

At Ohura a constable will also be wanted, as that is the centre of fine country which is coming in fast: it is at present worked from Ongarue, but it is too far (thirty-one miles) from that station to receive the attention it deserves.

There have been no stations opened or closed during the year.

The only casualties since last report were two constables resigned.

The offences return for 1913 shows that 1,707 offences were reported, as against 1,775 the previous year—a net decrease of 68. Decreases are shown under the following heads: Abusive language and behaviour, 59; assaults, 45; burglary, housebreaking, &c., 22; failing to provide maintenance, 36; forgery, 18; gaming offences, 11; theft, 12; theft of cattle and horses, 12. Increases appear under—Breaches of the peace, 14; drunkenness, 222; mischief, 19; obscene language, 12: so that on the whole there has been an increase of drunkenness and trivial offences and a decrease of serious offences. The increase in drunkenness is not confined to any particular locality, it being spread all over the district, but the greatest increase is shown in the King-country, where a large amount of casual labour has been employed during the year. The fact that the Force in that district has been increased during the year has probably something to do with the large number of arrests. Sly-grog sellers have been more active than during the previous year, and the police have been correspondingly alert, with the result that fines were inflicted amounting to £536, as compared with £170 last year. Of the total number of offences reported (1,707), 1,664 were accounted for either by arrest or summons. The total number of persons committed for trial at the Supreme Court was 57, of whom 45 were convicted.

There have been no serious crimes in the district during the year that require special mention; in fact, crime, on the whole, has decreased, as compared with the previous year.

The conduct of all members of the Force has been exemplary during the year. All have worked well together, and when called upon for extra duty have willingly responded, especially during the strike time, when every available man was employed on that duty, which threw double the usual work on those left at the different stations.

The new scale of pay will, I have no doubt, have an excellent effect upon the discipline of the Force. As it now compares favourably with the earnings of other workers, it will also undoubtedly induce many men to apply who would not have otherwise looked at the Force as a permanent career, and so the selection of candidates will not be so restricted, and a better Force will result.

INSPECTOR NORWOOD, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

I beg to submit the following report for the year ending 31st March, 1914:—

On the 31st March, 1914, the authorized strength was 40 of all ranks, as follows: 1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 3 sergeants, 32 constables, 1 detective sergeant, 1 acting-detective, 1 district constable.

No new stations have been opened or closed during the year.

The formation of a police-station at Tokonui is required; this has been referred to in previous reports.

New stations have been erected at Mataura and Tapanui, and extensive repairs, &c., to the stations at Queenstown, Pembroke, and Lumsden.

One constable was dismissed for continually performing his duties in an unsatisfactory manner, 1 died, and 1 constable obtained three months' leave prior to retiring on pension owing to having reached the age-limit. A senior sergeant was appointed to Invercargill to replace a sergeant transferred.

During the year ended 31st December, 1913, 903 offences were reported, as against 713 the previous year—an increase of 190 cases. Of the 903 cases reported, 863 were arrested or dealt with by summons, and 40 offences remained undetected. The increases are principally under the following headings: Offences under Animals Protection Act, 13; disobeying orders of Court, 43; drunkenness, 46; failing to provide for relatives, 29; Fisheries Act, breaches of, 11; malicious injury to property, 28; theft, 20. The principal decrease is 22, under the heading burglary, breaking and entering. Thirty-four cases were committed for trial, resulting in 26 convictions.

The district has been free from crime of a serious kind, and in the cases of breaking and entering reported juveniles have been the offenders in the majority of the cases. I attribute the falling-off of this class of offence to the fact of a more vigorous punishment by committals to industrial schools having been applied by the Court.

The conduct of all ranks, with one exception, has been satisfactory. Both the detective and uniform branches of the service have assiduously carried out their duties. The first named have been untiring in their efforts to detect crime, and in this they have been very successful.

In view of the large increase of motor traffic at night, I strongly suggest that it be made a statutory offence for any class of vehicle to be driven on the public road after sunset without a light. Section 7, Motor Regulations Act, 1908, compels a motorist to carry lights on car or motor-cycle, but there is no provision for any other class of vehicle when driven outside boroughs at night. This constitutes a serious source of danger.

The increase of pay and other privileges to all ranks of the service have given very great satisfaction. An improved class of candidate is now coming forward for enrolment, attracted no doubt by the improved condition of the service.

INSPECTOR PHAIR, GREYMOUTH DISTRICT.

I have the honour to furnish herewith a report upon the Greymouth Police District for the year ending 31st March, 1914.

The strength of the Force in this district on 31st March last was—1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 37 constables, and 1 detective sergeant; a total of 44, being the full strength allowed for this district.