

LAW, CRIME, ETC.**THE LEGAL SYSTEM IN VICTORIA.**

The law of Victoria, in its basic principles and main provisions, is founded on the law of England. All laws in force in England in 1828 were, so far as they should be held to apply to the circumstances of Australia, by Imperial Statute made law in New South Wales (which then included Victoria); and, in case of any doubt as to their applicability, the Colonial Legislature was empowered to declare whether or not they did apply, or to establish any modification or limitation of them within the colony. The same Statute established a Legislature within New South Wales with power to make laws for that colony; and Supreme and other courts were constituted. On the separation of Port Phillip from New South Wales in 1851 the new colony of Victoria was invested with similar powers, which were widened on the establishment of responsible government in 1855. In order, therefore, to ascertain the law of Victoria as to any particular matter or point, considerable research is often involved. The first step is a search of the Victorian Statutes. If the matter is fully dealt with there, the labour is concluded; but, if it has never been dealt with by any Victorian Act, recourse must be had to the Statutes of New South Wales and the Imperial Statutes specially applicable to New South Wales passed between 1828 and 1851. If no law on the point is obtainable from these sources, the law of England in 1828 must be ascertained, which in most cases is found in the English text-books. Having found the apparent law from one of these sources, it is still necessary to search through series of law reports for decisions which may either modify or interpret the same.

LITIGATION AND LEGAL BUSINESS.

Supreme
Court civil
business.

The Supreme Court of Victoria was first established in 1852, and its constitution and powers remain substantially unaltered by recent legislation, although the procedure was entirely remoulded by the "Judicature Act of 1883."

There were in 1924 seven Judges, viz., a Chief Justice and six Puisne Judges.

The following is a statement of Supreme Court business during the last year of each of the five decennial periods ended 1910, and the last five years :—

SUPREME COURT CIVIL CASES, 1870 TO 1923.

Year	Writs of Summons.		Causes Entered for Trial.	Causes Tried.	Verdicts for—		Amount Awarded.
	Number Issued.	Amount Claimed.			Plaintiff.	Defendant.	
1870 ..	5,583	£ 154,296	237	165	133	29	£ 29,298
1880 ..	5,065	185,131	221	161	133	28	47,401
1890 ..	6,619	687,503	535	297	229	65	68,592
1900 ..	825	137,083	161	106	62	31	101,896
1910 ..	743	69,182	129	85	37	16	7,984
1919 ..	629	90,818	116	61	24	14	6,151
1920 ..	632	74,288	132	80	39	17	9,036
1921 ..	822	164,898	198	82	46	17	13,623
1922 ..	726	155,329	187	67	31	23	13,063
1923 ..	779	178,542	201	62	43	12	17,543

Decline in Litigation. There has been a considerable decline in litigation in the Supreme Court since 1890. In 1923 the writs issued were nearly one-ninth; the amount sued for was about one-fourth; and the causes which actually came to trial were about one-fifth of the corresponding numbers in 1890. The figures show that a very small proportion of writs result in actual trials, whilst a large number of trials are either abandoned before a verdict is given, postponed to the following year, or settled.

County Court business. County Courts have a jurisdiction both in equity and common law cases, limited to £500; also in cases remitted by the Supreme Court. The cause of action must have arisen within 100 miles of the court in which proceedings are taken, which court must not be more than ten miles further away from defendant's residence than some other County Court in which the plaintiff might have sued. In 1923 there were 102 sessions lasting 472 days and held in 36 places. Particulars of litigation in the last

year of each of the five decennial periods ended 1910 and in each of the last five years are as follows :—

COUNTY COURT CASES, 1870 TO 1923.

Year.	Number of Cases Tried.	Amount Sued For.	Amount Awarded.	Costs Awarded to—	
				Plaintiff.	Defendant.
1870 ..	11,866	£ 277,236	£ 102,822	£ 13,815	£ 4,268
1880 ..	9,498	215,929	99,338	13,765	3,956
1890 ..	12,635	340,028	127,433	15,363	6,072
1900 ..	789	160,676	49,595	5,188	2,782
1910 ..	626	144,550	45,196	5,199	1,992
1919 ..	600	206,164	94,049	*	*
1920 ..	680	283,238	113,804	*	*
1921 ..	824	399,801	213,113	*	*
1922 ..	796	385,074	200,534	*	*
1923 ..	934	428,153	219,602	*	*

* No record.

The number of cases tried in 1923 was above the average of recent years, but was only about 7 per cent. of the number in 1890. The amounts sued for and awarded were, however, greater than the amounts for that year. The decline in the number of cases would seem to indicate that the public is less inclined than formerly to institute legal proceedings for the settlement of disputes; and that the County Court is not resorted to for the recovery of petty and trade debts to the same extent as in former years.

Workers' Compensation—Arbitration easier. The number of requests for arbitration under the Workers' Compensation Act during the year 1923 was 191. The aggregate amount of compensation claimed was £38,346, and the amount awarded, £35,058. These figures are not included in the above table.

Petty Sessions civil business. Courts of Petty Sessions were held at 228 places in Victoria in 1923 by stipendiary magistrates and honorary justices. Clerks of courts of ten years' standing, who have passed the prescribed examination, and barristers of five years' standing are eligible for appointment as police magistrates, but there is no legal training or knowledge of the law required as a condition precedent to the appointment of a person as an honorary justice of the peace. The jurisdiction in civil cases is limited to what

may be called ordinary debts, damages for assault, and restitution of goods, where the amount in dispute does not exceed £50. Particulars of such cases heard during a series of years are given hereunder :—

COURTS OF PETTY SESSIONS: CIVIL CASES, 1870 TO 1923.

Year.			Cases Heard.	Amount Claimed.	Amount Awarded.
				£	£
1870	..	..	27,722	190,242	105,086
1880	..	..	19,983	75,684	50,764
1890	..	..	30,466	196,917	132,663
1900	..	..	17,577	95,890	80,960
1910	..	..	29,902	186,538	146,284
1919	..	..	34,841	213,418	155,009
1920	..	..	38,300	218,408	158,198
1921	..	..	45,319	271,634	202,606
1922	..	..	47,140	384,441	295,697
1923	..	..	58,502	528,968	413,417

In addition to the ordinary cases above mentioned, and to the criminal jurisdiction hereafter mentioned, Courts of Petty Sessions deal with other business of a civil and quasi-criminal nature. During the year 1923, 593 appeals against municipal ratings, 1,485 maintenance cases, 1,081 fraud summonses against debtors, 14,004 cases relating to licences and certificates, 1,132 garnishee cases, 788 ejection cases, 107 prohibition cases, 190 Children's Maintenance Act cases, and 743 miscellaneous cases were heard, and 279 persons alleged to be lunatics were examined.

A statement is given below of the number of writs received by the Sheriff in the last year of each of the five decennial periods ended 1910 and the last five years, from which it will be seen that the decrease since 1890 is very considerable :—

WRITS RECEIVED BY THE SHERIFF, 1870 TO 1923.

Year.	King's Writs against Person and Property.	Subjects' Writs against—		Total.	
		The Person.	Property.		
1870	...	35	75	2,146	2,256
1880	...	35	58	1,944	2,037
1890	...	13	21	2,282	2,316
1900	...	4	3	199	206
1910	4	166	170
1919	...	3	6	109	118
1920	3	124	127
1921	9	186	195
1922	...	3	3	187	193
1923	...	6	1	237	244

High Court of Australia.

A statement showing the nature of this court and the powers vested in it appears in the *Year-Book* for 1916-17, page 433.

Intestate Estates.

