

in the cases of intoxicated motor-drivers can be accounted for by the increased number of drivers. The decrease in Sunday trading is probably due to the fact that so many traders realized that heavy fines quickly reduced their profits.

During the year one person was charged with the murder of his aged father. The offender was a mental defective, and is now detained in a mental hospital. In several cases under the Motor-vehicles Act of causing death, there was evidence of the drivers having taken intoxicating liquor.

Recently on a Sunday evening the detectives were patrolling in search of warehouse-breakers and came upon two men under suspicious circumstances. As the detectives approached the men the latter ran away in opposite directions. When pursued by the officers one of the men fired a rifle at his pursuers, and both men escaped arrest, and so far have not been traced.

On the 4th of October a married woman residing with her husband in a public-works hutment at Claverley mysteriously disappeared about 8.30 p.m. Her husband did not report her disappearance to the police, and it only came to their knowledge nearly three weeks later. Claverley is on the seashore, about twenty miles south from Kaikoura. The missing woman did not take any clothing with her. Inquiries have been made from her relatives and friends. The seashore has been searched from Clarence River to Akaroa, and a very close search has been made inland, by a large body of police, but no trace has been found of the missing woman or her remains.

The conduct of the members of the Force on the whole has been good. Four constables were dealt with for breaches of Police Regulations; of these, one was dismissed, and the remainder were fined.

The great majority of the men take a keen interest in their work, and the lectures delivered by experts on finger-prints and firearms have been much appreciated.

The vigilance of some of the young constables on night duty has been rewarded by the capture of several shop-breakers.

The office staffs and inquiry men have carried out their duties efficiently, and the Detective Branch have retained their efficiency and have been responsible for some very creditable work.

INSPECTOR SHANAHAN, TIMARU DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in the district on the 31st March, 1939, was forty-five, being two under the authorized strength.

An increase of one constable at Timaru and one at Oamaru is still required in order to satisfactorily carry out ordinary beat duty, relieving duty, &c. The appointment of a detective-sergeant is again recommended for duty at Oamaru.

The total number of offences reported for the year ended 31st December, 1938, was 856 as compared with 733 for the previous year, an increase of 123. Arrests or summonses resulted in 735 cases. The principal increases were in respect of assault, theft from dwellings, obtaining credit by fraud, house or shop breaking, drunkenness, breaches of the Arms Act, and breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act. The most notable decreases were assault with intent to commit a crime, false pretences, breach of the peace, using profane, indecent, or obscene language, damaging telegraph equipment, offences against provisions in force in no-license districts, being intoxicated in charge of a motor-vehicle, and reckless or negligent driving.

The district has been free from crime of a serious nature during the year.

The general conduct of the police in this district during the year has been very good and their duties have been performed in a satisfactory manner. There were no defaulters.

SUPERINTENDENT RAWLE, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

On the 31st March, 1939, the actual strength for the district was 118.

The actual further increase required to enable the duties to be satisfactorily carried out in this district is twelve men.

To man the beats and provide relief for annual and weekly leave and sickness seven men are required—three men for a new beat to include the wharves, oil and other stores, in Dunedin, which is very necessary; for assistance at Alexandra and in the Detective Office two further men are required.

It is anticipated that St. Bathans and Ophir Stations will be closed and new stations at Oturehua and Omakau will be opened this year.

The annual offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1938, disclosed that 2,963 offences were reported, as against 2,892 for the previous year, being an increase of 71 offences.

Of the number reported, 2,871 persons were arrested or summoned, leaving 92 undetected offences. Of those charged, 68 persons were committed for trial or sentence, and of these 61 persons were convicted.

The principal increases included the following: Assault, theft, mischief, causing death or bodily injury through reckless driving, and other breaches of Motor-vehicles Act.

Decreases included false statements and declarations, drunkenness, obscene language, selling liquor at unauthorized times, found on licensed premises, sly-grog selling, and reckless or negligent driving.

A disquieting feature for the year 1938 is the increase of juvenile crime, which rose to 118 for the quarter ended December, 1938, as against 44 for the same period in 1937; the figures for 1937 were 165, whilst those for 1938 rose to 281. The increase, in my opinion, is due to the lack of fear of the consequences of their acts, and to the greater liberty allowed children from ten up to seventeen years by their parents.