

ACCUMULATION.

PRIVATE WEALTH.

The returns of the Probate Office provide a means whereby an approximate estimate may be made of the private wealth of the people. Of course the estimate must only be taken as a rough approximation, but it will be shown how far the method can be relied on, and what are its defects. The property left by persons who died during the five years, 1898 to 1902, is the basis whereby the property owned by the people living, as shown by the census of 1901, is estimated. A period of five years is taken, because the returns for a single year may be unduly inflated by the falling in of one or several very large estates. The average amount left by each adult who died during the period named is assumed to be the average amount owned by each adult alive at the census of 1901. The accumulated wealth of an individual is believed to be greater at a more advanced than at a less advanced age, and is probably greatest at death. Whatever advantage there may be is probably counterbalanced by some items which cannot be brought into the computation. In Victoria, for instance, deposits in Savings Banks up to £100, and life insurance policies up to £200, may be divided amongst those entitled without taking out probate or administration. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Probate and Administration Act, making chargeable with probate duty settlements and deeds of gift intended to evade payment of the duty, it is probable that some of these escape detection, and would also be unaccounted for in the calculation. The following is a statement on the basis explained, of the private wealth in several Australian States and New Zealand:—

PRIVATE WEALTH: AVERAGE DURING 1898 TO 1902 IN VICTORIA,
NEW SOUTH WALES, SOUTH AUSTRALIA. AND NEW ZEALAND.

State of -	Estates of Deceased Persons. Net Amount Sworn to.	Deaths of Adults.	Average Amount left by each Adult	Adults at Census, 1901. †	Private Wealth. ‡	
					Total.	Per Head.
	£		£		£	£
Victoria	25,633,200*	53,213	482	651,143	313,851,000	261
New South Wales	24,027,400	46,710	514	700,480	360,047,000	266
South Australia	6,383,000*	12,591	507	186,327	94,468,000	260
Dominion of New Zealand	11,329,700	24,645†	459	437,208†	200,678,000	246†

* Estimated.

† Including Maoris.

‡ It is only at the time of a census that the adult population is accurately known in the different States, consequently it is only at such a period that the amount of private wealth can be reasonably estimated on the basis adopted.

It must be remembered that the wealth represented by this estimate is the private wealth "in" the State, and not that "of" the State. Probates, &c., of persons dying out of the State leaving property in the State are included in the figures quoted; but on the other hand, many Victorians have large interests, pastoral, mining, and other, in the other States. Taking the net incomes from property of absentees at the same date as the estimate, and capitalizing the same on a 4 per cent. basis, the income-returning property owned by outside investors in Victoria would appear to be about £26,340,000.

It has been found impossible to give a similar estimate of wealth for Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania, owing to the probate returns for those States being incomplete or apparently not accounting for anything like the whole of the property left by persons dying. In regard to New Zealand also it is probable that the wealth thereof has been somewhat under-estimated, as it is stated in the New Zealand Official Year-Book that certain estates upon which no duty is payable are not included in the returns. The Registrar-General of New Zealand estimated the average wealth during 1898-1902 on a somewhat similar basis to that above adopted, to be £227,326,000 or £279 per head, which is slightly higher than in the three Australian States for which estimates are given. At 31st December, 1906, the estimate determined from the five years ended with that date was £304,654,000, or an average of £335 per head, excluding Maoris; but it was explained that some exceptionally valuable estates came into the probate accounts during 1906.

Diffusion of
wealth.

The diffusion of wealth at the date of the last census appears to have been far wider in Victoria and South Australia than in New South Wales or New Zealand, according to the proportion of adults who died leaving property in respect of which probate or administration was taken out. For the reason previously mentioned, the comparison must be restricted to these three States and New Zealand. The following are the number of persons who died leaving property, as shown by the probate

returns, the number of adult deaths, and the proportion of the former to the latter during the five years, 1898-1902:—

DIFFUSION OF WEALTH IN SEVERAL AUSTRALIAN STATES AND NEW ZEALAND, 1898-1902.

—	Deaths of Adults.	Estates Proved.	
		Number.	Number per 1,000 Deaths of Adults.
Victoria ...	53,213	19,014	357
New South Wales	46,710	12,627	269
South Australia ...	12,591	4,422	351
New Zealand ...	24,645	6,855	278

It is thus shown that more than one-third of the adults who died in Victoria and South Australia during the five years, 1898-1902, were possessed of accumulated property in respect of which it was found necessary to obtain probate or letters of administration. An allowance should be made for the number of probates sealed of persons dying out of the State; but it is estimated that 5 per cent. would cover this.

Estimates of private wealth in various countries have been published by Mulhall, from which the following table has been taken. The figures relate to the year 1895, and no later information is available.

Private wealth in other countries.

PRIVATE WEALTH OF PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

Country.	Wealth per Head.	Country.	Wealth per Head.
	£		£
France ...	... 252	Europe ...	... 139
United States ...	... 234	Spain ...	... 135
Denmark ...	... 230	Sweden and Norway	... 114
Holland ...	... 183	Austria ...	... 104
Switzerland ...	... 164	Greece ...	... 101
Germany ...	... 156	Danubian States	... 90
Argentina ...	... 154	Portugal ...	... 87
Belgium ...	... 154	Russia ...	... 61

In a paper read before the British Association in 1903, Sir Robert Giffen put forward estimates of the aggregate income and wealth of the people of the British Empire as follows:—

Wealth of the British Empire.

AGGREGATE INCOME.

		£
United Kingdom ...	...	1,750,000,000
Canada ...	...	270,000,000
Australasia ...	...	210,000,000
India ...	...	600,000,000
South Africa ...	...	100,000,000
Remainder of Empire	...	200,000,000
Total ...	...	<u>3,130,000,000</u>

CAPITAL OR WEALTH.

			£
United Kingdom	...	...	15,000,000,000
Canada	...	...	1,350,000,000
Australasia	...	...	1,100,000,000
India	...	...	3,000,000,000
South Africa	...	...	600,000,000
Remainder of Empire	...	...	1,200,000,000
Total			22,250,000,000

Property
left by
deceased
persons.

The property left in Victoria by deceased persons has, for the second time, been tabulated according to age at death. In this tabulation, care has been taken to ascertain the net as well as the gross value of such property. By dealing similarly with the records of the next three years, it is anticipated that a fairly accurate estimate will be obtained of the average property left by persons dying at specified ages during the five-year period. It is proposed to apply this average to the numbers living at each age as disclosed at the census in 1911, and it is hoped that by this means it will be possible to obtain a reliable estimate of the private wealth of the people. The accompanying table shows, in various age groups, the number and value of estates of deceased persons of either sex in connexion with which probate or letters of administration were granted during 1909, also the proportions borne by such values to the number of estates and total deaths, and the amount of duty collected on the estates.

In addition to providing data for estimating the wealth of the community, the figures in this table disclose some interesting facts. The resident adults who left property at death in 1909 numbered 2,431 males, or 41 per cent. of the male deaths over the age of 21 years, and 1,318 females, or 28 per cent. of adult female deaths. The average value of property left by males is about twice that left by females. It appears that the average wealth of those leaving property in 1909 reached its maximum in the age group 80 to 90 in the case of females, and in the age group 90 and upwards in the case of males; but the average wealth of all deceased persons in the same year was highest for females between ages 50 and 60, and for males between ages 60 and 70. In the case of females, the ratio of estates to deceased persons is highest for the age group 50 to 60 (38 per cent.), while the ratio for males at each age group between

40 and 90 is practically uniform, ranging from 40 to 45 per cent., and is higher than the ratios for other periods of life. The precaution of making a will is adopted by a larger proportion of males than of females, and in the case of males by a steadily increasing proportion as age advances.

ESTATES OF DECEASED PERSONS IN AGE GROUPS, 1909.

Age at Death.	Estates.		Value of Estates.					Amount of Duty.
	Total Number.	Percent-age Intes-tate.	Gross.		Net--after deducting Liabilities.			
			Real.	Personal.	Real and Personal.	Average to each Estate.	Average to total Deaths in each Age Group.	
MALES.								
			£	£	£	£	£	£
Under 15 years ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15 to 21 " ..	11	100.0	50	1,240	1,280	116	6	6
21 to 30 " ..	82	67.1	32,038	64,226	72,962	890	218	4,041
30 to 40 " ..	156	46.2	40,282	78,324	88,618	568	194	2,359
40 to 50 " ..	349	42.7	214,295	333,937	396,906	1,137	505	18,071
50 to 60 " ..	325	31.4	298,166	402,516	572,785	1,762	696	30,119
60 to 70 " ..	445	27.0	911,879	674,228	1,175,220	2,641	1,177	75,141
70 to 80 " ..	714	18.9	969,332	968,957	1,667,440	2,335	1,040	88,915
80 to 90 " ..	341	13.5	538,513	408,152	856,752	2,512	993	52,181
90 years and up-wards ..	19	5.3	37,323	27,513	50,780	2,673	627	3,148
Absentees ..	221	28.5	36,224	205,999	233,028	1,054	..	10,224
Total Males	2,663	28.3	3,078,112	3,165,092	5,115,771	1,921	634	282,205
FEMALES.								
			£	£	£	£	£	£
Under 15 years ..	2	100.0	..	281	281	140	0.19	..
15 to 21 " ..	3	100.0	..	1,045	1,045	348	5	28
21 to 30 " ..	38	65.8	11,752	8,802	14,964	394	36	253
30 to 40 " ..	85	57.6	29,855	36,104	54,425	640	109	2,317
40 to 50 " ..	152	46.7	60,671	54,038	99,374	654	162	3,766
50 to 60 " ..	181	38.1	70,813	183,919	236,414	1,306	495	15,894
60 to 70 " ..	286	32.2	174,981	185,426	315,458	1,103	401	13,414
70 to 80 " ..	384	19.0	250,280	161,085	330,384	860	274	12,206
80 to 90 " ..	175	20.0	74,679	173,363	230,883	1,319	383	11,189
90 years and up-wards ..	17	5.9	9,714	3,531	12,180	716	138	359
Absentees ..	83	43.4	10,626	61,414	69,197	834	..	2,961
Total Females	1,406	32.4	693,371	869,008	1,364,605	971	214	62,387
Total Males and Females ..	4,069	30.0	3,771,483	4,034,100	6,480,376	1,593	449	344,592

The number and value of estates dealt with in each of the last two years, grouped according to value and distinguishing those of males from those of females, are as follows:—

NUMBER AND VALUE OF ESTATES OF DECEASED PERSONS,
1908 AND 1909.

