

## CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF THE FORCE.

During the year under review the conduct of senior members of the service has, on the whole, been highly satisfactory; but not so that of a number of the junior hands, who have had to be dealt with strictly for misconduct, some being discharged.

## FINGER-PRINT BRANCH.

On the 31st March last the finger-print collection consisted of the impressions of 6,151 offenders.

During the year 104 persons, claiming to be first offenders, were by means of their finger-prints identified as previously convicted persons, an increase of 16 over last year.

Finger-prints of prisoners in custody here, whose antecedents were unknown to our police, have been identified during the year at Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Sydney, and Cape Town as those of persons previously convicted in those cities.

During the Exhibition an officer of the branch was temporarily stationed at Christchurch, with the result that two separate parties of housebreakers, who for a considerable time had baffled the local police, and who had committed a number of burglaries, were brought to justice by the branch identifying their finger-prints which they had left on various articles they had handled in the burgled houses.

The detection of these offenders in this manner doubtless had its effect upon other criminals of this class, as during the whole of the Exhibition Christchurch was remarkably free from offences of this description, and indeed from crime of any kind.

The photographic portion of the branch works well, and still supplies all photographs required by the Department in Wellington and in special cases elsewhere, besides photographing finger-prints for transmission abroad, enlarging them when necessary in Police Court cases, and photographing finger-prints discovered in criminal cases. The photographing and plans of the buildings in the Papakaio murder case were executed by this branch, thus effecting a considerable saving in the expenditure and having the work executed more expeditiously than it could otherwise have been done. Photographs to the number of 2,247 were turned out by the branch during the year.

Members of the service are now becoming more impressed with the importance of the finger-print system of identification, and greater care is exercised by them in searching for prints in criminal cases. Seventeen articles with prints thereon were sent to headquarters for examination during the year, and in six cases the prints were identified as those of previously convicted persons.

## TRAINING OF CANDIDATES, ETC.

The training of candidates is still proving highly satisfactory. The benefits derived from the instruction imparted to probationers in education, drill, ambulance work, technical police duties, police Acts, and the finger-print system of identification is having a marked effect on the men.

Eligible candidates are not so plentiful as heretofore, partly owing, no doubt, to applicants having now to pass the Fifth Standard examination under "The Education Act, 1904," before being eligible for appointment to the Department, but principally owing to the fact that those willing to work can earn more money as labourers than in the Department. Thus far the raising of the educational qualifications has not improved the standard of the men appointed to the Department, as the present rate of pay is not a sufficient inducement for good men to join the service. I have therefore submitted a recommendation for a general increase of pay to all ranks of the Force, which I trust will receive favourable consideration.

During the year there were 56 fresh candidates who, after inquiry, measurement, &c., were found to be eligible for the service.

Seventy-eight men were taken on during the year. The nationalities, religions, and occupations of these 78 men are as follows:—Nationalities: New-Zealand-born, 52; Australians, 8; Irish, 7; English, 6; Scotch, 5. Religions: Church of England, 22; Roman Catholics, 32; Presbyterians, 19; Wesleyans, 2; Methodists, 2; Church of Christ, 1. Occupations: Labourers, 26; farm-labourers, 12; miners, 5; artillerymen, 5; farmers, 4; butchers, 5; drivers, 2; clerks, 2; bakers, 2; carpenters, 2; sawmillers, 2; shepherd, 1; ex-constable, 1; warp-dresser, 1; contractor, 1; grocer, 1; bootmaker, 1; machinist, 1; plasterer, 1; dairyman, 1; surfaceman, 1; asylum attendant, 1.

## POLICE PROVIDENT FUND.

On the 31st March last the amount standing to the credit of the fund was £29,126 1s. 3d., being an increase on the year of £2,004 18s. 9d. On the same date there were on the fund 3 ex-Inspectors, 21 ex-sergeants, 37 ex-constables, 3 ex-detectives, and 2 widows and 2 orphans of deceased constables, their aggregate annual allowances being £6,270 17s. 6d.

Since the Act came into force the Government have saved the sum of £17,159 8s. 11d. in the form of retiring-allowances which would no doubt have been paid had it not existed.

## STATIONS, ETC.

During the year the following works have been completed:—

*New Buildings.*

Addington ...	...	Station.	Hokitika ...	...	Lock-up.
Avondale ...	...	"	Newton ...	...	Station.
Bingsland ...	...	"	Ohacawai ...	...	Lock-up.
Gore ...	...	"	Taumarunui ...	...	Station.
Helensville ...	...	"	Tolago Bay ...	...	"