

Of the number of offences reported, 2,774 persons were arrested or summoned, leaving 118 undetected offences.

Of those charged, 68 persons were committed for trial or sentence, and, of these, 53 persons were convicted of the offences with which they were charged.

Male persons numbering 2,496 and females numbering 73 were summarily convicted, while cases against 132 males and 5 females were dismissed.

Increases were included in the following offences: False statements and declarations, false pretences, receiving property dishonestly obtained, selling or exposing liquor at unauthorized times, found on licensed premises after closing-hours, selling liquor without a license, and intoxicated while in charge of a motor-vehicle.

Decreases were included in the following: Theft, theft from dwellings, house or shop breaking, mischief, drunkenness, vagrancy, unlawfully using horses, motor-cars, &c., failing to maintain wives or children, reckless or negligent driving, and other breaches of the Motor-vehicles Act.

One person was charged with murder, and was acquitted on the ground of insanity. He shot his wife at Otokia, and then attempted suicide by shooting himself. He was subsequently committed to the Seacliff Mental Hospital. Two persons were charged with offences in connection with procuring abortion. Both were convicted.

The increase of cases of false statements and declarations is due to prosecutions in connection with persons obtaining excess of sustenance and relief money through the Employment Promotion Act.

The increase in the number of cases for false pretences is due, in part, to offences under the Employment Promotion Act being dealt with as false pretences under the Justices of the Peace Act.

In reference to breaches of the Licensing Act, these increases are no doubt due to more prosperous times, when people apparently have more money to spend on liquor.

The increases in the number of cases of persons for being found intoxicated while in charge of motor-vehicles is the result of more prosperous times, when there is probably an increase in the number of motor-vehicles in use, and also to more stringent action being exercised in order to curb this type of offender.

In connection with the decreases in the number of offences of thefts, thefts from dwellings, and house and shop breaking, it would be reasonable to assume that the lessening of this type of offence can also be attributed to more prosperous times, and, with the provision of more employment, there are less persons of the vagrant class in the district; also, the smaller class of theft is not reported as is the case when times are bad.

The decrease of the motor-vehicle prosecutions is no doubt due to the general tightening of the regulations, providing for stricter supervision of motor-vehicles generally.

The general conduct of the police during the year has been good, all members taking a keen interest in their duties, which have been satisfactorily performed, the duties of the Detective Branch being particularly well carried out.

Three constables were dealt with during the year for breaches of the regulations—one constable was dismissed and fines inflicted in the other two cases.

During the year arrangements were made in the District Office for the introduction of a loose-leaf recording-system for many of the individual records pertaining to routine matter, with a view of reducing the number of books that had previously been kept for that purpose. A system has also been introduced whereby at the expiration of every six months the staff change duties in rotation, in order that each will gain an all-round knowledge of the requirements to fit him for clerical duty in any capacity should he be required.

The result has been an all-round improvement and makes for higher efficiency in that branch.

During the year the Chief Detective had a copy of an index of criminal and licensing law reports which he has compiled during the past fifteen years run off on the cyclostyle and issued to members of the police at Dunedin. It was later brought under the notice of the Commissioner of Police, who approved of it being circulated to any member of the Force desiring a copy. The publication is now complete, and the copies have been forwarded to the applicants.

On the 15th July, 1937, Doctor William Evans tendered his resignation as Police Surgeon, a post he had held for the past twenty-four years, and in doing so handed the Superintendent a cheque for £200 for the purpose of establishing a library at the Central Police Station. The doctor expressed a wish that the library should be stocked with works on law, which would be useful to the men in furthering their professional knowledge. The selection of suitable books for the library was vested in a committee consisting of the Superintendent, Inspector, and Chief Detective. The library is now well established.

#### INSPECTOR GIBSON, INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

The strength of the Force in this district on 31st March, 1938, totalled fifty-two, an increase of three constables, caused by the introduction of the 48-hour week now being worked at this station.

I again recommend an increase of one constable at Gore Station to efficiently provide for the working of the 48-hour week and also for relieving duty during annual leave, &c., of constables at country stations attached to the Gore sub-district.

The offences return for the year ended 31st December, 1937, discloses a total of 1,114 offences reported, this being a decrease of nineteen compared with the previous year. The principal decrease was in respect of persons found unlawfully on licensed premises. There was an increase in theft and assaults. Of the total of 1,114 offences reported, 1,049 were dealt with by arrest or summons.

No serious crime occurred during the year.

The general conduct of members of the Force during the year has been good. Two constables were fined for breaches of the regulations.