Value.	1908.		1909.	
	Number.	Net Value.	Number.	Net Value.
MALES.				
		£		£
Under £100 ...	432	17,915	461	19,052
£100 to £300 ...	685	128,133	614	116,213
£300 to £500 ...	412	163,319	377	148,623
£500 to £1,000 ...	421	305,095	390	278,454
£1,000 to £2,000 ...	359	511,238	339	485,034
£2,000 to £3,000 ...	160	398,974	132	319,286
£3,000 to £4,000 ...	106	369,020	106	371,525
£4,000 to £5,000 ...	59	262,756	62	278,331
£5,000 to £10,000 ...	107	721,772	105	737,664
£10,000 to £15,000 ...	43	516,924	26	309,719
£15,000 to £25,000 ...	26	520,874	25	481,286
£25,000 to £50,000 ...	17	590,707	17	576,708
£50,000 to £100,000 ...	5	351,527	5	345,933
Over £100,000 ...	2	1,004,440	4	647,943
Total Males ...	2,834	5,862,654	2,663	5,115,771
FEMALES.				
Under £100 ...	301	14,722	264	12,484
£100 to £300 ...	483	91,604	416	77,972
£300 to £500 ...	242	94,788	241	94,382
£500 to £1,000 ...	228	162,026	223	156,348
£1,000 to £2,000 ...	143	197,919	134	189,135
£2,000 to £3,000 ...	38	92,315	65	161,565
£3,000 to £4,000 ...	25	85,516	17	57,934
£4,000 to £5,000 ...	16	70,812	7	31,898
£5,000 to £10,000 ...	23	154,783	23	158,799
£10,000 to £15,000 ...	3	35,995	7	89,463
£15,000 to £25,000 ...	3	50,025	3	60,273
£25,000 to £50,000 ...	6	214,926	5	165,907
£50,000 to £100,000 ...	...	...	...	...
Over £100,000 ...	...	...	1	108,445
Total Females ...	1,511	1,265,431	1,406	1,364,605
GRAND TOTAL ...	4,345	7,128,085	4,069	6,480,376

Compared with the returns for 1908 the figures for 1909 show, in estates of males, a reduction of 6 per cent. in the number, and of nearly 13 per cent. in the value, and in estates of females, a decline of 7 per cent. in the number, but an increase of nearly 8 per cent. in the value.

The following figures prove that the economic conditions prevalent in Victoria during the last thirty-one years have led to a wide and growing diffusion of wealth amongst the people:—

Period.	Percentage of Adults who died leaving Estates which went through the Probate Office, &c. Yearly Average.
1879-83	22.6
1884-88	25.9
1889-93	30.3
1894-98	33.3
1899-1903	36.7
1904	37.3
1905	36.8
1906	37.4
1907	38.6
1908	37.2
1909	37.1

RATEABLE PROPERTY: TOTAL AND GROUND VALUES.

The whole of Victoria, with the exception of about 650 square miles—600 in the county of Wonnangatta and the whole of French Island—or $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of the area of the State, being divided into municipalities for the purposes of local government, the value of real property, based on the municipal valuations, can be given with some degree of accuracy. Returns are obtained annually from each city, town, borough, and shire; and the following figures show the net annual rateable value and the capital value estimated by the municipalities over a series of years:—

RATEABLE PROPERTY: ANNUAL AND CAPITAL VALUES, 1880 TO 1910.

Year ended 30th Sept.	Estimated Value of Rateable Property.		Year ended 30th Sept.	Estimated Value of Rateable Property.	
	Annual.	Capital.		Annual.	Capital.
1880	£ 7,117,946	£ 83,847,418	1896	£ 10,393,000	£ 168,427,700
1881	7,175,289	87,642,459	1897	10,345,535	171,253,984
1882	7,433,812	91,792,547	1898	10,152,500	168,611,906
1883	7,692,706	95,610,959	1899	10,134,108	168,456,523
1884	8,098,814	103,795,832	1900	10,283,500	169,911,900
1885	8,793,490	114,283,570	1901	10,537,497	174,141,754
1886	9,621,135	125,878,748	1902	10,885,087	185,101,993
1887	10,153,771	137,885,701	1903	11,188,932	203,902,919
1888	11,913,473	167,385,210	1904	11,437,830	209,143,730
1889	12,931,526	187,558,511	1905	11,743,270	210,920,174
1890	13,265,543	194,313,646	1906	11,795,143	216,615,624
1891	13,733,770	203,351,360	1907	12,174,325	222,598,941
1892	13,605,990	197,366,940	1908	12,638,900	232,725,666
1893	12,779,600	189,461,350	1909	13,123,958	242,688,771
1894	11,676,079	174,984,851	1910	13,564,488	252,006,618
1895	10,641,200	167,197,780			

It will be observed from the table that there has been a steady increase each year since 1899 in the annual value of rateable property, as estimated by the municipalities. The capital values

given are not to be relied upon for purposes of accurate comparison. The great bulk of the municipalities capitalize the net annual value on a 5 per cent. basis; but about 28 per cent. of them assume the capital value to be much less in proportion to the annual value, some estimating 19, 16, 15, 12, 10, down to as low as 8 years' purchase, whilst in one case 7 years' purchase is given as the capital value. Twenty years' purchase is adopted by thirteen of the metropolitan municipalities, one adopts 17 years', two 15 years', one 13 years', and four 12 years'; whilst of thirty-nine country towns, twenty adopt from 7 to 12 years' purchase as the basis, one returns figures showing 13 years', one 14 years', five 15 years', one 16 years', one 17 years', and ten 20 years' purchase as the capital value. Of the 146 shires, 127 adopt 20 years' purchase in estimating the capital value, the others adopting from 19 to 8 years'.

The following is an estimate for the last seven years of the capital value of land with and without improvements, the latter of which is commonly called the unimproved value, but should more correctly be termed the ground value:—

VALUE OF LAND WITH AND WITHOUT IMPROVEMENTS, 1903-4
TO 1909-10.

Year.	Annual Rateable Value.	Capital Value with Improvements.	Unimproved or Ground Value.
Urban.			
	£	£	£
1903-4	5,366,477	93,376,880	46,688,440
1904-5	5,498,471	94,583,732	47,291,866
1905-6	5,664,425	99,354,665	49,677,332
1906-7	5,779,231	100,801,295	50,400,647
1907-8	5,944,691	103,666,178	51,833,089
1908-9	6,080,447	106,149,960	53,074,980
1909-10	6,232,091	108,863,963	54,431,981
Rural.			
1903-4	6,071,353	115,766,850	77,177,900
1904-5	6,244,799	116,336,442	77,557,628
1905-6	6,130,718	117,260,959	78,173,973
1906-7	6,395,094	121,797,646	81,198,431
1907-8	6,694,209	129,059,488	86,039,659
1908-9	7,043,511	136,538,811	91,025,874
1909-10	7,332,397	143,142,655	95,428,437
Total.			
1903-4	11,437,830	209,143,730	123,866,340
1904-5	11,743,270	210,920,174	124,849,494
1905-6	11,795,143	216,615,624	127,851,305
1906-7	12,174,325	222,598,941	131,599,078
1907-8	12,638,900	232,725,666	137,872,748
1908-9	13,123,958	242,688,771	144,100,854
1909-10	13,564,488	252,006,618	149,860,418

Landed property capital and ground values.

Improvements are estimated at one-half in the case of urban and one-third in the case of rural properties, which are about the proportions that are found to prevail in New Zealand, according to the valuations of the Valuer-General, revised to 1909. If the Victorian estimate were based upon the New Zealand proportion, without distinguishing urban and rural, the ground value in 1909-10 would be about £160,000,000, which is approximate to the above estimate. These proportions have also been checked by an examination of the census returns, which give the number of rooms in each house, and the materials of which the same were built. In Melbourne city an average of £100, and in suburbs and country towns £70 per room for brick, &c., houses was allowed; whilst in urban districts £45 per room, and in rural districts £40 per room, was allowed for wooden houses. On this system the above estimates were verified as being remarkably close, allowing for other improvements, besides houses, in rural districts.

ROYAL MINT.

The Melbourne branch of the Royal Mint was established in 1872, the date of opening being the 12th June. In the following table particulars are given, for the period 1872 to 1905 and for each of the last four years, showing the quantity of gold received at the Mint, where the same was raised, and its coinage value; also gold coin and bullion issued during the same periods:—

Royal Mint
returns.

ROYAL MINT RETURNS, 1872 TO 1909.

Gold Received.		1872 to 1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
<i>Gross Weight.</i>						
Raised in Victoria ..	oz.	21,084,237	848,298	754,810	736,875	704,584
„ New Zealand ..	„	2,927,710	132,529	103,764	90,411	95,546
„ Western Australia ..	„	2,777,605	18,700	20,772	20,255	21,181
„ elsewhere ..	„	2,172,095	54,764	58,823	83,580	83,383
Total ...	„	28,961,647	1,054,291	938,169	931,121	904,694
Coinage Value ...	£	114,252,292	4,100,195	3,645,704	3,614,643	3,539,328
<i>Gold Issued.</i>						
Coin—						
Sovereigns ...	No	105,156,855	3,657,874	3,332,691	3,080,148	3,029,538
Half-Sovereigns ...	„	1,094,725	82,000	...	405,034	186,094
Bullion—Quantity ...	oz.	2,046,357	95,114	80,648	93,461	107,328
„ Value ...	£	8,544,923	400,820	314,022	363,914	417,909
Total value Coin and Bullion ...	£	114,249,141	4,099,694	3,646,713	3,646,579	3,540,494

Since the opening of the Mint 32,789,922 ounces of gold have been received thereat, the coinage value, at £3 17s. 10½d. per ounce standard, being £129,182,162, thus averaging £3 18s. 9½d. per ounce gross. Of the total quantity of gold received at the Mint, 24,128,804 ounces were raised in Victoria, 3,349,960 ounces in New Zealand, and 2,858,513 ounces in Western Australia. The average value of Victorian gold received at the Mint during the year 1909 was £3 19s. 2½d. per ounce gross, £3 19s. 1½d. being the value of the gold and 1d. the value of the silver contained therein. The output of the Mint since its establishment comprises 118,257,106 sovereigns, 1,767,853 half-sovereigns, and 2,422,908 ounces of gold bullion; the total value of coin and bullion being £129,182,621.

Interchange
of coin and
bullion.