The rules by which the property and effects, both real and personal, of persons dying intestate are by law distributed are given in the *Year-Book* for 1916-17, page 437.

INSOLVENCIES.

Insolvencies, &c.

The number of failures and the declared assets and liabilities during the last year of each of the five decennial periods ended 1910 and in each of the last five years were as follows :—

**INSOLVENCIES AND DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT,
1870 TO 1923.**

Year.	Insolvencies.			Deeds of Arrangement.		
	Number.	Declared Liabilities.	Declared Assets.	Number.	Declared Liabilities.	Declared Assets.
		£	£		£	£
1870 ..	996	479,491	150,170	*	*	*
1880 ..	768	526,130	298,384	*	*	*
1890 ..	795	2,301,271	2,041,200	*	*	*
1900 ..	344	183,531	88,760	149	168,700	159,771
1910 ..	359	132,841	54,381	131	113,597	91,271
1919 ..	207	184,041	130,328	68	108,181	91,689
1920 ..	186	154,658	53,229	69	82,692	73,591
1921 ..	300	180,044	92,048	100	186,305	140,430
1922 ..	322	349,118	189,016	99	178,986	127,657
1923 ..	414	323,540	152,602	133	199,074	139,757

* Information not available.

The number of insolvencies in 1923 was higher than in each of the preceding seven years. The average yearly number during the ten years 1909 to 1918 was 358, and the average declared liabilities, £226,517. During the ten years 1899 to 1908 the average yearly number was 445, with declared liabilities of £244,538, whereas, during the ten years 1889 to 1898, when the failures resulting from the financial crisis of that period swelled the returns, the average yearly number was 833, with declared liabilities of £2,213,592. During the ten years 1879 to 1888 the average yearly number was 612, with declared liabilities of £661,720.

Insolvencies are of two kinds, voluntary and compulsory. The following table shows the number of petitions of each kind in the last five years :—

Year.	Voluntary.	Compulsory.	Total.
1919 ... ..	... 185	22	207
1920 ... ..	... 165	21	186
1921 ... ..	... 270	30	300
1922 ... ..	... 289	33	322
1923 ... ..	... 376	38	414

Occupations of Insolvents. In the next return will be found the occupations, in six classes, of those who became insolvent or compromised with their creditors during the last five years, also the number of breadwinners in each class at the census of 1921, and the proportion of the former to the latter. The total number of insolvents does not include 61 whose occupations were not stated :—

OCCUPATION OF INSOLVENTS, 1919 TO 1923.

Occupation Groups.	Number of Breadwinners, Census, 1921.	Average Yearly Number of Insolvents, 1919 to 1923.	Insolvents to every 10,000 Breadwinners.
Professional	60,585	15	2·48
Domestic	58,225	9	1·55
Commercial	108,011	113	10·46
Transport and Communication	53,332	19	3·56
Industrial	234,245	156	6·66
Primary Producers	147,438	55	3·73
Total	661,836*	367	5·55

* Exclusive of 7,617 persons of independent means.

The number of breadwinners of the domestic and professional classes who became insolvent was smaller, in proportion to their numbers in the community, than those of any other class, whilst a greater proportion of the commercial than of any other class found it necessary to file their schedules or compound with their creditors.

A table showing the occupations of insolvents in detail for the years 1912 to 1916 appears in the *Year-Book* for 1916-17, page 444.

DIVORCE.

The present law in regard to divorce is contained in the *Marriage Act* 1915, and a summary thereof is given in the *Year-Book* for 1916-17, page 445. The Act of 1915 was amended by Acts passed in 1919, 1921, and 1923, but the amendments relate to minor matters and do not affect the main features of the principal Act. The grounds upon which divorce might be granted were considerably extended by an Act passed in 1889.

Number of Divorces.

Since jurisdiction was first conferred upon the Supreme Court of Victoria in matters matrimonial in 1861, 6,216 decrees for dissolution of marriage and 111 decrees for judicial separation have been granted. Of these, 5,868 and 40 respectively have been issued since 1890; so that, during the 30 years ended 1890, only 348 decrees for dissolution of marriage and 71 for judicial separation were issued, or an average per annum of about twelve of the former and two of the latter; whereas, since the Divorce Act of 1889 received the Royal Assent in 1890, no fewer than 178 decrees per annum for dissolution of marriage have been granted, while the decrees for judicial separation have decreased to about one per annum.

Divorces, Sex.

The following table gives the number of petitions filed by husband and wife respectively, and the number of decrees granted for divorce, judicial separation, and nullity of marriage during the year 1923:—

DIVORCES, 1923.

	Petitions filed by—			Decrees granted to—		
	Husband.	Wife.	Total.	Husband.	Wife.	Total.
Dissolution of Marriage	236	292	528	193	233	426
Judicial Separation ...	...	3	3	...	2	2
Nullity of Marriage ...	1	4	5	1	2	3
Total ...	237	299	536	194	237	431

Grounds of divorce.

The grounds upon which divorces were granted during the year 1923 were as follows:—

Grounds on which Granted.	Divorce.		Judicial Separation.		Nullity of Marriage.	
	Husband.	Wife.	Husband.	Wife.	Husband.	Wife.
Adultery ...	64	64	...	1	...	...
Assaults (violent) ...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Bigamy ...	1	3	...	...	1	1
Consanguinity ...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cruelty, repeated acts of ...	...	2	...	1	...	...
Desertion ...	118	142	...	...	...	...
Desertion and adultery ...	4	7	...	...	...	...
Drunkenness (habitual) and cruelty ...	1	9	...	...	...	...
Insanity ...	5	2	...	...	...	...
Sentences for crime ...	...	3	...	...	...	...
Total ...	193	233	...	2	1	2

Divorces, 1881 to 1923.

The following is a statement of the number of petitions and decrees for dissolution of marriage and judicial separation in the State of Victoria during the last year of each of the four decennial periods ended 1911 and each of the last five years, also of the proportion of decrees per 100,000 married couples living :—

**DIVORCES AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS IN VICTORIA,
1881 TO 1923.**

Year.	Petitions for—		Decrees for—		Divorces and Separations per 100,000 Married Couples Living.
	Dissolution of Marriage	Judicial Separation.	Dissolution of Marriage.	Judicial Separation.	
1881	18	10	9	..	7
1891	153	1	99	..	57
1901	148	2	83	..	46
1911	262	2	211	..	99
1919	481	9	345	2	129
1920	510	8	370	2	134
1921	446	4	380	1	136
1922	478	2	370	2	129
1923	528	3	426	2	145

The extension of the grounds upon which divorce might be obtained had the effect of greatly increasing the number of petitions and decrees.

In New South Wales, where the law in regard to divorce does not differ much from that in Victoria, there were, in 1923, 901 decrees for dissolution of marriage and judicial separation. The number of divorces and separations in that year per 100,000 married couples living was 220. The average annual number for the five-year period 1919-23, in proportion to a like number of married couples, was 186, as compared with an average of 135 for the same period in Victoria.

CRIME.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CRIMINAL LAW.

