

GROWTH OF DEPARTMENT.

The following return shows the growth of the Department, the continued increase of the population, and the total number of offences (irrespective of by-law offences) reported, and in which arrests or summonses resulted, at each tenth year since 1877, prior to which date each province in the Dominion had its own Police Force. The figures for 1939 and 1940 are also shown :—

| Year. | Officers. | Non-commissioned Officers. | Detectives. | Constables. | Total. | Police to Population. | Cost per Inhabit. ant.           | Population. | Offences reported. | Offences where Arrests or Summonses resulted. | Arrests for Drunkenness (included in "Offences reported"). |
|-------|-----------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1878  | 25        | 90                         | 14          | 329         | 458    | 1 to 944              | *                                | 432,352     | 14,157             | 13,959                                        | 6,668                                                      |
| 1888  | 13        | 69                         | 17          | 388         | 487    | 1 to 1,328            | 3/13 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 646,913     | 12,897             | 11,854                                        | 5,387                                                      |
| 1898  | 7         | 56                         | 16          | 457         | 536    | 1 to 1,435            | 2/8                              | 768,910     | 16,378             | 14,730                                        | 5,532                                                      |
| 1908  | 15        | 83                         | 32          | 604         | 734    | 1 to 1,331            | 3/21 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 977,215     | 23,510             | 22,484                                        | 10,343                                                     |
| 1918  | 20        | 111                        | 38          | 732†        | 901    | 1 to 1,274            | 4/6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 1,147,391   | 19,067             | 18,043                                        | 7,228                                                      |
| 1928  | 23        | 127                        | 54          | 913†        | 1,117  | 1 to 1,301            | 5/9                              | 1,453,517   | 33,138             | 30,622                                        | 6,601                                                      |
| 1938  | 26        | 145                        | 93          | 1,164†      | 1,428  | 1 to 1,123            | 7/6                              | 1,604,479   | 44,308             | 41,618                                        | 5,446                                                      |
| 1939  | 27        | 148                        | 91          | 1,173†      | 1,439  | 1 to 1,129            | 7/5 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 1,624,714   | 46,378             | 43,162                                        | 5,935                                                      |
| 1940  | 27        | 149                        | 90          | 1,191†      | 1,457  | 1 to 1,126            | 7/8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 1,640,901   |                    |                                               |                                                            |

\* Not obtainable. † Includes temporary constables.

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, 1940 :—

| Fines payable to                                                     | Number of Convictions. | Total Amount of Fines imposed. |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Consolidated Fund .. .. .                                            | 16,498                 | £ 31,953 13 0                  |
| Main Highways Revenue Account (section 24, Motor-vehicles Act, 1924) | 7,833                  | 13,383 2 0                     |
| Local authorities (by-law offences) .. .. .                          | 265                    | 156 7 6                        |
| Total .. .. .                                                        | 24,596                 | £45,493 2 6                    |

CRIMINAL REGISTRATION BRANCH.

At Headquarters during the year the finger impressions of 3,522 persons were received, classified, indexed, and filed; 248 persons were identified as previous offenders who, had it not been for the finger-print system, would have passed as first offenders; 2,200 photographs were taken by the photographers attached to the Branch; the photographs of 3,123 prisoners (5,934 photographs) were received and dealt with; 752 photographs were reproduced in the *Police Gazette*; 16 wanted persons located; and 2 unknown deceased persons identified by finger-prints.

Finger-prints left by offenders when committing 30 crimes were identified as belonging to 24 persons, who were prosecuted. All pleaded guilty with the exception of 2, one of whom was convicted at the Supreme Court on finger-print evidence, and the other proved that his finger-print was legitimately left on the exhibit.

In one of the cases mentioned above, the offender when arrested was informed that his finger-prints had been discovered at the scene of the crime. He admitted the offence, and implicated 3 other persons, with the result that 4 offenders were convicted of fifteen crimes.

In another case, when informed of the evidence, the offender admitted the charge concerned, also eight additional offences of breaking, entering, and theft.

These cases serve to illustrate the value of the finger-print system of identification.

Finger-prints of 372 persons were received for inquiry from other countries, of which 36 were identified as those of persons previously convicted in New Zealand; the finger impressions of 111 New Zealand offenders were sent overseas for inquiry, 47 being identified as having been previously convicted outside this Dominion.

It is interesting to note that in New Zealand the finger-print system has, to date, been responsible for the identification of 7,472 persons.

In conjunction with the Arms Bureau, a number of micro-photographs of bullets, &c., were taken, with very satisfactory results in each case.

Instruction regarding the classification, filing, and searching of finger-prints, dealing with finger-print exhibits found at the scenes of crimes, our general office routine, and photography was given to two commissioned officers of the Fiji Police.