Since the establishment of the Melbourne Mint, the gold coin exported from Victoria, less that imported, has amounted to £99,644,316, or less by £19,496,716 than the total gold coin issued from the Mint. The following particulars are given of the value of gold and silver coin and bullion imported and exported during each of the last five years:—

INTERCHANGE OF COIN AND BULLION, 1905 TO 1909.

Imports of—	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
	£	£	£	£	£
Gold Coin	26,500	100,900	124,600	258,086	921,405
" Bullion	894,237	818,007	664,464	621,114	593,220
" contained in Matte ... ..	...	...	50,521	40,875	32,345
Silver Coin	17,998	36,403	123,925	50,825	1,680
" Bullion	676	968	13,349	3,661	3,844
" contained in Matte	37,472	39,410	100,407	71,678	49,580
Exports of—					
Gold Coin	1,620,520	4,416,808	2,306,240	3,913,770	2,481,567
" Bullion	378,777	493,369	339,819	408,062	332,789
" contained in Matte ... ..	..	..	44,481	41,246	32,625
Silver Coin	9,550	17,089	9,940	20,605	7,263
" Bullion	2,687	8,592	831	1,379	1,324
" contained in Matte	37,511	39,410	112,465	71,678	49,580

The imports and exports of gold and silver display considerable fluctuations. The net exports of gold in 1906 amounted to £3,991,270, exceeding the value of the total production of gold in Victoria during the same year by £710,792; in 1908 also the net exports exceeded the production, but in 1909 the production was more than double, in 1907 it was 62 per cent. more than, and in 1905 it was three times the net exports. The Victorian production of gold for 1909 was valued at £2,778,956.

BANKING.

On 31st December, 1909, there were eleven banks of issue in Victoria, possessing 644 branches or agencies, the latter representing an increase of 30 on the number of branches for the previous year. The financial position of these banks, on 31st December in each of the last five years, is shown by the following return:—

Finances of banks.

VICTORIAN BANK RETURNS, 1905 TO 1909.

In Victoria.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
LIABILITIES.					
	£	£	£	£	£
Deposits bearing interest*	23,055,743	24,232,979	24,615,431	23,975,491	25,677,111
Deposits not bearing interest	12,068,153	13,390,841	13,631,858	12,659,502	13,983,615
Notes in circulation ...	835,499	886,922	889,357	841,604	865,252
Other ...	463,449	366,950	480,046	332,467	373,741
Total ...	36,422,844	38,877,692	39,616,692	37,809,064	40,899,719
ASSETS.					
Coin and Bullion ...	8,056,666	6,918,743	8,043,780	7,310,729	8,491,774
Debts due to Banks ...	29,918,226	31,495,558	33,238,732	33,711,188	32,915,373
Property ...	1,919,230	1,901,999	1,844,237	1,779,182	1,736,566
Other ...	617,213	633,184	605,331	611,900	806,935
Total ...	40,511,335	40,949,484	43,732,080	43,412,999	43,950,648
CAPITAL AND PROFITS.					
Capital stock paid up	13,961,695	12,965,593†	13,441,231†	13,610,852†	13,615,937†
Reserved Profits (ex Dividend)	4,414,059	4,672,901	5,234,983	5,860,550	6,440,770
Last Dividend—					
Amount ...	469,218	482,883‡	549,604‡	567,647‡	588,070‡
Average rate per cent. per annum	7·07	7·12	7·84	7·98	8·22

* Including perpetual inscribed stocks which, in 1909, amounted to £951,865.—† Excluding £1,000,000 guaranteed by the Government of New Zealand, but which was included in 1905—‡ Half-yearly dividend in the case of nine banks.

The Victorian liabilities of the banks, at the close of the year 1909, were considerably in excess of the liabilities of any of the four previous years, exceeding those for 1905 by £4,476,875, and those for 1908 by £3,090,655, the excess being accounted for in the first instance entirely and in the second almost entirely by increases in customers' deposits. During the interval 1905-9 the Victorian assets increased by £3,439,313; but since 31st December, 1908, the increase has been only £537,649. There have been considerable fluctuations in the excess of assets over liabilities, such excess being in 1905 £4,088,491, in 1906 £2,071,792, in 1907 £4,115,388, in 1908 £5,603,935, and in 1909 £3,050,929. It

must be borne in mind that the figures represent only the assets and liabilities *within* the State, of which sworn returns are rendered to the Government quarterly as required by law.

An indication of the recovery in banking business is revealed by the annual increase in dividends paid and reserved profits. Compared with 1905, the average rate of dividend had increased in 1909 by 16 per cent., and the amount of reserved profits by 46 per cent.

The amount of Government deposits with banks in Victoria during each of the last sixteen years was as follows:—

Government deposits in banks.

				£					£
1894	...	...	...	2,303,450	1902	...	...	...	2,455,773
1895	...	...	...	2,405,285	1903	...	...	...	2,201,989
1896	...	...	...	2,338,970	1904	...	...	...	3,117,683
1897	...	...	...	2,260,566	1905	...	...	...	3,576,895
1898	...	...	...	1,796,075	1906	...	...	...	3,903,702
1899	...	...	...	2,705,243	1907	...	...	...	2,665,655
1900	...	...	...	2,840,102	1908	...	...	...	2,210,549
1901	...	...	...	2,557,811	1909	...	...	...	3,796,729

Banks in Australia and New Zealand.

There are twenty-two banks in Australasia, many of which do business in several States. Eleven do business in Victoria and Queensland, thirteen in New South Wales, seven in South Australia, six in Western Australia, and five in Tasmania and New Zealand. The amounts of deposits, advances, notes in circulation, and coin and bullion for the quarter ended 31st December, 1909, are as follows:—

AUSTRALASIAN BANKING BUSINESS, 31ST DECEMBER, 1909.

State, &c.	Deposits.*	Advances, &c.	Notes in Circulation.	Coin and Bullion.
	£	£	£	£
Victoria	38,708,861	32,915,373	865,252	8,491,774
New South Wales	45,319,856	38,455,505	1,758,913	10,717,289
Queensland	17,222,746	15,219,141	...	2,828,207
South Australia	9,561,977	6,078,826	497,940	2,321,635
Western Australia	5,404,774	5,743,478	351,978	2,487,442
Tasmania	3,536,384	2,838,540	156,434	704,801
Australia	119,754,598	101,250,863	3,630,517	27,551,148
New Zealand	22,196,171	20,982,000	1,573,954	5,090,844
Australasia	141,950,769	122,232,863	5,204,471	32,641,992

* Excluding perpetual inscribed stocks, which amount to £951,865 in Victoria, £635,100 in New South Wales, £84,559 in Queensland, and £311,259, in South Australia.

These figures have been taken from the *Australasian Insurance and Banking Record*. In Queensland Treasury notes have taken the place of bank notes. Except in Western Australia, deposits exceed advances outstanding.

As compared with the previous year, deposits have increased by £9,874,666 in the whole of Australasia, increases occurring in Victoria £3,077,145, New South Wales £2,122,574, Queensland £1,472,304, South Australia £960,407, Western Australia £444,490, and New Zealand £1,880,432; but a decrease in Tasmania £82,686. Advances, which include notes, bills of exchange, and all stock and funded debts of every description except notes, bills and balances due to the banks from other banks, are £2,114,122 less for Australia and £2,743,832 less for New Zealand than at the close of 1908, the variations for the different States being, Victoria £795,815 decrease, New South Wales £726,812 decrease, Queensland £488,852 decrease, South Australia £29,795 increase, Western Australia £44,816 increase, and Tasmania £177,254 decrease. Notes in circulation have increased by £36,346 in Australia; but in New Zealand have decreased by £33,268. Coin and bullion has increased by £3,528,302 in Australia, and by £505,089 in New Zealand.

The following table shows the particulars respecting the clearances through the Melbourne Clearing House for the ten years, 1900-1909.

Melbourne
Clearing
House.

MELBOURNE CLEARING HOUSE—TRANSACTIONS, 1900-1909.

Year.	Clearances.			Payments in Coin.	Average Weekly Clearances.
	Notes.	Cheques, Bills, &c.	Total.		
	£	£	£	£	£
1900	10,577,293	149,371,785	159,949,078	19,953,585	3,075,944
1901	11,059,519	159,367,162	170,426,681	21,505,100	3,277,436
1902	10,967,723	159,057,401	170,025,124	21,869,162	3,269,714
1903	10,322,250	156,371,148	166,693,398	21,505,741	3,205,642
1904	9,813,956	164,352,306	174,166,262	21,606,342	3,349,351
1905	9,979,716	177,652,709	187,632,425	24,562,534	3,608,316
1906	11,007,506	209,034,550	220,042,056	27,839,446	4,231,573
1907	11,557,939	225,035,841	236,593,780	29,281,793	4,549,876
1908	11,211,842	210,141,833	221,353,675	26,226,196	4,256,801
1909	11,157,341	228,506,266	239,663,607	30,065,454	4,608,915

From this table it is seen that there has been a large increase in the transactions of the Clearing House since 1900. Compared with that year, the weekly average for 1909 shows an increase of 50 per cent. The transactions for 1909 have not been exceeded since 1891.

The two classes of Savings Banks which formerly existed in Victoria, viz., the Post Office and the Trustees, were, in 1897, merged into one institution controlled by the Savings Banks Commissioners, and guaranteed by the Government. The interest allowed to depositors at 30th June, 1909, was at the rate of 3½ per cent. on sums

Savings
Banks.

up to £100; and 3 per cent. on sums over £100 up to £250; but no interest was allowed on any excess over £250. The following are the particulars of depositors and deposits at regular intervals during the last thirty-five years.

SAVINGS BANKS: DEPOSITORS AND DEPOSITS, 1875 TO 1909.

On 30th June.	Number of Depositors.		Amount remaining on Deposit.	
	Total.	Per 1,000 of Population.	Total.	Average to each Depositor.
1875	65,837	81	£ 1,469,949	£ s. d. 22 6 6
1880	92,115	108	1,661,409	18 0 9
1885	170,014	174	3,337,018	19 12 7
1890	281,509	252	5,262,105	18 13 10
1895	338,480	286	7,316,129	21 12 3
1900	375,070	314	9,110,793	24 5 9
1901	393,026	327	9,662,006	24 11 8
1902	410,126	340	10,131,604	24 14 1
1903	418,511	347	10,341,857	24 14 3
1904	432,867	358	10,582,808	24 9 0
1905	447,382	369	10,896,741	24 7 2
1906	466,752	380	11,764,179	25 4 1
1907	491,318	394	12,792,590	26 0 9
1908	511,581	404	13,428,676	26 5 0
1909	532,425	415	14,101,710	26 9 9

The best evidence of the growing habit of thrift, as well as of the wide diffusion of wealth amongst the middle and poorer classes in Victoria, is contained in the Savings Banks returns, the number of depositors in proportion to population, having increased by 32 per cent. since 1900, and by 65 per cent. since 1890. On 30th June, 1909, more than two persons out of every five in the State (including children and infants, who themselves number more than one-third of the population) were depositors with a credit balance, on the average, of £26 9s. 9d. Of the amount on deposit in 1909, 35 per cent. belonged to depositors with accounts up to £100 each, 40 per cent. with accounts over £100 and up to £250, and 25 per cent. with accounts over £250. The aggregate of the excess over £250—the money on deposit for which interest is not allowed—was, on 30th June, 1909, £735,632.