In nearly all cases where the criminal law has been broken the alleged offender is brought at the very first opportunity before a Court of Petty Sessions, before two honorary justices or a police magistrate, or both, or in some cases a single magistrate, and the court, if the matter is one which comes within its summary jurisdiction, disposes of the case summarily. If the offence is an indictable one, the magistrates hold a preliminary investigation, and, if they are satisfied that

a *prima facie* case has been made out by the prosecution, the accused is committed for trial to a superior court. There are two superior courts with criminal jurisdiction, viz., the Supreme Court, and a Court of General Sessions, which are held at various places throughout the State. The latter court may deal with all cases of an indictable nature except such as are expressly excluded from its jurisdiction, viz., ten of the most serious crimes. A person may be brought before magistrates by three modes of procedure, viz., by an arrest by a police officer on warrant issued on a sworn information; or in a limited number of cases without warrant if the offence has been witnessed by the arresting constable; or by a summons. If at a coroner's inquest a verdict is returned of murder or manslaughter, the accused person is sent for trial to the Supreme Court without any investigation before magistrates. The Attorney-General or Solicitor-General also has the power of presenting any person for trial before a superior court without the necessity of a preliminary magisterial hearing; and upon the application of any person, properly supported by affidavit, a grand jury may be summoned, on the order of the Full Court, if the affidavit discloses that an indictable offence has been committed by a corporate body; or that such an offence has been committed by any person, and that some justice has refused to commit such person for trial; or in the case of a committal that no presentment has been made at the court at which the trial would in due course have taken place. The grand jury, which consists of 23 men, investigates the charge, and, if it is of opinion that a *prima facie* ground of action has been made out, the case is sent for trial. The cases which are presented under these latter forms of procedure are, however, very rare.

Indeterminate sentences.

The Indeterminate Sentences Act came into force on 1st July, 1908. Its principal provisions are—

1. The adoption of the indeterminate sentence for (a) habitual criminals, and (b) certain classes of other offenders.
2. The appointment of an Indeterminate Sentences Board.
3. The establishment of reformatory prisons.
4. A system of probation applicable to adults as well as minors.

A Board was appointed on 18th August, 1908. Its present members are:—The Hon. S. Mauger (chairman), Dr. C. S. Godfrey, and Mr. W. R. Anderson, I.S.O., P.M., formerly Secretary to the Crown Law Department. The secretary is Mr. G. F. Dicker, Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne.

The chief functions of the Board are to make visits of inspection monthly to each reformatory prison, to examine the conduct reports of the inmates and accounts of their earnings, to authorize promotion in grade, to approve of indulgences, and to make careful inquiries

as to whether any persons detained in a reformatory prison are sufficiently reformed to be released on probation, and submit recommendations accordingly to the Chief Secretary; also generally to report on the working of the Indeterminate Sentences Act and the regulations. Other important powers were vested in the Board under the provisions of the Amending Indeterminate Sentences Act of 1915, chief among which are:—

- (a) To parole a prisoner temporarily for the purpose of testing his reform;
- (b) To impose conditions of release;
- (c) To transfer prisoners from one reformatory prison to another;
- (d) To hear charges of misconduct and impose punishment at a reformatory prison for the detention of persons not habitual criminals, the power formerly conferred on visiting justices in this regard being cancelled;
- (e) To control the disbursement of a prisoner's earnings upon release; and
- (f) To recommend to the Minister that he make an order permitting a prisoner detained in a reformatory prison to leave such prison temporarily—
 - (1) for the purpose of being treated in a hospital; or
 - (2) to visit a relative believed to be dying; or
 - (3) for any other reason which appears to the Board to be sufficient.

An important alteration under the Amending Act is the substitution of "Minister" for "Governor in Council" as the authority by whose direction a prisoner may be released on probation on the Board's recommendation. Regulations governing the treatment of declared habitual criminals, and of offenders not habituals, who are detained under indeterminate sentence in a reformatory prison, are now in operation.

In the early part of the financial year 1916-17 the Board was enabled to bring into operation two valuable aids to the reformation of the inmates of the reformatory prisons, by the Government sanctioning the purchase of a farm in connexion with the Castlemaine Reformatory, and the establishment of a forestry settlement at French Island. The equipment of the Castlemaine Reformatory was further improved in 1917 by the addition of the necessary plant and tools for imparting technical instruction to the inmates, this being given by an expert of the local technical school. The lads are now receiving practical training in the use of tools, framing, jointing, &c., and they have turned out much useful work. This instruction, coupled with the experience they are gaining in farming operations, is of value to them

in gaining suitable employment in the country on release. The improvements carried out on the farm have added considerably to the value of the property, and include clearing, fencing, ploughing, the enlargement of dams for water supply, and the erection of poultry pens, and of a building containing a dining room and ten sleeping rooms for inmates who are allowed to sleep at the farm.

The Afforestation camp at French Island has yielded good results, and the industry of the prisoners has received the commendation of the officers of the Forests Department. In addition to the work of afforestation, considerable improvements have been effected about the camp and additional buildings erected. The tree-planting season usually extends from May to September in each year. During other months the men are occupied in cutting fire breaks, clearing, and preparing for the next planting season. The experiment is of value, as it provides strenuous work for the men, who are drawn from those under indeterminate detention at Pentridge, and enables the "Honor" system to be carried out. At no time are the men under lock and key, and they are given a considerable amount of freedom, yet with few exceptions they have responded loyally to the trust placed in them. Any who fail to rise to the standard required of them are immediately returned to Pentridge. From time to time several prisoners have escaped, but with two exceptions they have been recaptured. Both here and at Castlemaine the open air life and work have had a beneficial effect upon the health of the prisoners, and the privileges and freedom they enjoy have not made them less amenable to discipline.

The number of prisoners under indeterminate detention on 30th June in each of the last five years was as follows :—

Name of Reformatory Prison.	Year ended 30th June.				
	1920.	1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.
Pentridge Reformatory Prison ..	55	54	39	31	41
Castlemaine Reformatory Prison ..	51	47	42	39	60
Reformatory for Females, Coburg ..	1	2	2	..	..
McLeod Settlement, French Island ..	28	30	31	35	31
Geelong Reformatory Prison ..	..	..	..	..	6
Total	135	133	114	105	138

Probation officers to supervise first offenders released by the courts on recognizance under the provisions of the *Crimes Act* 1915 are appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board. The number of such officers who have been appointed to date is 243.

OFFENCES HEARD BY MAGISTRATES.

Arrests and
summonses
for various
offences.

The following are particulars of the different classes of offences dealt with by magistrates in 1923 :—

ARRESTS AND SUMMONSES FOR VARIOUS OFFENCES, 1923.

Nature of Offence.	Total.	Summarily Convicted, &c.		Discharged by Magistrates.		Committed for Trial.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Against the Person—							
Murder and attempts at	4	...	...	1	...	1	2
Manslaughter ...	7	...	...	1	...	6	...
Shooting at, wounding, &c. ...	32	2	...	11	1	17	1
Assaults ...	1,429	755	45	545	84	...	...
Others ...	215	28	3	56	9	116	3
Total ...	1,687	785	48	614	94	140	6
Against Property—							
Robbery, burglary, &c.	331	56	2	48	8	206	11
Larceny and similar offences ...	2,176	1,363	129	426	54	192	12
Wilful damage ...	481	340	19	109	9	3	1
Others ...	617	421	25	131	24	15	1
Total ...	3,605	2,180	175	714	95	416	25
Forgery and Offences against the Currency	19	...	...	2	...	15	2
Against Good Order—							
Drunkenness ...	10,131	5,492	715	3,450	474	...	...
Others ...	9,709	7,330	649	1,488	235	7	...
Total ...	19,840	12,822	1,364	4,938	709	7	...
Other Offences—							
Perjury ...	6	...	...	...	...	3	3
Breaches of—							
Defence Act ...	2,129	1,806	3	320	...	...	...
Education Act ...	12,485	9,403	1,721	1,122	239	...	...
Electoral Act ...	965	616	160	119	70	...	...
Licensing Act ...	4,117	2,673	379	860	205	...	...
Pure Food Act ...	518	378	46	85	9	...	...
Miscellaneous ...	21,741	17,402	1,222	2,886	214	16	1
Total ...	41,961	32,278	3,531	5,392	737	19	4
Grand Total ...	67,112	48,065	5,118	11,660	1,635	597	37

These particulars include the arrests and summonses disposed of in Children's Courts, which are detailed in the next table, other than arrests of neglected children.

