

Growth of Department.—The following return shows the growth of the Department, 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, 1940, 1941, and 1942 are also shown :—

Year.	Officers.	Non-commis- sioned 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	3/1 $\frac{3}{4}$	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	3/2 $\frac{1}{4}$	977,215	23,510	22,484	10,343
1918	20	111	38	732†	901	1 to 1,274	4/6 $\frac{1}{2}$	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 $\frac{3}{4}$	1,624,714	46,378	43,162	5,935
1940	27	149	90	1,191†	1,457	1 to 1,126	7/8 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,640,901	45,009	41,619	5,470
1941	28	155	97	1,229†	1,509	1 to 1,084	7/11 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,636,230	38,559	35,896	4,887
1942	29	159	105	1,306†	1,599	1 to 1,022	8/3 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,634,338	34,608	30,790	3,001
1943	29	175	112	1,324†	1,640	1 to 998	8/10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,636,700	..	..	..

* Not obtainable. † Includes temporary constables.

Criminal Registration Branch.—At Headquarters during the year the finger impressions of 3,736 persons were received, classified, indexed, and filed ; 174 persons were identified as previous offenders who, had it not been for the finger-print system, would have passed as first offenders ; 2,141 photographs were taken by the photographers attached to the Branch ; the photographs of 2,665 prisoners (4,112 photographs) were received and dealt with ; 528 photographs were reproduced in the *Police Gazette* ; 13 wanted persons located ; and 3 unknown deceased persons identified by finger-prints.

Finger-prints left by offenders committing 43 crimes were identified as belonging to 26 persons, all of whom were convicted.

Finger-prints of 116 persons were received for inquiry from other countries, of which 18 were identified as those of persons previously convicted in New Zealand ; the finger impressions of 43 New Zealand offenders were sent overseas for inquiry, 17 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 7,865 persons.

In conjunction with the Arms Bureau, various photographs and lecture slides were prepared.

Auckland Criminal Registration Branch.—On the 31st March, 1943, the finger-print collection in Auckland totalled 9,320 sets.

During the year 1,094 sets of finger-prints were received and were duly classified, searched, and filed.

The remanded prisoner forms with the results of the cases inserted for 475 prisoners were dealt with.

The photographs of 201 prisoners were taken, and 1,005 prints were taken from the negatives ; also numbers of photographs of scenes of crimes and motor accidents, &c., were taken, the total number of photographs produced by the Branch during the year being 1,752.

In five cases offenders who would not otherwise have been known as having been previously convicted were traced by their finger-prints, and in eleven other cases finger-prints left by offenders when committing crimes were identified and the offenders duly arrested and dealt with by the Courts.

Arms Bureau.—The work of this Bureau is being extended, especially in relation to the identification of metal objects which have been recovered by the police and which have been interfered with by filing or otherwise to disguise their ownership or origin. During the year a number of such articles, including bicycles, were dealt with, identified, and traced to their owners. In one case of wholesale theft of bicycles, this process led to a Supreme Court conviction.

Many reports in respect of firearms which caused deaths were prepared for Coroners, and evidence given in several of the cases. Accidents with firearms are common, and every possible effort is being made to improve the knowledge of sportsmen and to make shooting safer.

The firearms accident rate has risen again from 37 in 1941-42 to 52 in the past year ; of these, 16 were fatal. The average age of persons injured was slightly over 28—the oldest victim being 88 and the youngest 2 years of age.

An unusual feature of the year's accidents was the number which occurred with the service rifle—viz., 16, of which 4 were fatal. The .22 rifle accounted for 21 cases ; shotguns, 10 ; revolvers, 3 ; and odd rifles, 2.

Police Buildings, &c.—The following works in connection with police-stations were carried out during the year by the Public Works Department :—

A new station was erected at Eltham, and those at Norsewood and Havelock completed. Residences for sergeants at Feilding and Reefton and offices at New Brighton were built, and motor-garages were constructed at Kaiapoi and Karori. Sites for police-stations were acquired at Bay View (Napier) and Owaka.

Repairs, renovations, and improvements were also effected at many stations throughout the Dominion.