It should, however, be pointed out that about 143,000 of the accounts remaining open were small sums under £1 left by depositors who had ceased to operate their accounts, and the total amount at their credit was about £20,500. If these figures be withdrawn from those in the preceding table it would appear that, on 30th June, 1909, there were 389,425 active accounts with £14,081,210 at credit—an average of £36 3s. 2d. per depositor—and that the number of depositors per thousand of the population was 304.

The next statement shows the assets and liabilities of savings banks in Victoria, the former indicating the manner in which deposits are invested or held:—

SAVINGS BANKS, ASSETS AND LIABILITIES, 30TH JUNE, 1909.

<i>Assets.</i>		£
With Treasurer of Victoria—Certificate representing Post Office Savings Bank Deposits, taken over 30th September, 1897		963,052
Government Debentures		7,368,187
Bank Fixed Deposits Receipts (in name of Treasurer of Victoria)		2,269,532
Savings Bank Mortgage Bonds and Debentures (Advance Dept.)		901,402
City of Melbourne Debentures		33,704
Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Debentures		755,104
Mortgage Securities		1,542,903
Mortgage Properties foreclosed or in possession		109,141
Melbourne Trust Ltd. Debentures and Shares		5,311
Accrued Interest, &c., on Investments		190,038
Bank premises		140,000
Advances Department		168
Inter-State Transfer Account		1,057
Commercial Bank—Current Accounts		86,736
Cash at various Savings Banks, Agencies, and Trustees' Bankers and in transit		149,563
Total		14,515,898
<i>Liabilities.</i>		£
Depositors' balances, with Interest to date		14,101,710
Other liabilities		2,236
Surplus Funds allotted as follows:—		
Reserve Fund	£350,000	
Depreciation Fund	45,200	
Profit and Loss Account	9,321	
Fidelity Guarantee Fund	7,431	
Total Surplus Funds		411,952
Total		14,515,898

For the purpose of making advances to farmers, an advance department was established in 1896 by the Act amalgamating the Post Office and Commissioners' Savings Banks. Funds for this purpose are raised by sale of mortgage bonds for £25 each, and by debentures in denominations of £100 and over, redeemable at fixed dates not more than fifteen years from date of issue. The total issues up to 30th June, 1909, amounted to £2,583,600, of which bonds and debentures for £1,003,750 have been redeemed or repurchased, leaving £1,579,850 outstanding. Of this amount £658,675 is held by the public, and the balance by the Commissioners themselves in respect of money invested out of Savings Banks funds. The sum advanced during the year 1908-9 was £238,210, making, with the amounts previously advanced, a total of £2,492,698, of which £1,180,494 has been repaid, leaving outstanding on 30th June, 1909, an amount of £1,312,204, representing 3,109 loans, which thus averaged £422. As a measure of the safety with which the

Savings
Banks
loans to
farmers.

advance department has been conducted, it may be mentioned that the instalments of principal in arrear amounted on 30th June, 1909, to only £42, and the interest in arrear to £85.

TRANSACTIONS UNDER CRÉDIT FONCIER SYSTEM TO 30TH JUNE, 1909.

		At 30th June, 1908.	During 1908-9.	At 30th June, 1909.
Loans raised	£	2,304,622	278,978	2,583,600
„ repaid	£	873,750	130,000	1,003,750
„ outstanding	£	1,430,872	...	1,579,850
Applications received	No.	11,009	825	11,834
„ „ amount	£	5,235,890	468,085	5,703,975
Applications granted	No.	6,890	549	7,439*
„ „ amount	£	3,016,640	277,025	3,293,665*
Amounts advanced—				
To pay liabilities	£	1,995,230	207,907	2,203,137
„ Crown rents	£	83,313	4,706	88,019
For improvement and development of land	£	175,945	25,597	201,542
Total advanced	£	2,254,488	238,210	2,492,698
Amounts repaid	£	1,029,057	151,437	1,180,494
„ outstanding	£	1,225,431	...	1,312,204

* Including £561,915 offered to, but not accepted by, 1,085 applicants.

Savings
Banks in
Australasia.

The Savings Banks of Australasia comprise Trustee banks in Victoria and South Australia—those of Victoria being guaranteed by and under the supervision of the Government—Government banks in Queensland and Western Australia; Government and Trustee banks in New South Wales; Government and Joint Stock banks in Tasmania; and Government and private banks in New Zealand. The number of depositors in these banks, and the amount on deposit, including interest, are given in the succeeding table. The figures relate to the date, 30th June, 1909, except those of the Tasmanian and New Zealand banks. As regards these, the figures of the Joint Stock banks of Tasmania, are made up to the end of February, 1909, and those of the others to the date, 31st December, 1908.

SAVINGS BANKS IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND. 1908-9.

State.	Number of Depositors.		Amount remaining on Deposit.	
	Total.	Per 1,000 of the Population.	Total.	Average to each Depositor.
			£	£ s. d.
Victoria	592,425	415	14,101,710	26 9 9
New South Wales	444,930	275	19,022,151	42 15 1
Queensland	106,627	188	5,158,219	48 7 6
South Australia	182,875	446	6,328,870	34 12 2
Western Australia	71,262	259	3,052,531	42 16 8
Tasmania	58,145	317	1,605,919	27 12 5
Australia	1,396,264	322	49,269,400	35 5 9
New Zealand	388,945	405	13,512,266	34 14 10
Australasia	1,785,209	337	62,781,666	35 3 4

The number of depositors in proportion to population in Victoria is greater than in the other States (excepting South Australia) and New Zealand, although the average amount standing to the credit of each depositor is not so large. It has already been shown that the diffusion of wealth, as evidenced by the proportion of persons dying and leaving property, was at the date of the last census wider in Victoria than elsewhere, and this is corroborated by the above figures. More than one-third of the population of Victoria, South Australia, and New Zealand are depositors, nearly one-third in Tasmania, more than one-fourth in New South Wales and Western Australia, and nearly one-fifth in Queensland.

The following table shows the number and proportion to population of depositors, the amount of deposits, and the average to each depositor in Savings Banks in Great Britain, other European countries, and the United States:—

Savings
Banks in
various
countries.

SAVINGS BANKS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Country.	Year.	Number of Depositors.		Amount remaining on Deposit.			
		Total.	Per 1,000 of the Population.	Total.	Average to each Depositor.		
			£				
			£ s. d.				
England and Wales	1908	11,126,125	313	174,103,922	15	13	0
Scotland ...	1908	1,079,436	223	24,957,103	23	2	5
Ireland ...	1908	600,723	137	13,303,139	22	2	11
United Kingdom...	1908	12,806,284	286	212,364,164	16	11	8
Austria ...	1906	5,789,777	209	229,592,664	39	13	1
Belgium ...	1906	2,419,710	341	32,193,971	13	6	1
France ...	1906-8	12,709,765	324	199,319,300	15	13	8
Italy ...	1907	6,953,078	206	137,137,937	19	14	6
Netherlands ...	1905-6	1,658,985	293	19,323,083	11	13	0
Russia ...	1907	6,210,238	42	121,511,064	19	11	4
Sweden ...	1907	2,043,095	380	41,585,351	20	7	1
Norway ...	1907	868,616	373	24,194,740	27	17	1
Denmark ...	1907	1,240,739	472	39,857,977	32	2	6
United States ...	1908	8,705,848	100	752,194,380	86	8	0

The following statements give the approximate stocks of gold, silver, and paper money in the principal countries of the world for 1907, and the world's coinage of gold and silver for 1908. The

World's
stocks of
money and
coinage.

information has been extracted from reports issued by the Directors of the Mints of the United States and Great Britain:—

APPROXIMATE STOCKS OF MONEY IN THE PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD AT THE CLOSE OF 1907.

Country.	Value of—		
	Gold.	Silver.	Uncovered Paper.
	£	£	£
Argentina	28,727,000	*	49,234,000
Austria-Hungary	62,283,000	21,412,000	27,001,000
Belgium	6,329,000	7,829,000	26,590,000
British Empire—			
Australasia	32,734,000	2,055,000	*
Canada	13,624,000	1,377,000	12,576,000
India	23,261,000	170,554,000	7,993,000
South Africa	9,987,000	4,110,000	*
United Kingdom	115,997,000	24,001,000	24,124,000
Egypt	28,768,000	3,082,000	*
France	190,363,000	84,475,000	53,714,000
Germany	214,610,000	45,926,000	56,940,000
Italy	53,057,000	8,548,000	32,960,000
Japan	19,686,000	11,178,000	21,309,000
Mexico	9,617,000	11,672,000	10,521,000
Netherlands	8,980,000	10,973,000	10,398,000
Russia	188,493,000	16,048,000	*
Spain	18,042,000	35,693,000	20,364,000
Turkey	27,104,000	5,651,000	*
United States	331,388,000	146,923,000	160,177,000
Other Countries	58,356,000	114,004,000	370,205,000
Total	1,441,406,000	725,511,000	884,106,000

* No information.

WORLD'S COINAGE DURING THE YEAR 1908.

Country.	Gold.	Silver.	Nickel, Copper, Bronze, &c.
	£	£	£
United Kingdom	13,728,200	1,009,300	170,300
Australasia	10,456,600	...	...
India (a) ... ..	...	12,077,100	411,200
British Colonies and Dependencies (b) ... ..	...	1,445,200	30,300
Austria-Hungary	1,209,000	2,230,800	291,800
China ... ..	...	2,491,500	1,696,000
France and French Colonies	6,129,500	3,752,800	41,300
Germany and German Colonies	3,290,000	2,939,700	338,100
Japan (a)	1,794,900	1,642,100	...
Mexico	912,800	880,800	...
Russia	600	674,600	127,700
Turkey	964,800	153,400	...
United States and Philippines (a)	41,091,300	5,332,600	405,400
Other Countries	1,265,000	1,855,400	622,600
Total	80,842,700	36,485,300	4,134,700

(a) Financial Year, 1907-8

(b) Inclusive of coins struck at Calcutta and Bombay (during the Financial Year, 1907-8) at Ottawa, and at the "Mint," Birmingham.

