motor-vehicles.

Considerable activity has been maintained to detect offences under the Gaming Act; as a result fifteen offenders were charged with unlawful betting in 1926, as against none in 1925.

Taken generally, the conduct of the members of the Force has been good. For breaches of the regulations three constables were dismissed, one temporary constable was discharged, and five constables tendered their resignations to save dismissal. Others were dealt with by fine.

INSPECTOR KEMP, TIMARU DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in this district on the 31st March last was forty, a decrease of one as compared with the previous year. One constable retired medically unfit; one was dismissed from the service, and one resigned. Five constables were fined for six breaches of regulations.

The number of offences reported during the year ended 31st December last was 651, as against 927 the previous year, being a decrease of 276.

There were two murders during the year. One was a case of a man wilfully shooting his mate. He was arrested for this offence and committed to the Supreme Court for trial. A change of venue was granted to Christchurch and the trial Judge directed the grand jury to bring in "No bill," as he thought "there was insufficient evidence at present; and if this course were adopted and further evidence came to light he could be again charged." This was done.

The second charge is that of a farmer's wife near Makikihi who while in a state of dementia drowned her infant child in a creek near to her house. Since then she has been an inmate of a mental hospital, and up to the present the Superintendent of the institution reports that her mental condition is such that she is not able to appear.

At Geraldine an incendiary caused a lot of trouble and destruction of property, but was eventually detected and convicted on two charges of arson.

The detection here of three leading bookmakers, who were each fined £100 for keeping common gaming-houses, has had a salutary effect; and although it is hard to stamp out the bookmaker as the law at present stands, it has had the effect of making him most circumspect in his operations.

The conduct of the police has been good on the whole.

SUPERINTENDENT MURRAY, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

I took charge of the district on the 29th December last, from Inspector Cameron, of Christchurch police, who was in temporary charge during the latter part of the illness of the late Superintendent W. Mathieson.

The authorized strength of the Force in the District on the 31st March, 1927, was 106 of all ranks. The casualties were two deaths (one Superintendent and one constable), six resignations (constables), two retired on superannuation (constables), and one dismissed for misconduct (constable).

The total number of offences reported during the year was 1,486, as against 1,493 for the previous year, an increase of seven; 1,334 cases led to prosecution.

The conduct of the Force in this district with a few exceptions has been good, and the duties satisfactorily performed.

INSPECTOR BIRD, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in this district on the 31st March last was forty-seven. Four constables resigned voluntarily during the year.

The total number of offences reported during the year ended 31st December, 1926, was 964, as against 1,035 for the previous year, being a decrease of seventy-one. There has been no serious crime.

The conduct of all ranks, with few exceptions, has been satisfactory. One senior sergeant and two constables were fined for breaches of regulations.