

During the year the finger-prints of 931 previously convicted prisoners were received for registration, and of these 178 offenders whose antecedents were unknown to the police of the districts in which they were in custody were identified solely by means of their finger-impressions, showing an increase of 30 over last year.

The following table shows the increase of the finger-print collection, and prisoners traced thereby, since the introduction of the finger-print system of identification in March, 1903 :—

Year.	Number of Prints in Collection.	Increase on Previous Year.	Prisoners traced as Previous Offenders.
1904	3,500	3,500	117
1905	4,200	700	72
1906	5,000	800	88
1907	6,151	1,151	104
1908	7,622	1,471	123
1909	8,718	1,096	138
1910	9,919	1,201	140
1911	10,905	986	148
1912	12,097	1,192	178

Finger-prints of persons in custody here have been identified in Holland, England, and the Australian Commonwealth as those of persons previously convicted in those places, while prints of persons in custody in the various States of Australia have been identified here as those of persons previously convicted in New Zealand, and constant correspondence regarding the antecedents of offenders is maintained with the police throughout the British Empire and in European and American countries.

During the year several instances of finger-print identifications resulting in detections of considerable import were recorded. In August last a case occurred which aptly illustrates the value of the finger-print system as a detective agency: A set of almost indecipherable finger-impressions of a prisoner who was undergoing a short sentence for a minor offence was received for registration, and careful search in the filed collection of prints disclosed his identity with a man of different name who had been wanted on warrant for a period of upwards of five years, and who had successfully evaded the efforts of the general police to trace him. Following on this identification he was brought to justice and sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

Within the year the photographs of 2,168 prisoners were dealt with, and 818 photographs were taken for general police purposes by the photographer at headquarters—an increase of 165 over the preceding year—at a cost of 2½d. each.

The complete criminal histories of 2,111 finger-printed offenders are now recorded in official registers which admit of immediate reference, the *Police Gazette* has been brought into closer association with the work of criminal registration, the increased requirements of this section have received due attention, and the result has been profitable to the Department generally.

CANDIDATES FOR FORCE.

One hundred and three men were taken on during the year, their nationalities, religions, and occupations being as follows :—Nationalities : Australia, 8 ; England, 20 ; Ireland, 17 ; New Zealand, 41 ; Scotland, 17. Religions : Baptist, 1 ; Brethren, 1 ; Church of England, 36 ; Methodist, 3 ; Presbyterians, 28 ; Roman Catholics, 29 ; Wesleyans, 5. Occupations : Artillerymen, 3 ; asylum attendants, 2 ; blacksmiths, 2 ; butchers, 3 ; carpenter, 1 ; clerks, 2 ; commission agent, 1 ; contractor, 1 ; dredge hand, 1 ; drapers, 2 ; engine-drivers, 4 ; ex-constables, 35 ; farm labourers, 8 ; fitter, 1 ; fruiterer, 1 ; grocer, 1 ; labourers, 24 ; miners, 2 ; ploughman, 1 ; sawmill hand, 1 ; seaman, 1 ; shepherds, 2 ; shop-assistant, 1 ; storeman, 1 ; tramway inspector, 1 ; tramway motor-man, 1.

FIRST AID TO THE INJURED.

During the year ended March, 1912, 74 probationers presented themselves, at the conclusion of their course of training at the depot, for examination in "first aid to the injured," the examinations being held under the auspices of the St. John Ambulance Association.

Of the 74 men who sat, all passed.

The maximum number of marks was gained in two cases, the average of those who passed being 82·71. (Maximum, 100 ; bare pass, 50.)

The lecturer was in each case Dr. Henry, Police Surgeon, and the examiners different medical men appointed by the Association.

STATIONS, ETC.

During the year the following works have been carried out :—

New Buildings erected.

Wellsford.	Napier (Inspector's residence).	Blackwater (lock-up).
Eden Terrace.	Taihape (constable's residence).	Rangiora.
Parnell.	Otaki.	New Brighton.
Morrinsville (lock-up, office, &c.).	Johnsonville.	Riccarton.
Hamilton (offices and cells).	Wellington South (gymnasium, &c.).	Timaru (police-gaol).
Frankton.		South Invercargill.