PRICES, ETC., OF GOVERNMENT STOCKS.

Selecting one of the leading 4 per cent. and one of the leading $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Victorian stocks, and finding the highest prices quoted in 1885 and each subsequent year, an adequate idea may be formed of the general course of prices in London during the last twenty-five years. These are shown in the following table, together with the equivalent returns to the investor.

Comparative prices of Victorian stocks.

PRICES OF VICTORIAN REPRESENTATIVE STOCKS IN LONDON, 1885 TO 1909.

Year.	Highest Prices quoted on Stock Exchange.		Minimum Return to Investor.	
	4 per cents. (due 1920).	$3\frac{1}{2}$ per cents. (due 1923).	4 per cents.	$3\frac{1}{2}$ per cents.
			£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1885	104 $\frac{1}{4}$	...	3 15 10	...
1886	107 $\frac{3}{8}$	...	3 13 2	...
1887	108 $\frac{3}{8}$	...	3 13 1	...
1888	114 $\frac{1}{8}$	...	3 6 5	...
1889	114 $\frac{1}{4}$	105	3 5 8	3 5 5
1890	111 $\frac{1}{2}$	103 $\frac{1}{4}$	3 8 0	3 7 0
1891	109 $\frac{1}{2}$	100 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 10 3	3 9 9
1892	106 $\frac{3}{4}$	98	3 13 9	3 13 5
1893	103 $\frac{1}{4}$	93 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 18 6	4 3 4
1894	106 $\frac{3}{8}$	99 $\frac{7}{8}$	3 15 2	3 10 2
1895	111 $\frac{1}{4}$	105 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 9 0	3 6 1
1896	116 $\frac{3}{8}$	109 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 2 7	3 1 6
1897	115	108 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 4 0	3 2 7
1898	113 $\frac{3}{4}$	107 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 5 1	3 3 6
1899	114	107 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 4 5	3 2 10
1900	111 $\frac{3}{4}$	105 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 6 8	3 5 0
1901	112 $\frac{1}{2}$	106 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 5 3	3 4 1
1902	112 $\frac{1}{4}$	104 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 5 3	3 6 0
1903	107 $\frac{5}{8}$	101 $\frac{1}{4}$	3 11 2	3 10 0
1904	107	98 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 11 10	3 14 5
1905	107	100 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 11 6	3 11 6
1906	105 $\frac{5}{8}$	101 $\frac{3}{8}$	3 13 4	3 10 7
1907	105	100 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 14 2	3 11 8
1908	105 $\frac{7}{8}$	101 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 12 1	3 10 5
1909	104 $\frac{3}{4}$	100 $\frac{1}{4}$	3 13 11	3 12 9

The minimum return to the investor is calculated after allowing for accrued interest and redemption at par at maturity.

The following are the means between the highest and lowest prices of Australasian stocks in London during each of the last

Prices of Australasian stocks.

sixteen years. The stocks selected are the representative issues of 4 and 3½ per cents. :—

MEAN PRICES OF AUSTRALASIAN STOCKS IN LONDON, 1894 TO 1909.

Year.	Victoria.	New South Wales.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.
	FOUR PER CENTS. REDEEMABLE IN—						
	1920.	1933.	1915.	1917-36.	1934.	1920-40.	1929.
1894	103½	107½	105½	105½	108½	..	107½
1895	104½	113½	109½	109½	117½	..	109½
1896	111½	118	111½	111½	124½	..	112½
1897	113	120	113	112½	121½	..	114
1898	111½	117½	109½	110	118½	..	112½
1899	110	115½	109	108½	116½	..	111
1900	109½	114½	108½	108	115½	110½	111½
1901	110	114½	107½	107½	113½	109½	113
1902	108½	112	105½	105	112½	110	111½
1903	104½	107½	102½	102	109½	107	107
1904	104½	107½	102½	101	107½	105½	106
1905	105½	107	103	103½	107	106	107½
1906	103½	108	102½	102	108	105	107½
1907	102½	106	101	101	107	104	106
1908	103½	107	102	102	107	104½	107½
1909	103½	107	102	102½	107	103½	106½

Year.	THREE AND A HALF PER CENTS. REDEEMABLE IN—						
	1923.	1924.	1924.	1939.	1915-35.	1920-40.	1940.
	1894	95½	99½	95½	97½	..	96½	99½
1895	98½	104½	102½	104½	..	102½	103½
1896	104½	108	106½	108	..	107½	106
1897	106½	109	106	111	..	108½	107½
1898	104½	106½	104½	103	..	107½	106½
1899	103	105	103	106	..	103½	105½
1900	103	105	103	105	102½	102½	105
1901	104	104½	102½	104½	101½	102½	106½
1902	102½	103½	101	103	100	103	105½
1903	98	99½	97½	101½	98	100	102½
1904	96½	97½	96½	98	95	98	99½
1905	98½	99½	98½	99	97½	99	98½
1906	100	100	99	100	99	98	100
1907	98	99	97	99	96	97	99
1908	99	100	98	99	98	98	99
1909	98	99	97	98	98	98	98

The earlier years in this table are marked by a series of rapid rises in the prices of all the stocks quoted, but in 1898 prices began to recede and this process continued until 1904. In 1905 and 1906 they hardened generally, but in 1907 a fall took place; in 1908 a partial recovery was made which, however, was not fully sustained in 1909. The prices in 1908 and 1909 were on about the same level as those of 1894 in the case of the four per cent. stock, and

were slightly higher in the case of the three-and-a-half per cents, though the loans were fifteen years nearer maturity. The figures, however, as they stand, do not afford an indication of the real values of the stocks concerned; the table simply shows the mean between the highest and lowest prices for the year.

The best method of comparing the values of stocks over a series of years, or of comparing the different values placed upon the stocks of different States by investors, is to show the actual or effective rate of interest the investor is satisfied with, as evidenced by the mean between the highest and lowest quotations during the year. This is done in the following table, allowance being made for an average of three months' accrued interest, which is deducted from the market price before the computation is made. In computing the yield to the investor, the gain or loss incurred by redemption at par at maturity is taken into account:—

Investors' return from Australasian stocks

INVESTORS' INTEREST RETURN FROM AUSTRALASIAN STOCKS,
1894, 1897, 1900, 1902, AND 1904 TO 1909.

Year.	Victoria.	New South Wales.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.
FOUR PER CENTS.							
	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.
1894	3 17 2	3 13 7	3 13 10	3 13 9	3 13 0	..	3 13 4
1897	3 5 1	3 2 2	3 2 2	3 4 1	3 1 3	..	3 6 2
1900	3 8 8	3 6 4	3 7 6	3 7 10	3 6 2	3 7 0	3 9 0
1902	3 8 4	3 8 2	3 11 10	3 11 8	3 8 0	3 6 9	3 8 5
1904	3 14 0	3 13 0	3 16 2	3 19 9	3 13 0	3 13 2	3 13 9
1905	3 12 11	3 12 5	3 13 5	3 15 4	3 12 8	3 11 1	3 11 6
1906	3 14 11	3 11 5	3 15 1	3 16 5	3 11 8	3 11 8	3 11 3
1907	3 17 0	3 13 6	3 18 2	3 18 2	3 12 10	3 13 0	3 13 3
1908	3 14 1	3 11 7	3 15 6	3 15 1	3 12 5	3 12 1	3 11 3
1909	3 15 4	3 12 0	3 15 4	3 16 4	3 11 10	3 14 0	3 12 3
THREE AND A HALF PER CENTS.							
	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.	Per cent. £ s. d.
1894	3 15 11	3 11 11	3 16 4	3 12 10	..	3 15 2	3 11 0
1897	3 3 11	3 0 6	3 3 7	3 1 0	..	3 1 1	3 3 11
1900	3 6 10	3 5 0	3 6 10	3 5 9	3 7 7	3 7 3	3 6 4
1902	3 7 10	3 6 8	3 9 0	3 7 6	3 10 3	3 6 9	3 5 6
1904	3 16 0	3 14 10	3 16 10	3 12 7	4 2 2	3 14 11	3 11 9
1905	3 14 0	3 11 8	3 13 10	3 11 10	3 19 0	3 12 8	3 12 0
1906	3 11 5	3 10 5	3 12 3	3 10 0	3 15 0	3 13 8	3 10 4
1907	3 14 4	3 12 2	3 15 6	3 11 11	4 2 9	3 16 8	3 11 5
1908	3 12 5	3 10 10	3 13 10	3 11 2	3 18 9	3 14 5	3 11 3
1909	3 14 5	3 13 2	3 15 8	3 12 5	4 0 3	3 16 0	3 12 6

NOTE.—Where the date of redemption is optional, the earliest date has been adopted for the calculation.

Taking the 3½ per cents. as being the representative stocks, it appears that, almost without exception, those of New South Wales, South Australia, and New Zealand, yield least to the investor, being practically alike, and having of late years been purchased at prices

returning little more than the nominal rate of interest, while those of Western Australia yield most, the net return required by the investor in 1909 having been 4 per cent.

Representative British and Colonial stocks in London.

The following is a statement of the interest return to the investor in the principal issues of Colonial stocks and in British Consols, as indicated by the mean between the highest and lowest market prices quoted during the years 1900 and 1909:—

INTEREST ON MEAN PRICES OF BRITISH CONSOLS AND COLONIAL STOCKS, 1900 AND 1909.

