

INSPECTOR SHANAHAN, TIMARU DISTRICT.

I recommend that a station be opened at Saltwater Creek, which is at the south end of the town. A recommendation to this effect was made in the annual report for last year. I consider that a station at Saltwater Creek is warranted.

The total number of offences reported during the year was 679, as against 813 for the previous year, being a decrease of 134. The principal decreases were carnal knowledge, forgery, mischief, thefts, robbery, and offences against morality.

There were increases in false pretences, house or shop breaking, damage to telegraph equipment, reckless or negligent driving, opium-smoking, and vagrancy.

A man who murdered his father at Pleasant Valley appeared before the Supreme Court at Timaru on the 16th October, 1935, and, after medical evidence to the effect that accused was too insane to plead, he was committed to a mental hospital.

A young man attempted to murder a woman at Tapui on the 11th August, 1935. The accused appeared before the Supreme Court at Dunedin, and, after medical evidence as to his mental condition, the jury returned a verdict of "Not guilty, on grounds of insanity."

A married woman at Oamaru admitted administering veronal to herself and children for the purpose of murder and suicide. One child, the baby, died. She was subsequently tried for murder at the Supreme Court, Dunedin, but was acquitted on the grounds of insanity, and ordered to be detained in a mental hospital.

The general conduct of the members of the Force has been good, and their duties have been satisfactorily performed.

I recommend that three extra constables be provided for this district—viz., one at Timaru, one at Oamaru, and one at the proposed station at Saltwater Creek. I consider the extra requirements essential to meet contingencies such as leave, sickness, &c.

SUPERINTENDENT CAMERON, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

The authorized strength of the Force has not been increased during the year.

An increase of two sergeants and six constables is required. The vacancy caused by the reduction of one sergeant to the rank of constable has not been filled, and another sergeant is required for relieving duties when sickness or annual leave occurs. Of the six constables required, one is in addition to the Force at Mosgiel, the population in this sub-district having considerably increased, and there is too much work for the one constable stationed there. He acts as Clerk of Court, and since the adjacent Court has been closed at Outram the work of the latter place is now transacted at Mosgiel.

An additional constable is required at North-east Valley station. At present there is only one constable stationed there. The population has greatly increased, and there are public gardens and several recreation-grounds which require police attention. The motor traffic on the main north highway passes through this sub-district, and is steadily increasing. Four additional constables are required at the Central Station in order that each night-duty beat may be patrolled by one constable, which cannot be accomplished by the present strength.

The annual offences return for the year ending 31st December, 1935, discloses that 2,882 offences were reported, as against 2,324 for the previous year, being an increase of 558 cases. Of the number of offences reported, 2,765 persons were arrested or charged on summons, leaving 117 undetected offences.

Of those charged, 45 males were committed for trial and 36 were convicted.

No serious crimes were committed during the year.

Increases occurred in the following offences: Theft (undescribed), false pretences, house and shop breaking, receiving property dishonestly obtained, drunkenness, failing to maintain wife and children, and breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

There were decreases in the following: Forgery, mischief, and assaulting, obstructing, or resisting constables.

The fascination of driving a motor-car, higher-powered cars, fast driving, and the increased number of vehicles on the roads largely contribute to the number of offences under the Motor-vehicles Act.

The general conduct of the police during the past twelve months has been good, all members taking a keen interest in their respective duties, which have been satisfactorily performed.

During the year one sergeant was convicted for breach of the regulations and reduced to the rank of constable. One constable was convicted and fined for breach of the regulations.

INSPECTOR GIBSON, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

The total strength is one sergeant less than on 31st March, 1935, caused by the transfer of the sergeant from Bluff, as it was considered that the work there could be carried out quite satisfactorily by two constables.

The offences return for the year shows a total of 1,156 offences reported. This is a decrease of 161 on the figures for the previous year.

The principal decreases are thefts (common), forgery, and breaches of provisions of Destitute Persons Act.

The principal increases are sheep-stealing and breaches of Motor-vehicles Act.

There was no really serious crime reported in the district during the year.

The conduct of the members of the Force during the year was good. None were punished, but one constable was asked to resign because he was not competent and failed to improve.

I would recommend that section 80 of the Stock Act, 1908, be amended to give power to a Superintendent or an Inspector of Police to lay informations for breaches of the Act in cases where he is of the opinion such informations should be laid.