Of the persons dealt with in the 49,889 summons cases, 41,976 were summarily convicted, 7,849 were discharged, and 64 were com-

mitted for trial. Of the total persons dealt with (67,112) 53,183 were summarily convicted, 13,295 were discharged, and 634 were committed for trial.

The table which follows shows the number of arrests and summonses for various offences which were disposed of in Children's Courts during the year 1923 :—

CHILDREN'S COURTS: ARRESTS AND SUMMONSES FOR VARIOUS OFFENCES, 1923.

Nature of Offence.	Number of Offences for which—				Others (Application to board out, &c.).		Total Offences.	
	Arrests were made.		Summonses were issued.		M.	F.	M.	F.
	M.	F.	M.	F.				
Against the Person—								
Assaults	14	..	48	2	..	..	62	2
Others	2	..	5	..	..	..	7	..
Total	16	..	53	2	..	..	69	2
Against Property—								
Larceny, &c.	437	2	679	20	..	..	1,116	22
Wilful Damage	14	2	219	5	..	..	233	7
Others	3	..	29	..	..	..	32	..
Total	454	4	927	25	..	..	1,381	29
Against Good Order—								
Drunkenness	3	..	2	..	..	..	5	..
Others	34	2	491	11	..	..	525	13
Total	37	2	493	11	..	..	530	13
Other Offences—								
Breaches of Defence Act .. ..	..	..	7	..	..	..	7	..
„ Licensing Act .. ..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Miscellaneous	230	96	1,053	6	46	23	1,329	125
Total	230	96	1,060	8	46	23	1,336	127
Grand Total	737	102	2,533	46	46	23	3,316	171

The arrests of neglected children, which in 1923 numbered 98, viz., 70 males and 28 females, have been included in this table to indicate the business done by Children's Courts, but they are eliminated from all other criminal tabulations.

Of the persons who were brought before magistrates during the past five years, 24 per cent. were arrested, and 76 per cent. summoned. The great increase in summons cases since 1906 is due principally to the number of prosecutions under the Licensing, Pure Foods, Commonwealth Electoral, and Defence

Arrests and summonses cases.

Acts, and is also partially accounted for by more parents having been summoned for neglecting to send their children to school than in previous years—the compulsory clauses of the Amending Education Act requiring children to attend a greater number of times than formerly. Particulars for the last year of each of the four decennial periods ended with 1911, and for each of the last five years, are given in the subjoined table :—

ARRESTS AND SUMMONSES, 1881 TO 1923.

Year.	Arrested by the Police.	Brought before Magistrates on Summons.	Total.
1881	22,640	19,384	42,024
1891	31,971	24,525	56,496
1901	27,855	21,130	48,985
1911	19,398	25,128	44,526
1919	11,993	46,477	58,470
1920	14,582	42,116	56,698
1921	15,249	47,153	62,402
1922	16,163	47,550	63,713
1923	17,223	49,889	67,112

Neglected children arrested.

The arrests of neglected children, which are excluded from the above table and the tables which follow, numbered 1,190 in 1919, 193 in 1920, 112 in 1921, 115 in 1922, and 98 in 1923.

The principal reason for the great falling off in the last four years is that children boarded out with their own mothers by the Children's Welfare Department are not now arrested by the police.

The following table shows for each of the last five years the number of offences for which persons were arrested or summoned, summarily convicted, discharged by magistrates, committed for trial, and convicted after commitment, also the number per 10,000 of the population :—

NUMBER OF ARRESTS AND SUMMONS CASES, 1919 TO 1923.

Year.	Total.	Summarily Convicted.	Discharged by Magistrates.	Committed for Trial.	Convicted after Commitment.
1919	58,470	44,623	13,272	575	347
1920	56,698	43,088	12,815	795	461
1921	62,402	46,924	14,702	776	520
1922	63,713	49,464	13,516	733	463
1923	67,112	53,183	13,295	634	400
Number per 10,000 of Population.					
1919	396·9	302·9	90·1	3·9	2·4
1920	374·9	284·9	84·7	5·3	3·0
1921	405·9	305·2	95·6	5·1	3·4
1922	405·5	314·8	86·0	4·7	2·9
1923	412·9	327·2	81·8	3·9	2·5

In regard to persons arrested, minor charges are excluded, and only that charge which throughout the hearing of the case was most prominent is taken account of; but, in summons cases, the unit is each separate charge or case, and the number of convictions, discharges, &c., is, therefore, greater than the number of persons concerned.

CRIME AND DRUNKENNESS.

Offences and drunkenness.

The subjoined table shows, for a series of years, the number of persons arrested or summoned, also the number per 1,000 of the population, for the only classes of offence for which complete comparisons can be made:—

CRIME IN THE STATE OF VICTORIA, 1890 TO 1923.

Year.	Number of Persons Arrested or Summoned for—				
	Offences against the Person.	Offences against Property.	Drunkenness.	Other Offences.	Total.
1890	4,091	5,036	18,501	36,456	64,084
1895	2,344	3,336	11,143	20,843	37,666
1900	2,103	3,106	15,878	28,003	49,090
1910	1,663	3,052	12,719	34,626	52,060
1919	1,542	4,034	6,237	46,657	58,470
1920	1,909	4,877	7,154	42,758	56,698
1921	1,840	4,321	7,621	48,620	62,402
1922	1,570	3,639	8,773	49,731	63,713
1923	1,687	3,605	10,131	51,689	67,112
Number per 1,000 of the Population.					
1890	3·66	4·50	16·54	32·59	57·29
1895	1·98	2·82	9·41	17·60	31·81
1900	1·76	2·60	13·31	23·47	41·14
1910	1·30	2·38	9·92	27·00	40·60
1919	1·05	2·74	4·23	31·67	39·69
1920	1·26	3·23	4·73	28·27	37·49
1921	1·20	2·81	4·96	31·62	40·59
1922	1·00	2·32	5·58	31·66	40·56
1923	1·04	2·28	6·17	31·80	41·29

Drunkenness. The most noticeable feature of the above table is the large decrease in the arrests for drunkenness in the last five years as compared with earlier years.

Offences against the person and property. Almost all serious crimes are either offences against the person or offences against property. The first-named consist mainly of assault, but include murder, manslaughter, shooting, wounding, and all crimes of lust. Offences against property consist principally of larceny and similar offences; but include burglary, robbery, &c., cattle stealing, and wilful damage to property.

The only serious crimes included under "Other Offences. Offences" are forgery, counterfeiting, conspiracy, and perjury, and these are very few in number, there having been in Victoria in 1923 only 26 of such crimes out of a total of 51,639 in the category to which they belong. A large proportion of the cases under the heading "Other Offences" are merely breaches of various Acts of Parliament, by-laws, &c., which indicate no degree of criminal instinct or intent on the part of the person charged. There is also among them a large number of offences against good order, including insulting behaviour, vagrancy, &c.

If it be desired to compare the above figures with those relating to other States or countries several considerations must be taken into account. The first point necessary is that the criminal law in the places compared be substantially the same; the second, that it be administered with equal strictness; and the third, that proper allowances be made for differences in the age and sex constitution of the population. These considerations must also be taken into account in comparing crime in recent years with that in previous periods when there may have been differences in the law and when the population was very differently constituted in regard to sex and age.