Country.	Date of Maturity.	Rate of Interest on Stock.	Return to Investor Per Cent.		
			1900.	1909.	Increase.
United Kingdom ..	Inter-minable	per cent. 2½*	£ s. d. 2 10 0	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0
Canada	1947	2½	2 17 1	3 9 2	0 12 1
Canada	1938	3	3 0 0	3 9 9	0 9 9
Ceylon	1934	4	3 6 11	3 9 9	0 2 10
Western Australia ..	1934	4	3 6 2	3 11 10	0 5 8
New South Wales	1933	4	3 6 4	3 12 0	0 5 8
New Zealand	1929	4	3 9 0	3 12 3	0 3 3
Natal	1937	4	3 10 1	3 12 3	0 2 2
South Australia ..	1939	3½	3 5 9	3 12 5	0 6 8
Jamaica	1934	4	3 10 11	3 12 5	0 1 6
New Zealand	1940	3½	3 6 4	3 12 6	0 6 2
Newfoundland	1935	4	3 11 1	3 12 8	0 1 7
New South Wales ..	1924	3½	3 5 0	3 13 2	0 8 2
Cape Colony	1929-49	3½	3 5 3	3 13 2	0 7 11
British Guiana ..	1935	4	3 12 3	3 13 8	0 1 5
Tasmania	1920-40	4	3 7 0	3 14 0	0 7 0
New Zealand	1945	3	3 3 2	3 14 0	0 10 10
Victoria	1923	3½	3 6 10	3 14 5	0 7 7
Cape Colony	1923	4	3 10 4	3 15 2	0 4 10
Victoria	1920	4	3 8 8	3 15 4	0 6 8
Hong Kong	1918-43	3½	3 7 5	3 15 4	0 7 11
Queensland	1915	4	3 7 6	3 15 4	0 7 10
Queensland	1924	3½	3 6 10	3 15 8	0 8 10
Trinidad	1917-42	4	3 7 8	3 15 10	0 8 2
Tasmania	1920-40	3½	3 7 3	3 16 0	0 8 9
South Australia ..	1917-36	4	3 7 10	3 16 4	0 8 6
New South Wales	1935	3	3 0 11	3 17 3	0 16 4
Quebec	1937	3	3 10 7	3 19 1	0 8 6
Western Australia	1915-35	3½	3 7 7	4 0 3	0 12 8
Victoria	1929-49	3	3 4 10	4 2 0	0 17 2
Natal	1914-39	3½	3 7 11	4 2 4	0 14 5
Natal	1929-49	3	3 4 9	4 3 9	0 19 0
British Guiana ..	1923-45	3	3 7 2	4 10 5	1 3 3
Queensland	1922-47	3	3 6 1	4 10 11	1 4 10
Trinidad	1922-44	3	3 6 11	4 13 4	1 6 5
Western Australia	1916-36	3	3 12 0	5 3 2	1 14 2
South Australia ..	1916 or later	3	3 10 2	5 19 11	2 9 9

* Consols carried 2½ per cent. interest until 1903; but the rate of interest to a permanent investor in 1900 is only reckoned at 2½, which is now the permanent rate.

It would appear from this table as if the Australian and other Colonial 3 per cent. stocks were not viewed with approbation by the British investor; but as most of these stocks are payable at the option of the Governments between extremes of 20 or 25 years, and the computation of returns to investors has been made on the assumption of redemption of the loans at the earliest dates, such returns are higher than the probabilities warrant. Since the market rate of interest is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., it is not at all likely that the Governments will endeavour to redeem at the earliest date, unless under the unlikely condition of a fall in interest below 3 per cent. Therefore, in the case of these stocks, it would be a fairer comparison to calculate the return to the investor on the assumption of redemption at the latest optional date. Under these circumstances, the interest realized by the purchasers of the various 3 per cent. Australian and other Colonial stocks in 1900 and 1909 would be as follows:—

Stocks.	Return to Investor.—Per cent.					
	1900.		1909.		Increase.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	s.	d.
South Australia, 1916 or later ...	3	3 11	3	11 4	7	5
Western Australia, 1916-36 ...	3	6 10	3	15 6	8	8
Victoria, 1929-49 ...	3	3 8	3	14 2	10	6
Queensland, 1922-47 ...	3	3 11	3	14 5	10	6
British Guiana, 1923-45 ...	3	4 9	3	15 6	10	9
Natal, 1929-49 ...	3	3 8	3	15 2	11	6
Trinidad, 1922-44 ...	3	4 7	3	16 3	11	8

It is thus seen, on comparison with the yields of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 4 per cents. shown in the previous tables, that there was no real preference exhibited in favour of any particular stock in 1909.

The amount of Victorian Government stock and debentures, under certain loans payable in Melbourne, outstanding on 30th June, the price in January, and the return to the investor per cent. for recent years, are as follows. The market prices are taken from the *Australasian Insurance and Banking Record*:—

Prices of stock and debentures in Melbourne.

PRICES OF STOCK AND DEBENTURES IN MELBOURNE: 1899 TO 1910.

Year.	Amount Outstanding on 30th June.	Price in January.	Return to Investor per cent.	
			£	s. d.
3% Stock, due 1917 or at any time thereafter.				
1899 ...	2,790,482	100 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	19 8
1900 ...	3,059,511	100-100 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	19 11
1901 ...	3,146,000	98 $\frac{1}{2}$ -99 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	0 7
1902 ...	3,195,619	99 $\frac{3}{8}$	3	0 4
1903 ...	3,196,933	97	3	1 10
1904 ...	3,120,492	92 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	4 10

PRICES OF STOCK AND DEBENTURES IN MELBOURNE: 1899 TO 1910—
continued.

Year.	Amount Out- standing on 30th June.	Price in January.	Return to Investor per cent.
	£		£ s. d.
3 % Stock, due 1917 or at any time thereafter— <i>continued.</i>			
1905 ...	3,155,773	88 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 7 7
1906 ...	3,153,067	93	3 4 6
1907 ...	3,197,732	91 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 5 7
1908 ...	3,226,585	89	3 7 5
1909 ...	3,229,429	87	3 9 0
1910 ...	...	85 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 10 2
3 % Debentures, due 1921-30.			
1901 ...	532,000	97 $\frac{1}{4}$ -97 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 2 9
1902 ...	1,000,000	95-95 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 4 10
1903 ...	1,000,000	93 $\frac{1}{2}$ -93 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 7 1
1904 ...	1,000,000	88-90	3 13 2
1905 ...	1,000,000	87 $\frac{1}{2}$ -88	3 15 3
1906 ...	997,400	93	3 8 7
1907 ...	993,150	90	3 12 10
1908 ...	985,950	89	3 14 8
1909 ...	985,650	86 $\frac{1}{2}$ -87	3 18 8
1910 ...	...	88 $\frac{3}{4}$ -89	3 16 0
4 % Debentures, due 1913-23.			
1899 ...	746,795	111-112	3 1 2
1900 ...	746,795	112	2 19 6
1901 ...	746,795	105-107 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 8 2
1902 ...	746,795	106	3 8 0
1903 ...	746,795	104 $\frac{1}{4}$	3 10 9
1904 ...	746,795	103	3 12 10
1905 ...	746,795	103 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 10 3
1906 ...	746,795	104 $\frac{1}{2}$ -105	3 6 5
1907 ...	746,795	104	3 7 3
1908 ...	746,795	102 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 10 8
1909 ...	746,795	103 $\frac{1}{4}$	3 6 0
1910 ...	...	104 $\frac{1}{4}$	2 17 7

The prices quoted in this table do not include any allowance for accrued interest, the practice on the Melbourne Stock Exchange differing from that on the London Exchange, where accrued interest is included in prices quoted.

In computing the returns to investors, the 3 per cent. stock has been regarded as interminable, since it is at the option of the Government whether it be redeemed in 1917, or at any time thereafter; and, as before explained, with reference to other Colonial stock, it is extremely unlikely that redemption will take place at the earliest date. For the 3 per cent. debentures it has been assumed that redemption will be made at the latest optional date, viz., 1930. For the 4 per cent. debentures the earliest date has been assumed, since the nominal interest is in excess of the market rate. For the years

1901, 1902, and 1903, the 4 per cent. debentures gave the highest yield per cent., but since then the investor in the 3 per cent. debentures has had the highest return each year. In 1909 and 1910 the 4 per cent. debentures gave a lower return to the investor than either the 3 per cent. stock or 3 per cent. debentures. It appears that the yields realized by the investor in Victoria from 3 per cent. stock and 4 per cent. debentures in January, 1910, were considerably lower than those generally realized by the investor in Colonial stocks on the British market during 1909.

INSURANCE.

There are nineteen companies transacting life assurance business in Victoria. Seven of these companies have their head offices in Victoria, five in New South Wales, three in America, and four in the United Kingdom. The following are the number and amount of policies in force in Victoria in companies whose head offices are inside, and in those whose head offices are outside Victoria during the years 1900 to 1909:—

Life assurance.

LIFE POLICIES IN FORCE IN VICTORIA, 1900 TO 1909.

Year.	Companies with Head Offices in—				Total.
	Victoria.	New South Wales.	United Kingdom.	America.	
NUMBER.					
1900 ..	59,997	105,851	1,203	5,662	172,713
1901 ..	70,115	117,958	1,130	6,833	196,036
1902 ..	76,958	125,075	1,052	7,837	210,922
1903 ..	77,938	127,364	1,004	8,555	214,861
1904 ..	84,006	130,366	950	8,890	224,212
1905 ..	84,108	133,117	914	9,029	227,168
1906 ..	87,894	138,546	841	7,810	235,091
1907 ..	89,359	145,203	805	7,018	242,385
1908 ..	95,601	152,219	751	6,146	254,717
1909 ..	104,354	160,679	706	5,160	270,899
AMOUNT.					
	£	£	£	£	£
1900 ..	8,268,635	14,917,162	554,124	2,575,941	26,315,862
1901 ..	9,267,205	15,952,982	523,560	2,821,142	28,564,889
1902 ..	9,610,224	16,798,243	477,934	2,991,761	29,878,162
1903 ..	9,458,538	17,175,972	458,820	3,137,237	30,230,567
1904 ..	9,692,186	17,646,043	434,030	3,208,084	30,980,343
1905 ..	9,702,730	18,242,212	426,840	3,214,742	31,586,524
1906 ..	10,010,359	18,973,956	393,765	2,868,727	32,246,807
1907 ..	10,375,502	19,814,689	377,906	2,544,255	33,112,352
1908 ..	10,836,282	20,674,898	344,859	2,201,808	34,057,847
1909 ..	11,289,146	21,585,263	324,630	1,921,714	35,120,753

The policies dealt with in the preceding table include simple life assurance, endowment assurance, and pure endowment, in both the ordinary and industrial classes.

The percentage of policies held in Australian and foreign offices in Victoria in 1909, and the percentage increase or decrease since 1900, are as follows:—

LIFE ASSURANCE POLICIES: PERCENTAGE AND GROWTH OF VICTORIAN BUSINESS IN AUSTRALIAN AND FOREIGN OFFICES.

Companies with Head Offices in—	Percentage in 1909 of—		Increase per cent. in 1909 as compared with 1900.	
	Total Policies.	Total Amount Assured.	Number.	Amount.
Victoria	38·5	32·1	73·9	36·5
New South Wales ..	59·3	61·5	51·8	44·7
United Kingdom ..	·3	·9	- 41·3*	- 41·4*
America	1·9	5·5	- 8·9*	- 25·4*
Total	100·0	100·0	56·8	33·5

* The minus sign denotes a decrease.

