

principal increase has been in respect to charges of theft, breaches of the peace, intimidation to restrict lawful acts, and selling or supplying liquor at unauthorized times. The other offences do not call for any special comment.

The completion of road, and stoppage of railway-construction works, had the effect of causing a cessation of the floating population in the district, hence the decrease of crime during the year.

The increase in reference to breaches of the peace and intimidation to restrict lawful acts was due to the industrial trouble which had taken place on coalfields during the past year.

Two serious crimes were committed in the district during the year; the first being that of a married woman who attempted to murder her infant daughter by cutting her throat with a razor. The woman was undoubtedly insane when she committed the crime, her mental condition grew worse, and when the charge was called on in the Supreme Court, the Crown entered a "*nolle prosequi*," the woman having been committed to a mental hospital. The second serious crime was that of a married woman who murdered her husband by shooting him with a rifle. The husband was of drunken habits, neglected his wife and children, and also had been in the habit of brutally assaulting his wife. The children were so neglected that they were removed from the custody of the parents by the Child Welfare Department. The loss of the children and the treatment meted out to her by the husband preyed on her mind, with the result that she committed the crime in question. A jury in the Supreme Court found the woman not guilty in respect to her alleged crime, on the grounds of insanity, and she was committed to a mental hospital.

The general conduct of the members of the Force in the district has been good, and the duties satisfactorily performed. There was only one defaulter.

SUPERINTENDENT EALES, CHRISTCHURCH DISTRICT.

Consequent on the cessation of work at the railway-works at Parnassus, the police-station there was closed on the 30th November, 1931.

The total number of offences reported during the year ended 31st December, 1931, was 4,705, as against 4,217 in 1930. Proceedings were taken against 3,746 persons, convictions being recorded against 3,470, and 276 cases being dismissed. One charge of attempted murder was preferred in the case of a demented woman, who tried to drown her child. Increases are shown in thefts, house-breaking, and unlawfully using motor-cars. Drunkenness shows a decrease. The increase in cases of dishonesty was probably due to the large number of unemployed, who are undoubtedly in very poor circumstances, and the decrease in drunkenness may be attributed to the same cause.

The conduct of members of the Force of all ranks has been exceptionally good. Very few cases of indiscipline were reported, and every man has given his mind to his work, which has at times been very trying.

INSPECTOR BIRD, TIMARU DISTRICT.

The total number of offences during the year was 973, being a decrease of 124. The principal increases being false accounting by officials or public officers, mischief, breaches of the peace, obscene language, and breaches of Arms Act. Decreases: Shopbreaking, drunkenness, and negligent driving of motor-vehicles.

The only serious crime during the year was the murder of a young woman at Arundel, by a man who committed suicide shortly after the murder, jealousy being the motive.

The conduct of the members of the Force in this district has been good, only two constables being dealt with for breaches of police regulations.

SUPERINTENDENT ECCLES, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

The total number of offences reported for the year ending 31st December, 1931, was 1,881, as compared with 1,723 reported for the previous year, showing an increase for the year of 158½ offences. Of the offences reported there were 1,718 prosecutions, resulting in 1,669 convictions. The principal increases were assault, theft, false pretences, house and shop breaking, unlawfully using motor-vehicles, and found on licensed premises during prohibited hours. The decreases consisted of mischief, drunkenness, and vagrancy. I consider that the increase in the number of offences reported is due to the large number of unemployed and the financial depression during the year.

Two men were sentenced in the Supreme Court, Dunedin, on the 18th June, 1931, the principal offender to five years hard labour and one year reformatory detention, and the other offender to three years hard labour, for assault with intent to rob an old resident of Dunedin, on the 11th May, 1931. The principal offender was also sentenced to the same term (concurrent) for doing actual bodily harm to the victim's wife. In the offences referred to all the stolen jewellery was recovered. The principal offender referred to in the previous case was also associated with another criminal and they were sentenced to four years hard labour and three and a half years hard labour respectively for breaking and entering and theft of jewellery valued at £3,000 on the 24th January, 1931, in daylight. It was a very daring robbery, and only £150 worth of jewellery has been recovered. The principal offender mentioned was also sentenced to four years hard labour (concurrent) for three other serious charges of breaking and entering and theft. These are the only cases of serious crime committed in this district during the year.

One sergeant and seven constables were fined for breaches of the police regulations, and one constable resigned compulsorily for misconduct during the year; but the conduct of the members of the Force on the whole has been good, and both branches of the service have been working in the greatest of harmony.