

GAMING OFFENCES.

There were 432 prosecutions, resulting in 393 convictions, during the year under the Gaming Act, against 467 prosecutions and 386 convictions in 1924.

Prosecutions of Bookmakers.

The following return shows the result of prosecutions in connection with bookmaking during the year ended 31st March, 1926 :—

Offence.	Number of Prosecutions.	Number of Convictions.	Amount of Fines imposed.
			£
Carrying on business of bookmaker	23	10	910
Keeping common gaming house	24	21	1,045
Found in common gaming house	20	19	39
Laying totalizator odds	14	12	180
Publishing betting-charts	20	17	185
Street betting	9	6	340
Betting with infants	1	1	10
Totals	111	86	£2,709

CRIMINAL REGISTRATION BRANCH.

The finger-impressions of 4,186 persons were received, classified, searched, and filed during the year—an increase of 1,422 over the previous year ; 292 persons were identified as previous offenders, either in this Dominion, the Australian States, or England ; 1,325 photographs were taken by the photographers attached to the branch, an increase of 260 over last year ; the photographs of 1,503 prisoners (5,964 photographs) were dealt with, and 600 photographs were reproduced in the *Police Gazette*.

In thirty-four cases of breaking and entering, finger-prints left by offenders when committing the crime were identified, which is a record. Very few, if any, of these offenders would have been charged had it not been for the finger-print system. Of the thirty-four cases mentioned only three went for trial to the Supreme Court, and each resulted in a conviction. In the remaining cases the offenders pleaded guilty, thus effecting a great financial saving to the country. The most noteworthy of the trials were : Firstly, the case of the Wellesley Club, Wellington, which was broken into and a number of silver trophies stolen. From finger-prints found on a broken glass cover to one of the silver cups the Wellington detectives were informed of the identity of the offender. He was located in Wellington and arrested with a friend of his, who admitted committing the offence. Both were convicted and sentenced. Secondly, the Commercial Hotel and Rosenfeldt and Co.'s premises, Auckland, were broken into. Within three hours of the start of the examination of the articles from the Commercial Hotel for finger-prints a telegram was on its way to the Auckland Police informing them who the offender was. On the following day another telegram was despatched saying that the same person, according to finger-prints found, was responsible for dynamiting the safe at Rosenfeldt and Co.'s premises ; he was located, and pleaded guilty to both charges at the lower Court. On another occasion a police officer brought in some articles bearing finger-prints for examination, and was informed whose prints they were before he left the office, which was within half an hour of his arrival.

The period covered by this report shows a considerable general increase in the work of this branch, especially considering the size of the finger-print collection, which is ever on the increase, therefore requiring longer and more tedious searches.

The following table shows the increase 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	1916 ..	18,134	1,452	218
1905 ..	4,200	700	72	1917 ..	19,508	1,374	166
1906 ..	5,000	800	88	1918 ..	20,982	1,474	132
1907 ..	6,151	1,151	104	1919 ..	22,332	1,350	153
1908 ..	7,622	1,471	123	1920 ..	23,686	1,354	176
1909 ..	8,718	1,096	138	1921 ..	26,650	2,964	232
1910 ..	9,919	1,201	140	1922 ..	28,408	1,758	255
1911 ..	10,905	986	148	1923 ..	30,284	1,876	292
1912 ..	12,097	1,192	178	1924 ..	31,929	1,645	289
1913 ..	13,552	1,455	183	1925 ..	33,802	1,873	267
1914 ..	15,302	1,750	230	1926 ..	35,844	2,042	292
1915 ..	16,682	1,380	270				