Thus, while there has been a very large increase in the business of the Australian offices, there has been a large falling off in the business of the British and American companies, nearly all of which have, however, ceased to accept new business.

Classifica-
tion of
assurance
policies.

The business transacted by the different offices comprise many varieties of assurance, but these may be grouped into three large classes—(1) simple assurance payable only at death; (2) endowment assurance, payable at the end of a specified term or at previous death; (3) endowments payable only should a person named survive a specified term. An endeavour has been made to obtain direct from each office the business under each of these classes. In the case of three of the offices the separation between ordinary assurance and endowment assurance could not be effected. The following table shows the available information on the subject for the past three years, distinguishing between ordinary and industrial business:—

LIFE ASSURANCE POLICIES IN FORCE AT 31ST DECEMBER,
1907 TO 1909.

	1907.	1908.	1909.
ORDINARY BUSINESS.			
Number of Policies—			
Assurance	130,595	135,555	140,815
Endowment Assurance }			
Pure Endowment .. ..				8,049	8,899	10,619
Total	138,644	144,454	151,434

LIFE ASSURANCE POLICIES IN FORCE AT 31ST DECEMBER,
1907 TO 1909—continued.

	1907.	1908.	1909.
ORDINARY BUSINESS—continued.			
Amount Assured—	£	£	£
Assurance ...	30,199,584	30,936,052	31,744,357
Endowment Assurance ...	800,685	850,275	969,903
Pure Endowment ...			
Total ...	31,000,269	31,786,327	32,714,260
Annual Premiums—			£
Assurance ...	...	...	1,089,515
Endowment Assurance ...	...	...	40,709
Pure Endowment ...	...	...
Total ...	...	...	1,130,224
INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS.			
Number of Policies—			
Assurance ...	39,375	41,067	44,847
Endowment Assurance ...	44,893	50,536	54,947
Pure Endowment ...	19,473	18,660	19,671
Total ...	103,741	110,263	119,465
Amount Assured—	£	£	£
Assurance ...	808,418	807,248	818,955
Endowment Assurance ...	948,940	1,133,610	1,252,467
Pure Endowment ...	354,725	330,662	335,071
Total ...	2,112,083	2,271,520	2,406,493
Annual Premiums—			£
Assurance ...	...	...	40,599
Endowment Assurance ...	...	...	66,965
Pure Endowment ...	...	...	23,233
Total ...	...	...	130,797

There has thus been an increase of 12,790 ordinary and 15,724 industrial policies since 1907, the increase in the total sum assured by the ordinary policies being £1,713,991, and in that by the industrial policies £294,410. The average amount of policy in the former category for 1909 was £216, whilst—calculated from the returns of those societies which distinguish between simple assurance and endowment assurance—the average amount of the simple assurance policy in the ordinary branch was £332, and that of the endowment assurance policy £172, the total amounts of the policies in the two forms of assurance being very similar, viz., £15,257,939 for simple assurance, and £15,786,858 for endowment assurance. The pure endowment policies amounted to £969,903, or an average of £91 for each policy. In the industrial branch of the business the average

amount of policy is £20.1, and there is not much variation in the average policies of the three classes, viz., simple assurance, £18.3, endowment assurance £22.8, and pure endowment £17.0. The total amounts of the several policies were £818,955, £1,252,467, and £335,071 respectively. Taking these figures in conjunction with those relating to the ordinary business (with the restriction before mentioned) it would seem that there is a preference slightly in favour of endowment assurance. A better test of popularity would be furnished by the number of policies in the respective classes. In the ordinary business there are 45,971 simple assurance, and 91,572 endowment assurance policies, and in the industrial business 44,847 and 54,947 policies respectively. Judged by these figures, endowment assurance must be regarded as the popular form.

Annuity
policies.

The following are the number and amount of annuity policies in force in Victoria at the end of each of the last ten years, distinguishing between those in force in companies whose head offices are inside, and those whose head offices are outside Victoria :—

ANNUITY POLICIES IN FORCE IN VICTORIA, 1900 TO 1909.

Year.	Head Offices in Victoria.		Head Offices outside Victoria.		Total.	
	Number.	Amount per Annum.	Number.	Amount per Annum.	Number.	Amount per Annum.
1900 ..	65	£ 3,877	189	£ 12,307	254	£ 16,184
1901 ..	81	4,221	229	15,150	310	19,371
1902 ..	85	4,958	269	15,990	354	20,948
1903 ..	91	4,850	294	13,971	385	18,821
1904 ..	101	7,275	308	14,108	409	21,383
1905 ..	117	7,253	308	14,179	425	21,432
1906 ..	137	8,146	320	14,270	457	22,416
1907 ..	144	8,181	336	15,007	480	23,188
1908 ..	157	8,845	324	14,163	481	23,008
1909 ..	181	11,662	334	14,838	515	26,500

The annuities at the close of 1909 exceed those at the close of 1900 by 103 per cent. in number and 64 per cent. in amount.

Of the 334 annuities held in 1909 in companies whose head offices were outside Victoria, 245 for £10,680 per annum were in New South Wales offices, 2 for £348 in English offices, and 87 for £3,810 in American offices. It is noteworthy that there was only one annuity in the industrial branch, and that for only £6 per annum.

The preceding tables relate to policies in force on 31st December; but in the succeeding table is summarized the amount of new business written by all life insurance companies during 1909, the annual premium income obtainable therefrom being also given.

LIFE ASSURANCE—NEW POLICIES ISSUED DURING 1909.

		<i>Ordinary Business.</i>				
Number of Policies—	Assurance	...	...	...	...	2,939
	Endowment Assurance	...	...	...	...	11,733
	Pure Endowment	...	...	...	...	4,338
	Total	...	...	...	...	19,010
	Annuities	...	...	...	...	60
						£
Sum Assured —	Assurance	...	...	...	...	975,575
	Endowment Assurance	...	...	...	...	1,849,738
	Pure Endowment	...	...	...	...	305,417
	Total	...	...	...	...	3,130,730
	Annuities	...	...	...	...	4,406
Single Premiums—	Assurance	...	...	...	...	4,605
	Endowment Assurance	...	...	...	...	1,447
	Pure Endowment	...	...	...	...	4,197
	Total	...	...	...	...	10,249
	Annuities	...	...	...	...	33,701
Annual Premiums—	Assurance	...	...	...	...	30,521
	Endowment Assurance	...	...	...	...	71,166
	Pure Endowment	...	...	...	...	11,883
	Total	...	...	...	...	113,570
	Annuities	...	...	...	...	195
		<i>Industrial Business.</i>				
Number of Policies—	Assurance	...	...	...	...	15,066
	Endowment Assurance	...	...	...	...	28,721
	Pure Endowment	...	...	...	...	5,191
	Total	...	...	...	...	48,978
						£
Sum Assured —	Assurance	...	...	...	...	357,959
	Endowment Assurance	...	...	...	...	764,744
	Pure Endowment	...	...	...	...	87,072
	Total	...	...	...	...	1,209,775
Annual Premiums—	Assurance	...	...	...	...	18,495
	Endowment Assurance	...	...	...	...	43,523
	Pure Endowment	...	...	...	...	6,273
	Total	...	...	...	...	68,291

Insurance—
other than
Life.

The following table shows the transactions of insurance companies doing other than life business and operating in Victoria in 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, and 1909:—

INSURANCE—OTHER THAN LIFE: 1904 TO 1909.

Nature of Insurance.	Year.	Receipts.			Outgo.		
		Premiums.	Other.	Total.	Losses.	Other.	Total.
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Fire and Marine	1904	559,518	33,614	593,132	230,626	220,029	450,655
	1905	550,138	36,874	587,012	248,947	225,972	474,919
	1906	587,502	36,245	623,747	240,357	235,910	476,267
Fire ...	1907	496,667	28,484	525,151	227,871	208,076	435,947
	1909	559,100	27,498	586,598	254,098	225,521	479,619
Marine	1907	136,534	6,285	142,819	109,474	44,202	153,676
	1909	115,825	4,603	120,428	67,515	34,978	102,493
Accident and Guarantee	1904	47,110	2,756	49,866	19,085	21,649	40,734
	1905	53,539	4,072	57,611	23,508	19,990	43,498
	1906	60,799	3,872	64,671	18,585	26,701	45,286
Accident	1907	57,190	2,254	59,444	20,343	30,556	50,899
	1909	75,110	3,185	78,295	27,733	45,037	72,770
Guarantee	1907	11,047	1,710	12,757	2,129	4,953	7,082
	1909	9,558	1,382	10,940	1,972	4,531	6,503
Other (Live Stock, Burglary, Plate Glass)	1904	7,655	593	8,248	4,348	2,175	6,523
	1905	9,853	658	10,511	4,477	2,448	6,925
	1906	10,672	757	11,409	6,093	3,330	9,423
Live Stock	1907	16,109	465	16,574	9,102	3,549	12,651
	1909	22,818	467	23,285	10,054	5,785	15,839
Burglary	1907	2,563	66	2,629	1,027	1,234	2,261
	1909	3,106	55	3,161	1,932	1,388	3,320
Plate Glass	1907	5,428	532	5,960	1,778	2,808	4,586
	1909	5,698	564	6,262	2,072	2,730	4,802
Other ...	1909	4,675	662	5,337	1,674	2,281	3,955
Totals	1904	614,283	36,963	651,246	254,059	243,853	497,912
	1905	613,530	41,604	655,134	276,932	248,410	525,342
	1906	658,973	40,854	699,827	265,035	265,941	530,976
	1907	725,538	39,796	765,334	371,724	295,378	667,102
	1909	795,890	38,416	834,306	367,050	322,251	689,301

The particulars given in this table relate to Victorian risks, that is, to all business written on the Victorian registers of the sixty-eight companies represented in the return. The figures are net, and in the case of premiums exclude re-insurances and returns; the losses also exclude amounts recovered from re-insuring offices; but include losses on Victorian risks wherever paid. The item "Other outgo" excludes expenditure, amounting to £14,423, incurred in Victoria in connexion with the supervision of branches outside the State, as well as the sum expended outside Victoria on the supervision of branches within the State. The amount so expended outside the State is unknown, but it is probably less than the outlay under the former heading.

The total amount at risk is not available, but it is obvious, from the extent of the premiums, that the amount covered must be very large.

