

POLICE PROSECUTIONS.

The following is a return of the number of convictions for which fines were imposed and the total amount of such fines in respect of prosecutions instituted by the police during the year ended 31st March, 1931 :—

Fines payable to	Number of Convictions.	Total Amount of Fines imposed.
Consolidated Fund	12,210	£ 29,565
Main Highways Revenue Fund (section 24, Motor-vehicles Act, 1924)	5,437	10,671
Local authorities (by-law offences)	572	449
Total	18,219	40,685

CRIMINAL REGISTRATION BRANCH.

At headquarters the finger-impressions of 3,340 persons were received, classified, searched, and filed during the year; 257 persons were identified as previous offenders who, had it not been for the finger-print system, would probably have passed as first offenders; 1,316 photographs were taken by the photographers attached to the Branch; the photographs of 4,344 prisoners (6,674 photographs) were dealt with, and 624 photographs were reproduced in the *Police Gazette*.

In twenty-four cases of breaking and entering finger-prints left by the offenders when committing the crimes were identified and the offenders brought to justice. In twenty-two of these cases the offenders pleaded guilty at the Lower Court, thus saving the expense of Supreme Court trials. The most noteworthy of these were the following :—

(1) A tobacconist's premises were broken into and finger-prints found on a fanlight through which entrance had been effected. These finger-prints were later identified, and the person concerned when confronted with the fact that his finger-prints had been found on the fanlight at once admitted that he had committed the offence, and implicated an accomplice. He also admitted having committed another burglary, and indicated that others had assisted him. He was later sentenced to a term of imprisonment, while three of his confederates were also convicted and sentenced. Thus finger-prints in this case were the cause of four offenders being brought to justice and two offences cleared up.

(2) In another case a motor-car was stolen and driven to another town, where premises were broken into and goods stolen therefrom. Finger-prints found at the scene were identified, and when their owner was interviewed and informed that his finger-prints had been found he admitted the offences.

During the year the finger-print system was responsible for the identification of twenty-three persons wanted by the police, and also three deceased persons.

The work in this Branch shows a considerable increase over that for the preceding year.

The following table shows the increase in the finger-print collection 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.	Year.	Number of Prints in Collection.	Increase on Previous Year.	Prisoners traced as Previous Offenders.
1904 ..	3,500	3,500	117	1918 ..	20,982	1,474	132
1905 ..	4,200	700	72	1919 ..	22,332	1,350	153
1906 ..	5,000	800	88	1920 ..	23,686	1,354	176
1907 ..	6,151	1,151	104	1921 ..	26,650	2,964	232
1908 ..	7,622	1,471	123	1922 ..	28,408	1,758	255
1909 ..	8,718	1,096	138	1923 ..	30,284	1,876	292
1910 ..	9,919	1,201	140	1924 ..	31,929	1,645	289
1911 ..	10,905	986	148	1925 ..	33,802	1,873	267
1912 ..	12,097	1,192	178	1926 ..	35,844	2,042	292
1913 ..	13,552	1,455	183	1927 ..	37,808	1,964	255
1914 ..	15,302	1,750	230	1928 ..	39,409	1,601	276
1915 ..	16,682	1,380	270	1929 ..	40,852	1,443	208
1916 ..	18,134	1,452	218	1930 ..	42,371	1,519	239
1917 ..	19,508	1,374	166	1931 ..	43,973	1,602	257

The section of the Criminal Registration Branch at Auckland, which was established in June, 1928, reports that the finger-impressions of 878 persons were received, classified, searched, card-indexed, and filed during the year, and of this number 170 were taken at that office. Eleven persons were identified as previous offenders. The finger-print collection now totals 2,050 impressions, and 214 reconvictions have been recorded. In four cases of breaking and entering finger-prints left by offenders when committing the crimes were identified, and the offenders pleaded guilty.

The photographs of 371 prisoners were taken, and 1,722 photographs with descriptions and criminal histories were supplied to the Department; 194 miscellaneous photographs of exhibits, views of localities, &c., required in investigations and prosecutions were also supplied. The results of prosecutions and particulars of previous local criminal history were furnished in 429 cases to the Criminal Registration Branch in Wellington.