SENTENCES PASSED.

The results of summary disposal of cases by magistrates during 1923 were as follows :—

SUMMARY DISPOSAL BY MAGISTRATES OF PERSONS ARRESTED, 1923.

Sentence.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Fines paid	5,455	681	6,136
Imprisonment for—			
Under 1 month	2,592	494	3,086
1 and under 6 months	937	105	1,042
6 and under 12 months	189	22	211
1 to 2 years	1	...	1
2 years	1	...	1
Ordered to find bail or sentence suspended on entering surety	285	35	320
Admonished	273	10	283
Sent to Industrial or Reformatory Schools	66	2	68
Otherwise dealt with	45	14	59
Total sentenced	9,844	1,363	11,207
Discharged	4,748	698	5,446
Total summarily disposed of	14,592	2,061	16,653
Sentenced per 10,000 of population	123·4	16·8	69·7

Sentences in
superior
courts.

The following were the sentences of the arrested persons tried and convicted in superior courts during 1923:—

SENTENCES OF ARRESTED PERSONS TRIED AND CONVICTED, 1923.

Sentence.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Fines paid	2	...	2
Imprisonment for—			
1 and under 6 months	38	4	42
6 " 12 "	128	5	133
1 " 4 years	77	2	79
4 " 7 "	5	...	5
Death recorded	1	...	1
Ordered to find bail or sentence suspended on entering surety	70	8	78
Sent to Reformatory Prison	18	...	18
" Reformatory Schools	1	1	2
" Lunatic Asylum	1	...	1
Total convicted	341	20	361
Acquitted	181	12	193
Not prosecuted	20	3	23
Convictions per 10,000 of population...	4·28	·25	2·25

In addition to being sent to gaol, nine prisoners were ordered one whipping each with a birch or a cat-o'-nine-tails.

Prisoners remaining for trial from the previous year and sentenced in the year mentioned are included in the above statement, but those awaiting trial at the end of the year are excluded.

In compiling the criminal statistics of the State each year a person arrested more than once is counted as a separate individual in respect of each arrest. It is possible to ascertain approximately the number of distinct persons passing through the hands of the police by making a close comparison

Arrests of
distinct
individuals.

DISTINCT INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED, 1923.

Sex and Age of Persons Arrested.		Number of Arrests.	Number of Distinct Individuals Arrested.	Number of Times on which Distinct Individuals were Arrested.																			
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	21	
SEX.																							
Males	.. ..	15,128	11,786	9,889	1,256	350	135	48	39	18	15	11	9	4	2	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	
Females	.. ..	2,095	1,320	1,003	152	70	32	19	15	11	6	5	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	2	..	..
Total	.. ..	17,223	13,106	10,892	1,408	420	167	67	54	29	21	16	10	5	3	2	3	2	1	3	2	1	
AGE.																							
Under 10 years	7	4	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10 to 15	76	69	63	5	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15 to 20	955	883	822	51	9	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
20 to 25	2,306	1,940	1,688	182	45	13	8	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
25 to 30	2,431	1,982	1,707	190	44	22	9	5	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
30 to 40	4,125	3,162	2,620	347	106	41	15	11	10	3	5	1	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
40 to 50	3,470	2,425	1,926	290	104	33	19	19	12	8	3	4	1	2	..	1	2	..	1	..	..	..
50 to 60	2,441	1,650	1,275	222	70	38	11	10	2	8	4	3	3	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	..	1
60 to 70	1,137	817	652	98	37	14	3	7	..	1	1	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
70 to 80	237	154	120	21	3	5	1	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
80 years and over	38	20	17	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..

of names, ages, birth-places, religions, occupations, &c., of the individuals dealt with. This has been done for 1923, in so far as sex and age of the persons arrested are concerned, and the result is given in the following table:—

Individuals arrested more than once. Of the total number of arrests, 17,223, only 13,106, or 76 per cent., were of distinct individuals. Of these, 10,892, or 83 per cent., were arrested only once; 1,408, or 11 per cent., twice; 420, or 3 per cent., three times; 167, or 1 per cent., four times; and 219, or 2 per cent., five times and over—one of these persons having been arrested twenty-one times. The table which follows gives a comparison of 1923 with 1907—a year in which an important Act relating to the obtaining and holding of licences came into force. From this it will be seen that there was a large decrease in the later year in the number of distinct persons arrested:—

DISTINCT PERSONS ARRESTED, 1907 AND 1923.

Year.	Distinct Persons Arrested.						Percentage Arrested.				
	Number.			Per 100,000 of the Population.			Once.	Twice.	Thrice.	Four Times.	More than Four Times.
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.					
1907 ...	14,519	2,297	16,816	2,410	369	1,372	83	10	3	2	2
1923 ...	11,786	1,320	13,106	1,478	163	815	83	11	3	1	2

Sexes of those arrested more than once. The tendency of females to be arrested over and over again is much greater than that of males, for, while only 16 per cent. of the males who fell into the hands of the police were arrested more than once in 1923, as many as 24 per cent. of the females were so arrested.

Distinct persons arrested more than once for drunkenness. The distinct persons arrested for drunkenness during 1923 numbered 7,438, and, of these, 1,361, or 18 per cent., were arrested more than once, viz., 852 twice; 255 thrice; 110 four times; 49 five times; and 95 more than five times, of whom 1 was arrested twenty-one times.

Drunkenness, 1907 and 1923. The number of distinct persons arrested for drunkenness was 10,944 in the year 1907, and 7,438 in 1923. The proportions per 1,000 of the population were 8·93 and 4·63 respectively in the years mentioned, the decrease in the later year being equivalent to a reduction of 48 per cent.

Drunkards charged with other offences. Whilst the number of distinct persons arrested for drunkenness in 1923 was 7,438, the charges of drunkenness brought against them numbered 10,029; these persons were also charged with 1,468 other offences, so that the total number of charges of all kinds against drunkards was 11,497. Fifty-eight per cent. of the arrests during 1923 consisted of persons who were charged with drunkenness.

Drunkenness, 1919 to 1923. The number of persons and the number per 1,000 of the population arrested or summoned for drunkenness during the last five years are given hereunder:—

PERSONS ARRESTED OR SUMMONED FOR DRUNKENNESS,
1919 TO 1923.

Year.	Number of Persons —			Number per 1,000 of Population.
	Arrested.	Summoned.	Total.	
1919 ...	6,161	76	6,237	4·23
1920 ...	7,090	64	7,154	4·73
1921 ...	7,542	79	7,621	4·96
1922 ...	8,684	89	8,773	5·58
1923 ...	10,029	102	10,131	6·17

Drunkenness — Comparison with previous years. The amount of drunkenness in proportion to population, as evidenced by arrests, being taken as 100 in 1874-8, the corresponding numbers for subsequent periods will show the increase or decrease by comparison. These numbers are given in the following statement:—

Period.	Index Number.	Period.	Index Number.
1874-78	100	1915	64
1879-85	88	1916	55
1886-92	106	1917	37
1893-97	65	1918	29
1898-1902 ..	84	1919	29
1903-07	77	1920	32
1908-12	68	1921	34
1913	72	1922	38
1914	69	1923	42

A very considerable decrease in drunkenness is shown for the five years 1893-97, which was a period of general depression. In the five years following an increase occurred, but since that time the arrests for this offence have declined. In the middle of the year 1915 an Act was passed limiting the number of hours during which alcoholic liquors could be sold in hotels, and a further limitation was made in the following year. This probably accounts for the marked decrease in drunkenness in the last eight years. The index numbers for that period are the lowest on record.

