

The law empowering the police to enter without warrant, by day or by night, any premises where sly-grog is suspected of being carried on, and to seize all liquor found therein, has proved most helpful to the police, and has to a great extent done away with the sly-grog selling in this district.

The police in this district have during the year paid every attention to the enforcement of the gaming laws.

#### SUPERINTENDENT WRIGHT, DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

The authorized strength on the 31st March, 1918, was—1 Superintendent, 1 Sub-Inspector, 2 senior sergeants, 11 sergeants, 86 constables, 1 Chief Detective, 2 detective-sergeants, 2 detectives; total, 106. The only increase on last year's strength was that of 1 matron. I recommend an increase of 1 constable at the Central Station, Dunedin, to enable the administration of the gaol to be carried out without stripping a beat.

No new buildings have been provided during the year, and owing to the strict economy exercised no repairs beyond those urgently required have been effected. Money is very badly needed in this district for purchase of stations and repairs, but the expenditure can stand over for the present.

During the year 4 constables resigned to join the Expeditionary Forces.

The offence return for 1917 shows that 1,784 offences were reported, as compared with 2,319 in 1916, a net decrease of 535 offences. This decrease is chiefly accounted for under the headings of—Assaults, 41; breaches of the peace, 17; disobeying orders of Court, 91; disorderly conduct, 18; drunkenness, 261; escaping from custody, 16; failing to maintain, 21; obstructing and resisting police, 34; thefts, 22; and thefts from dwellings, 12. There have been increases under the headings of—Burglary, 6; carnally knowing girls, 5; false pretences, 9; gaming offences, 24; obscene language, 10; but these do not exceed the usual fluctuations experienced from year to year, and call for no remark. Of the total number of offences reported, nearly 97 per cent. have been accounted for either by arrest or summons. Of the 76 persons committed for trial, 69 were subsequently convicted at the Supreme Court.

There were 9 prosecutions for sly-grog selling, resulting in convictions and fines amounting to £200, as compared with 7 prosecutions during the previous year and £41 12s. in fines.

No crimes of such a serious nature as to require comment have been committed during the year, and the district has been very orderly.

The conduct of the police has been good, and all have shown a zeal in the performance of their duties. War work continues to increase, and it is astonishing the amount of work that is entailed. Were it not for the decrease in what may be termed police work proper the depleted staff would not have been able to cope with the inquiries which are daily undertaken for nearly every branch of the military organization.

During the year an assistant matron was appointed, and this has enabled the matron and her assistant to devote considerable time to outside matters, such as visiting railway-station, picture-theatres, parks, and other places where girls frequent, with the view of their protection.

Temporary constables are now doing duty in Dunedin, and, considering their want of training, are giving satisfaction.

#### INSPECTOR FOUHY, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in the district on the 31st March, 1918, was as follows: 1 Inspector, 1 senior sergeant, 4 sergeants, 1 detective-sergeant, and 34 constables, a total of 41 of all ranks.

At Invercargill station two more constables are required to cope with the work properly. There are just enough men here to work the station when full-handed, but I am always short-handed when men have to go relieving constables on leave, or sick, or have to go on escort duty. Then, the natural expansion of the town requires greater police protection. Wyndham district is too large to be satisfactorily worked by one man, and I have already recommended that a constable should be stationed at Tokonui.

During the year 1 constable retired from the service on superannuation.

The total number of offences reported for 1917 was 557, as against 735 for 1916. There have been increases in the following class of offences: Common assault, 9; disobeying orders of Court, 20; obscene language, 5; theft by servants, 10. There has been a substantial decrease in the following: Burglary, 17; drunkenness, 87; failing to provide maintenance for wives, &c., 24; false pretences, 11; mischief, 10; theft undescribed, 11; theft from dwellings, 11.

The conduct of all branches of the Force in this district has, on the whole, been good.

Great difficulty is experienced in effectually enforcing the anti-treating clauses of the War Regulations. Though the police in this district obtained numerous convictions during the year, and have had some substantial fines imposed, as well as one license endorsed, and another cancelled, for breaches of the anti-treating regulations and the licensing statutes, there is no doubt that the anti-treating clauses are still persistently disregarded. This is principally on account of adherence to an old custom, to the ease with which treating is effected, and to the corresponding difficulty of detection. On the whole, however, there has been a considerable decrease in the quantity of liquor consumed during the year, and in drunkenness and cognate offences. This is due to the number of men absent on active service, but more particularly to the limitation of the statutory hours for the sale of liquor, legislation which can be and is being strictly enforced.