The total losses on all classes of insurance for the five years given in the table represent 45 per cent. of the premiums.

BUILDING SOCIETIES.

Building societies in Victoria date from an early period in the history of the State, and up to 1892 their business was extensive. Since then it has been comparatively small, although the figures of recent years show that an improvement has taken place in building society business. The following table gives particulars of the principal items of business during the last five years:—

BUILDING SOCIETIES: 1905 TO 1909.

—	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Number of societies ...	28	31	30	29	27
" shareholders	5,881	6,920	6,949	6,420	7,413
" borrowers	6,351	7,418	7,638	7,770	8,127
During the year—	£	£	£	£	£
Advances ...	154,507	253,029	316,516	272,245	242,790
Repayments ...	237,898	316,005	344,051	347,302	330,848
Working expenses ...	20,084	24,060	24,264	33,554	32,665
At end of year—					
Deposits ...	716,601	712,186	694,095	665,295	714,265

The above figures show that there has been substantial improvement in building society business since 1905, the advances made during 1909 representing an increase of 57 per cent., and the repayments an increase of 39 per cent. on the corresponding figures for 1905. The total assets of the building societies on 31st December, 1909, amounted to £2,461,064, of which £1,741,368 consisted of loans on mortgage, and £602,029 of properties in possession or surrendered. Of the total liabilities, viz., £2,298,920, £1,247,497 was due to shareholders, £228,750 to debenture holders, and £714,265 to depositors. The total reserved funds at the same date amounted to £212,116.

MORTGAGES, LIENS, ETC.

A statement of the number and amount of registered mortgages and releases of land in each of the last five years is given hereunder. Generally, in about 5 per cent. of the mortgages the amount of the loan is not stated, so that the amounts appearing in the following table may be taken as understating the total by about that proportion. No account is taken of unregistered or equitable mortgages to banks

Land mortgages and releases.

and individuals, as there is no public record of these dealings; nor are building society mortgages over land held under the *Transfer of Land Act* included, they being registered as absolute transfers. Besides releases registered as such, some mortgages are released or lapse in other ways, e.g., by a transfer from mortgagor to mortgagee, by sale by mortgagee, or by foreclosure.

LAND MORTGAGES AND RELEASES: 1905 TO 1909.

Registered During Year.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Mortgages—					
Number ..	8,665	8,964	10,523	11,563	11,759
Amount £	5,957,242	7,139,501	8,937,305	8,787,077	9,853,459
Releases—					
Number ..	7,175	8,318	8,034	8,721	8,286
Amount £	5,143,295	6,896,972	7,222,827	5,694,406	8,002,484

Stock mortgages, liens on wool and crops.

The number and amount of stock mortgages, liens on wool, and liens on crops registered during each of the last five years were as follows. Releases are not shown, as releases of liens are not required to be registered, the latter being removed from the register after the expiration of twelve months; and very few of the mortgagors of stock trouble to secure themselves by a registered release.

STOCK MORTGAGES, LIENS ON WOOL AND CROPS: 1905 TO 1909.

Security.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Stock Mortgages—					
Number ..	900	747	799	743	771
Amount £	161,841	141,154	171,145	136,731	114,009
Liens on Wool—					
Number ..	154	152	150	153	149
Amount £	58,061	56,396	65,898	45,666	87,440
Liens on Crops—					
Number ..	1,673	1,086	503	445	465
Amount £	91,050	80,580	52,280	65,607	57,730
Total—					
Number ..	2,727	1,985	1,452	1,341	1,385
Amount £	310,952	278,130	289,323	248,004	259,179

The large number of liens on crops in 1905 is due to the fact that 1,095 were liens to the Board of Land and Works, under the *Seed Advances Act* 1903. There were 624 such liens in 1906, 174 in 1907, 208 in 1908, and 19 in 1909.

Two forms of security are taken by lenders over personal chattels, viz., a bill of sale, or a contract of sale for letting and hiring. The former is a simple mortgage of the chattels, whilst the latter purports to be an absolute sale of the chattels to the lender, with an agreement by the lender to hire the goods back to the borrower at a certain rental, which takes the place of interest. The numbers and amounts of those filed in each of the last five years are as follows:—

Bills and
contracts
of sale.

BILLS AND CONTRACTS OF SALE: 1905 TO 1909.

Security.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Bills of Sale—					
Number ..	2,200	1,998	1,407	1,428	1,327
Amount £	181,375	184,911	167,292	223,324	180,626
Contracts of Sale—					
Number ..	265	161	152	189	131
Amount £	7,860	5,184	5,376	8,216	6,156

Before filing a bill of sale, 14 days' notice of intention to file must be lodged with the Registrar-General, within which period any creditor may lodge a "caveat" to prevent the filing of the bill without the payment by the borrower of his claim. To circumvent this, the practice arose, in 1877, whereby the borrower purported to sell the chattels to the lender, who hired them back to the borrower, and this became the form of security more generally adopted until 1887, when a decision was given that if there were any tacit understanding that the transaction should be considered as a loan, the security would be void unless registered as a bill of sale. In consequence of this, the number of contracts of sale gradually decreased, until in 1906 the bills of sale were more than twelve times their number, and the amount secured thirty-six times as great. In 1909 the number of bills was ten times the number of contracts, and the amount secured thereby twenty-nine times as great.

Trading
companies
registered.

A statement of the number and nature of trading companies floated and registered in Victoria during the ten-year period 1894-1903, and during each of the last six years, is appended:—

TRADING COMPANIES REGISTERED IN VICTORIA, 1894 TO 1909.

Nature of Company.	1894 to 1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
FINANCE—							
Land, property, investment	24	...	5	...	7	3	7
Finance, agency, &c. ...	12	...	3	2	6	2	5
Insurance ...	3	2	1	...	...	1	...
TRADE—							
Cycling ...	13	2	2	...	...	3	...
Export ...	5	1	...	...	1	...	1
Produce ...	16	4	3	...	2	5	2
Supply and trading ...	17	5	6	10	12	14	11
Merchants' imports ...	28	1	5	5	2	6	5
TRANSPORT—							
Carrying ...	10	...	...	1	1	1	1
Railways and rolling-stock	5	...	...	1	...	...	...
Tramways ...	4	...	...	...	1	...	2
Steamship ...	7	1	...	1	1	2	1
Others ...	9	2	1	2	...	1	2
INDUSTRIAL—							
Bacon curing ...	6	1	...	...	1	2	..
Brewing ...	5	2	1	...	6	1	4
Bricks, tiles ...	6	...	...	...	1	...	5
Electric ...	5	2	3	...	3	...	...
Engineering, machinery ...	9	1	11	10	8	15	7
Explosives, &c. ...	5	...	...	...	3	1	4
Freezing ...	5	...	1	1	2	...	1
Manufacturing (undefined)	13	...	9	7	5	1	2
Tobacco ...	6	1	...	...	1	...	...
Preserving ...	10	2	...	...	1	2	...
Printing ...	7	...	3	1	2	2	6
Wine-making ...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...
Others ...	161	10	5	6	14	29	41
PRIMARY PRODUCTION—							
Cultivation ...	2	2	...	2	4	...	8
Dairying, &c. ...	83	16	8	4	6	1	3
Mining, prospecting, &c. ...	36	1	2	9	6	4	4
Gold saving, extracting, &c. ...	9	1	3	...	1	1	...
Pastoral ...	5	...	1	1	2	1	1
MISCELLANEOUS—							
Newspaper, magazine ...	23	5	1	2	2	1	2
Public halls ...	16	...	1	2	...	2	...
Other ...	72	14	10	8	8	13	9
Total ...	643	76	85	75	109	114	134

The figures in the above table refer only to companies registered under Part I. of the *Companies Act 1890*, and are, therefore, exclusive of ordinary mining companies, of which 151 were registered during 1909 under Part II. of the Act. Insurance companies doing life business only, as well as building societies, are also excluded. An examination of the above figures shows that of the 1,236 new companies registered during the last sixteen years, 491, or 40 per cent., were industrial; 227, or 18 per cent., were connected with primary production; 187, or 15 per cent., with trade; 83, or 6½ per cent., with finance; 57, or 5 per cent., with transport; whilst 191 or 15½ per cent., were of a miscellaneous character, including newspapers, magazines, public halls, and various societies and associations. Those industrial companies, included under the term "others," are principally companies registered for the manufacture of a particular patented article, but include a number of companies formed for the manufacture of various commodities and for the treatment of natural products.

According to records in the Registrar-General's office, there were 1,323 trading companies in 1909 actively engaged in the operations for which they were formed, as against 1,303 in 1908, 1,337 in 1907, 1,305 in 1906, and 1,131 in 1905. In addition to the above there were 14 insurance companies doing life business only in 1909, and a large number of mining companies, but how many is not known.

The following table shows the particulars of the Registered Co-operative Societies for 1909:—

REGISTERED CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES, 1909.

Number of Societies	...	...	...	...	37
Number of Shareholders	...	...	...	...	23,622
Total Sales during Year	...	...	...	...	£470,534
Other Receipts	...	...	...	...	£10,168
Wages and Salaries for Year	...	...	...	...	£43,625
Other Working Expenses	...	...	...	...	£46,587
Net Profit	...	...	...	...	£8,276
Liabilities at end of Year—				£	
Paid-up Capital	...	...	...	118,903	
Reserves	...	...	...	8,192	
Bank Overdraft	...	...	...	59,283	
Sundry Creditors	...	...	...	57,267	
Other Liabilities	...	...	...	41,968	
Total Liabilities	...	...	...	...	£285,613
Assets at end of Year—				£	
Real Estate, Stock and Fittings	...	...	...	196,316	
Sundry Debtors	...	...	...	75,481	
Cash in Hand and on Deposit	...	...	...	7,185	
Other Assets	...	...	...	17,839	
Total Assets	...	...	...	...	£296,821

Number of existing companies.

Registered co-operative societies.

As compared with 1908 there has been an increase of only two in the number of societies, and 160 in the number of shareholders. The total liabilities have increased by £19,176, of which £6,472 is due to increased capital. The total assets have increased by £20,304.

Of the thirty-seven co-operative societies, fourteen were engaged in the purchase of farmers' requisites or the sale of farm and garden produce, six as general distributors, four in bread-making, two each in the manufacture of jams, &c., and in meat supplying, and one each in supplying coachbuilders' materials, co-operative credit banking, fish selling, printing and publishing, eucalyptus oil distilling, fruit drying, fruit packing and selling, fodder and produce selling, and brick-making.