The accompanying table shows the number of persons under 20 years of age arrested for drunkenness, also the number per 100,000 of the population under that age from which it will be seen that very few young persons are arrested for this offence :—

ARRESTS OF PERSONS UNDER 20 YEARS OF AGE CHARGED WITH DRUNKENNESS, 1895 TO 1923.

Year.	Number.	Number per 100,000 of the Population under 20 years of age.
1895	185	35·60
1900	222	42·38
1910	128	24·19
1919	138	24·45
1920	140	24·15
1921	110	18·72
1922	118	19·58
1923	143	23·07

Offences by Juveniles. The crimes for which juvenile offenders were arrested in 1923, and their ages are given in the subjoined statement:—

**OFFENCES CHARGED AGAINST JUVENILES ARRESTED
DURING 1923.**

Nature of Offence.	Ages.										Total.	
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
1. Against the Person—												
Manslaughter									1			1
Others						1		1	3			5
2. Against Property with Violence—												
Housebreaking		2	2	1	3	2	2	7	8	8		35
Others										3		3
3. Against Property without Violence—												
Larceny, &c.			2	3	8	5	15	15	21	28		97
Others			1		2		2	2	1	5		13
4. Against Good Order—												
Drunk and disorderly									1	2		3
Offensive behaviour, &c.						1		2	1	7		11
Others						1		1	4	6		12
5. Miscellaneous—												
Railway Act									4	1		5
Escaping from legal custody.. .. .							1		5	3		9
Others						1				2		3
Total		2	5	4	13	11	20	28	49	65		197

Education of persons arrested. One per cent. of the distinct individuals arrested in 1923 were entirely illiterate, 98 per cent. could read only, or read and write, and under 1 per cent. were possessed of superior or good education.

CONSUMPTION OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR.

Consumption of intoxicating liquor. The next table shows for a period of years the average yearly consumption of intoxicating liquors in Australia and New Zealand. It is not possible to give the Victorian consumption for a later year than 1909, as the Commonwealth Government discontinued keeping records of Inter-State trade in the following year.

AVERAGE CONSUMPTION OF SPIRITS, BEER, AND WINE
IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

	Yearly Average Quantity Consumed, 1st July, 1918, to 30th June, 1923.			Consumption per Head		
	Spirits.	Beer.	Wine.	Spirits.	Beer.	Wine.
	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.
Commonwealth of Australia ..	2,080,900	65,301,000	2,154,800	·38	12·14	·39
*Dominion of New Zealand ..	725,400	13,770,900	182,600	·60	11·35	·15

* Average for five years ended 31st December, 1923.

The quantities consumed per head in Australia during the quinquennium 1909-13 were : spirits, ·82, beer, 12·40, and wine, ·42 gallons ; and for New Zealand : spirits, ·79, beer, 9·69, and wine, ·14 gallons.

With the assistance of the figures in the preceding table, it is possible to estimate for Australia and New Zealand, with some degree of accuracy, the approximate expenditure of the people on intoxicating liquors in a year. The following table shows the average yearly consumption over a period of years :—

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND DRINK BILL.—
YEARLY AVERAGE.

	Expenditure by the People on—					
	Spirits.	Beer.	Wine.	Total.		
				Amount.	Per Head.	Per Adult Individual.
	£	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
*Commonwealth of Australia ..	7,706,700	14,679,700	1,615,900	24,002,300	4 8 9	7 13 7
†Dominion of New Zealand ..	2,669,200	3,083,400	137,000	5,889,600	4 17 2	8 6 4

* Average for five years ended 30th June, 1923.

† Average for five years ended 31st December, 1923.

These figures show that the average yearly expenditure on drink in Australia during the five years ended 30th June, 1923, was £24,002,300, and that in New Zealand during the quinquennium 1919 to 1923 it was £5,889,600. The expenditure per head for the Commonwealth was £4 8s. 9d., and for New Zealand, £4 17s. 2d. The corresponding expenditures for the quinquennium 1909-13 were £3 10s. 2d., and £2 18s. 2d. per head.

LOCAL OPTION.

Local Option Act of 1920. At the general elections for the State Legislative Assembly, held on 21st October, 1920, the provision in the *Licensing Act 1906* (incorporated in the Act of 1915), which required a poll of the electors to be taken on the question of the number (if any) of liquor licences to be held in the various licensing districts of the State, was submitted to the electors. The resolutions were:—

- A. That the number of licences existing in this district continue.
- B. That the number of licences existing in this district be reduced.
- C. That no licences be granted in this district.

If resolution C had been previously carried and was in force in the district, the following was to be submitted instead of the resolutions mentioned above:—

- D. That licences be restored in this district.

Resolution A or B was carried if a majority of the votes given was in favour of such resolution. Resolution C was carried if three-fifths at least in number of the votes given was in favour of that resolution, it being provided that, where less than such number was given, the votes recorded in favour of resolution C should be added to the votes given for resolution B. Resolution D was carried if three-fifths at least in number of the votes given was in favour of that resolution. Resolutions C and D could not be carried unless 30 per cent. or more of the number of electors on the electoral rolls for the district voted for the resolution.

In two licensing districts in the State, viz., Boroondara and Nunawading, resolution C was carried. Seven hotels in the former district and three in the latter had therefore to be closed. The amount of compensation awarded by the Licences Reduction Board was £12,100, or an average of £1,210 for each hotel.

Act of 1922. By an amending Licensing Act (No. 3259) assented to on 21st December, 1922, it is provided that a vote of the electors for the Legislative Assembly be taken on the licensing question once in every eighth year on a day to be fixed by proclamation of the Governor in Council, published in the *Government Gazette*, not being a day within three months before or after the day for a general election, the first of such polls to be taken in the year 1930.

At the first of such votes and at any subsequent vote, whenever licences exist, the following resolution only shall be submitted to the electors:—

Abolition.—That licences shall be abolished (Resolution I.).

If at any vote Resolution I. is carried the following resolution only shall be submitted to the electors at each subsequent vote until carried:—

Restoration.—That licences shall be restored (Resolution II.).

Hotels Closed, 1885-1905. During the period 1885 to 1905, 217 hotels were closed as the result of local option polls. The amount of compensation awarded was £212,771, or an average of £980 for each hotel. This sum was provided partly out of the Licensing Fund, and, when this was insufficient for the purpose, out of the general revenue.

Restricting the hours for the sale of intoxicants. In the year 1915 an Act was passed (No. 2584) which fixed the hours during which alcoholic liquors might be sold in hotels during the period of the war at from 9 o'clock in the morning until half-past 9 at night. By an Act passed in 1916 (No. 2827) the closing hour was fixed at 6 o'clock instead of 9.30. The latter provision was made permanent by Act No. 3028, passed on 19th December, 1919.

LICENCES REDUCTION BOARD.

