

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, 1935 :—

Fines payable to	Number of Convictions.	Total Amount of Fines imposed.
		£ s. d.
Consolidated Fund	10,707	22,024 12 1
Main Highways Revenue Fund (section 24, Motor-vehicles Act, 1924)	3,857	5,508 9 6
Local authorities (by-law offences)	353	188 8 0
Total	14,917	27,721 9 7

CRIMINAL REGISTRATION BRANCH.

At Headquarters the finger-impressions of 2,720 persons were received, classified, searched, indexed, and filed during the year ; 200 persons were identified as previous offenders who, had it not been for the finger-print system, would have passed as first offenders ; 1,645 photographs were taken by the photographers attached to the Branch ; the photographs of 2,815 prisoners (5,064 photographs) were dealt with, 542 photographs were reproduced in the *Police Gazette*, and 13 wanted persons located.

In twenty cases of breaking and entering, &c., finger-prints left by the offenders when committing the crimes were identified, and the offenders prosecuted. In three of these cases enlarged photographs were prepared and the necessary evidence tendered in the lower Court, but each pleaded guilty at the Supreme Court. The seventeen other offenders pleaded guilty at the lower Court.

Some cases worthy of mention are the following :—

In the Ruawaro murder case a knife was used by the offender to cut blood-stains from the rail of a fence. Notches, which corresponded with ridges showing in the knife cut at the scene of the crime, were discovered in the blade of the accused's knife ; these were microscopically photographed and the necessary evidence tendered.

In another case a dwelling was broken into and various articles stolen. The following morning a black wooden box which had apparently been handled by the offender was submitted for examination. Finger-prints were discovered on this box and a search immediately started. Later the same day the prints were traced and the detective was informed who had handled this exhibit. The offender, although unknown to the local police, was located and arrested the following day, when he admitted this and six other offences. He also implicated a second offender.

It is interesting to note that the finger-print system in New Zealand has to date been responsible for the identification of no less than 6,309 persons.

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	1920 ..	23,686	1,354	176
1905 ..	4,200	700	72	1921 ..	26,650	2,964	232
1906 ..	5,000	800	88	1922 ..	28,408	1,758	255
1907 ..	6,151	1,151	104	1923 ..	30,284	1,876	292
1908 ..	7,622	1,471	123	1924 ..	31,929	1,645	289
1909 ..	8,718	1,096	138	1925 ..	33,802	1,873	267
1910 ..	9,919	1,201	140	1926 ..	35,844	2,042	292
1911 ..	10,905	986	148	1927 ..	37,808	1,964	255
1912 ..	12,097	1,192	178	1928 ..	39,409	1,601	276
1913 ..	13,552	1,455	183	1929 ..	40,852	1,443	208
1914 ..	15,302	1,750	230	1930 ..	42,371	1,519	239
1915 ..	16,682	1,380	270	1931 ..	43,973	1,602	257
1916 ..	18,134	1,452	218	1932 ..	45,692	1,719	215
1917 ..	19,508	1,374	166	1933 ..	47,306	1,614	213
1918 ..	20,982	1,474	132	1934 ..	48,545	1,239	183
1919 ..	22,332	1,350	153	1935 ..	49,796	1,251	200