

INSPECTOR NORWOOD, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

I beg to submit the following report for the year ended the 31st March, 1915 :—

On that date the authorized strength of all ranks was as follows : 1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 3 sergeants, 34 constables, and 1 detective-sergeant.

A constable has been placed at Half-moon Bay in lieu of a district constable. No other alteration has taken place in opening or closing of stations. A dwellinghouse has been purchased at Nightcaps for use as a police-station, where a house was formerly rented. Extensive repairs were carried out to the station at Riverton, and increased accommodation provided at Bluff.

New buildings are required at Gladstone, North Invercargill, and Orepuki.

One constable was retired on pension, and the services of a district constable were dispensed with.

During the year ended the 31st December, 1914, 1,013 offences were reported, as against 903 in the preceding year and 713 in 1913, being an increase of 110 for last year. Of the 1,013 offences reported 974 arrests or summonses resulted. The increases are under the following headings : Abusive and threatening language, &c., 8 ; assaults (indecent), 5 ; assault and robbery, 2 ; burglary, breaking and entering, 14 ; disorderly conduct, 10 ; disturbing meetings, 11 ; drunkenness, 60 ; neglected and criminal children, 16 ; theft (undescribed), 16 ; theft from dwellings, 16. Fifty-five cases were committed for trial, resulting in 49 convictions in the Supreme Court.

Throughout the district there has been no crime of an abnormal kind.

Notwithstanding the increase of offences of the more serious class the members of the Force have, by assiduous attention to duty, successfully coped with the work, the criminal statistics showing only 39 undetected offences out of a total of 1,013.

The conduct of the men has been very satisfactory, and only in one instance has a fine been inflicted for a minor breach of the regulations.

An additional constable is required at Invercargill. Constables are frequently absent on leave of absence, sick, or on escort duty, which at times diminishes my limited staff to such an extent that there are insufficient men to properly carry out the duties at the central station.