Licences Reduction Board. The Licences Reduction Board, provided for by the *Licensing Act* 1906, was appointed on 21st May, 1907. At the same time a Compensation Fund was instituted, which was raised by means of a percentage fee of £3 for every £100 of purchases of liquor, the owner of the premises being chargeable with two-thirds and the tenant with one-third of the fee. The duties of the Board are referred to in the *Year-Book* for 1915-16, page 476. Just before the close of the year 1916 an amending Licensing Act (No. 2855) was passed, by which the members of the Licences Reduction Board were constituted a Licensing Court for the whole State. The taking of a local option poll was postponed to the second general election after January, 1917, and the court was authorized in the meantime to close hotels to the extent of the Compensation Fund available, as if reduction had been carried in every Licensing District. No alteration was made in the provisions abolishing the statutory number of hotels for a district, so that the number existing on 1st January, 1917, is now the maximum number, a similar provision applying to spirit merchants' licences, grocers' licences, Australian wine licences, and club licences. The Mallee area was made the subject of special legislation, under which it is possible after a petition and a poll to obtain victuallers' licences in proclaimed areas containing at least 500 electors. These victuallers' licences are to be 12 miles apart, except at Mildura, where there can be three hotels. The whole system of licence-fees was re-cast, fixed fees in the retail liquor trade being abolished and percentage fees substituted. In the wholesale section there are now percentage fees for the sales to private customers, and fixed fees in respect of the balance of the trade. The percentage fee in the case of hotels has been fixed at 6 per cent. of the annual liquor purchases, the owner paying three-eighths, and the licensee five-eighths. This combines and takes the place of the old fixed fees, the 3 per cent. compensation fee, and the assessments for lost licence fees arising out of the closing of hotels. Spirit merchants and holders of grocers' licences and Australian wine licences pay 4 per cent. of the cost of liquors sold to non-licensed purchasers.

Provision was made by Act No. 2776 for an adjustment of rents owing to the reduction effected by the "9.30 Closing Act" in the number of hours allowed for selling liquor, and this provision was extended by Act No. 2855 so as to provide for adjustments by reason of the further restrictions imposed by Act No. 2827—the "6 o'clock Closing Act." The work of adjustment was intrusted to the Board. Under the provisions of these Acts over 700 applications were received from licensees for adjustment of rent and licence-fee rebates.

Up to 30th June, 1924, 1,532 hotels had been closed by the Board or had surrendered their licences. The total sum paid in compensation was £907,701, or an average of £592 each. Four hundred and fifty-two of these hotels were located in the Greater Melbourne district; the compensation paid in connexion with these totalled £440,097, making an average of £974 each. There were 1,080 hotels closed in country districts, whose owners and licensees received £467,604, or an average of £433 for each hotel.

Particulars of the hotels closed and compensation awarded in metropolitan and country districts in each year since the constitution of the Board are set forth in the following table:—

NUMBER OF HOTELS CLOSED AND COMPENSATION AWARDED, 1907 TO 1924.

Year Ended—	Number of Hotels Closed.			Amounts Awarded Owners and Licensees.		
	Greater Melbourne.	Country.	Total.	Greater Melbourne.	Country.	Total.
31st December—				£	£	£
1907 ..	26	37	63	26,471	6,125	32,596
1908 ..	43	90	133	33,764	32,817	66,581
1909 ..	30	78	108	20,021	21,648	41,669
1910 ..	28	78	106	27,636	26,507	54,143
1911 ..	17	85	102	15,501	32,953	48,454
1912 ..	24	72	96	20,511	30,877	51,388
1913 ..	26	76	102	24,775	25,346	50,121
1914 ..	19	70	89	20,040	30,033	50,073
1915 ..	30	82	112	25,800	35,883	61,683
1916 ..	40	103	143	35,485	48,658	84,143
1917 ..	23	60	83	19,193	30,415	49,608
30th June—						
1918 ..	10	34	44	7,475	15,802	23,277
(six months)						
30th June—						
1919 ..	22	57	79	19,825	29,635	49,460
1920 ..	39	36	75	39,080	21,595	60,675
1921 ..	35*	57	92*	43,355	34,230	77,585
1922 ..	7	41	48	9,070	35,915	44,985
1923 ..	22	13	35	33,825	6,140	39,965
1924 ..	11	11	22	18,270	3,025	21,295
Total ..	452	1,080	1,532	440,097	467,604	907,701

* Including ten hotels closed as the result of a Local Option poll held on 21st October, 1920.

A table showing the number of hotels closed in each licensing district to 30th June, 1921, appears in the *Year-Book* 1920-21, pages 296 to 299.

The return given hereunder shows the number of hotels, including roadside licences, in Victoria in 1885, 1906 and 1924, and the number of persons to each hotel in those years. The years 1885 and 1906 have been selected, because in those years important alterations were made in the liquor licensing laws :—

NUMBER OF HOTELS, 1885, 1906 AND 1924.

Year.	Estimated Population.	Number of Hotels.*	Persons to each Hotel.
1885	969,200	4,339	223
1906	1,244,474	3,520	354
1924 (30th June)	1,639,704	1,959	837
Increase, 1885 to 1924	670,504	...	614
Decrease, ,, ,, ... ..	...	2,380	...

* Including Roadside Licences.

While the population has increased by 69 per cent. since 1885, the number of hotels has decreased by 55 per cent., and the number of persons to an hotel is now 275 per cent. more than it was in that year. During the period 1885-1924, 227 hotels were closed as the result of local option polls, 1,522 were deprived of their licences by the Licences Reduction Board, or surrendered their licences to the Board, and 631 were closed voluntarily.

The *Lotteries Gaming and Betting Act* 1906 (now Section 152 of the *Police Offences Act* 1915) provides that all race-courses shall be licensed, for which a fee of £1 per annum is charged. It is stipulated that, in addition to this fee, there shall be paid annually a sum equal to 3 per cent. of the gross revenue derived from all sources. Where the gross revenue is less than £1,500, but more than £600, the annual sum payable is 2 per cent. of the revenue, and where the gross revenue is £600 or less no percentage is charged. The amounts paid into the Consolidated Revenue in licence fees and percentages on receipts during the past ten years were as follows :—

REVENUE FROM RACE-COURSE LICENCES AND PERCENTAGE FEES, 1915 TO 1924.

Year ended 30th June.	Amount.	Year ended 30th June.	Amount.
	£		£
1915	13,611	1920	13,416
1916	11,758	1921	17,731
1917	13,380	1922	17,578
1918	11,346	1923	20,124
1919	11,557	1924	20,516

GAOLS AND PRISONERS.

Gaols and prisoners. There are seven gaols in Victoria, including the Pentridge Penal Establishment, and four reformatory prisons, also four police gaols which are used as receiving stations; the figures given below show that there is accommodation in the gaols for about two and a half times the average number of prisoners in confinement. The following statement contains information for the year 1923 in regard to the accommodation for prisoners, the daily average number in confinement, the number received during the year, and the number in confinement at the end of the year:—

GAOL ACCOMMODATION AND PRISONERS, 1923.

Name of Institution.	Number of Prisoners.							
	For whom there is accommodation.		Daily Average.		Total Received.		In Confinement, 31.12.23.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Pentridge ..	669	..	409	..	999	..	473	..
Pentridge Reformatory Prison ..	68	..	33	..	65	..	31	..
Ballarat ..	62	18	16	..	201	6	11	..
Bendigo ..	116	28	22	..	243	13	15	..
Castlemaine Reformatory Prison	84	..	42	..	62	..	37	..
Coburg Female Prison ..	..	156	..	46	..	177	..	37
Jika Reformatory Female Prison ..	..	10	..	1	..	..	..	..
Geelong ..	187	29	69	..	331	4	65	..
McLeod Settlement Reformatory Prison ..	45	..	35	..	50	..	29	..
Melbourne ..	222	70	99	13	3,448	612	99	11
Sale ..	30	5	5	..	75	6	6	..
Police Gaols ..	92	18	5	..	127	7	6	..
Total ..	1,575	334	735	60	5,601	825	772	48

Prisoners in confinement, 1871 to 1923—decrease. A statement is given below of the average number of prisoners in detention in the gaols of the State in the last year of each of the decennial periods 1871 'o 1911 inclusive, and in each of the last five years. From this it will be seen that there has been a considerable decrease in late years as compared with earlier periods. The rate per 10,000 of population, aged fifteen years and over, was, in 1923, 21 per cent. less than in 1911, 51 per cent.

less than in 1901, 72 per cent. less than in 1891, 77 per cent. less than in 1881, and 82 per cent. less than in 1871.

PRISONERS IN CONFINEMENT, 1871 TO 1923.

Year.	Average Number of Prisoners in Confinement.			Number per 10,000 of Population, aged 15 years and over.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
1871 ...	1,345	274	1,619	54·77	15·46	38·30
1881 ...	1,294	304	1,598	45·25	12·35	30·03
1891 ...	1,550	350	1,900	38·78	10·07	25·43
1901 ...	951	200	1,151	23·92	5·06	14·53
1911 ...	713	100	813	15·73	2·16	8·87
1919 ...	576	59	635	11·63	1·10	6·14
1920 ...	706	50	756	13·68	·92	7·12
1921 ...	741	54	795	14·56	·98	7·40
1922 ...	752	54	806	14·36	·98	7·31
1923 ...	735	60	795	13·38	1·04	7·05

Birthplaces,
religions,
and ages of
prisoners.

The birthplaces, religions, and ages of prisoners constantly detained, as deduced from the numbers passing through the gaols, are shown below for the five decennial periods ended with 1921 and for 1923:—

BIRTHPLACES, RELIGIONS, AND AGES OF PRISONERS CONSTANTLY DETAINED, 1881 TO 1923.

—	1881.	1891.	1901.	1911.	1921.	1923.
Total	1,598	1,900	1,151	813	795	795
Birthplace—						
Australia and New Zealand	584	845	689	595	660	637
England and Wales	401	420	149	87	64	67
Scotland	105	129	56	26	18	28
Ireland	378	336	160	62	23	33
China	27	14	18	4	1	1
Others	103	156	79	39	29	29
Religion—						
Protestants	888	1,098	651	476	479	464
Roman Catholics	671	729	465	317	293	300
Jews	7	14	8	4	4	4
Buddhists, Confucians, &c..	27	14	12	1	..	1
Others	5	45	15	15	19	26
Age—						
Under 20 years	229	129	75	54	85	59
20 to 30 years	473	669	316	205	287	265
30 to 40 years	312	457	337	211	190	195
40 to 50 years	294	279	234	193	126	130
50 to 60 years	166	193	102	96	68	92
60 years and over	124	173	87	54	39	54

BIRTHPLACES, RELIGIONS, AND AGES OF PRISONERS
CONSTANTLY DETAINED, PER 10,000 OF POPULATION,
1881 TO 1923.*

	1881.	1891.	1901.	1911.	1921.	1923.
Birthplace—						
Australia and New Zealand	10·84	10·65	7·25	5·32	4·92	4·52
England and Wales ..	27·20	25·78	12·72	9·73	} 6·53	7·57
Scotland ..	21·81	25·46	15·66	9·78		
Ireland ..	43·58	39·39	26·01	14·95		
China ..	22·88	16·53	28·89	7·14	3·54	3·46
Others ..	35·34	39·24	25·80	11·64	11·13	10·61
Religion—						
Protestants ..	14·36	13·12	7·19	4·90	4·12	3·83
Roman Catholics ..	32·98	29·33	17·63	11·07	9·08	8·86
Jews ..	16·17	21·68	13·54	6·38	5·21	4·97
Buddhists, Confucians, &c.	24·20	20·75	21·95	6·18	..	6·90
Others ..	2·00	10·78	7·03	3·05	4·97	5·25
Age—						
Under 20 years ..	35·30	2·53	1·42	1·01	1·45	·96
20 to 30 years ..	34·18	27·36	15·30	8·67	10·93	9·61
30 to 40 years ..	34·82	31·30	18·23	11·66	8·35	8·16
40 to 50 years ..	20·95	32·00	20·07	11·64	7·20	7·07
50 to 60 years ..	34·84	23·95	15·35	9·60	4·50	5·78
60 years and over ..	30·88	23·90	8·73	5·58	3·07	4·05

* The ratios refer to 10,000 persons in the community whose birthplaces, religions, or ages were as stated above.

POLICE PROTECTION.

The following table shows the numbers in the various
Strength of police force in grades of the police force in Victoria on the 31st December,
Victoria. 1923 :—

POLICE IN VICTORIA, 31ST DECEMBER, 1923.

Designation.	Number.		
	Metropolitan.	Country.	Total.
<i>Foot.</i>			
Chief Commissioner ..	1	..	1
Superintendents ..	3	8	11
Inspectors ..	8	2	10
Sub-Inspectors ..	12	5	17
Sergeants, First class ..	41	10	51
„ Second class ..	32	18	50
Senior Constables ..	135	73	211
Constables ..	402	230	632
Detectives ..	23	2	25
Others ..	..	..	..
Total ..	660	348	1,008

POLICE IN VICTORIA, 31ST DECEMBER, 1923—continued.

Designation.	Number.		
	Metropolitan.	Country.	Total.
<i>Mounted.</i>			
Sergeants, Second class ... ..	...	...	...
Senior Constables	2	1	3
Constables	27	213	240
Total	29	214	243
Grand Total	689	562	1,251

The number of police in Victoria per 100,000 of the population and the corresponding proportions for other States, at the end of 1923, were as follows:—Victoria, 76·9; New South Wales, 127·9; Queensland, 134·13; South Australia, 113·7; Western Australia, 143·3; Tasmania, 109·1; and Northern Territory, 787·6.

The figures given for Victoria are below normal, owing to the temporary reduction in the Force consequent on the Police Strike of November, 1923. At the end of 1922 there were in Victoria 109·5 police per 100,000 of the population.

The next table contains a statement of the amount and the amount per head of population expended in connexion with the police, and the penal establishments and gaols of Victoria, in the year 1871-2 and every tenth year thereafter until 1911-12 inclusive, also in each of the five years ended with 1922-23:—

EXPENDITURE ON POLICE AND GAOLS, 1871-2 TO 1922-23.

Year ended 30th June.	Amount Expended (exclusive of Pensions) on—					Amount per Head of Population.
	Maintenance, &c.		Buildings.		Total.	
	Police.	Gaols and Penal Establishments.	Police.	Gaols and Penal Establishments.		
	£	£	£	£	£	s. d.
1872 ..	190,711	57,855	5,722	2,133	256,421	6 10
1882 ..	201,063	53,032	14,996	3,328	272,419	6 2
1892 ..	283,409	65,679	19,113	23,319	391,520	6 9
1902 ..	271,561	51,948	7,064	3,613	334,186	5 6
1912 ..	316,456	48,514	12,856	2,300	380,126	5 8
1919 ..	363,189	51,543	2,890	2,725	420,347	5 10
1920 ..	459,425	60,561	2,878	1,386	524,250	7 0
1921 ..	528,168	73,902	5,752	2,079	609,901	8 0
1922 ..	527,305	71,825	6,681	2,336	608,147	7 10
1923 ..	531,440	75,732	8,597	4,631	620,400	7 10

The police perform a number of duties in addition to those connected with the maintenance of law and order. The actual cost to the community of the police protection afforded is, therefore, less than the expenditure shown in the above table for maintenance of the police force.

Executions. During the nineteen years ended with 1923 there were only seven executions in Victoria, one of which took place in 1908, one in 1912, two in 1916, two in 1918, and one in 1922. Since the first settlement of Port Phillip in 1835, 175 criminals have been executed within the State, of whom only four were females.

The *Year-Book* for 1916-17 contains on page 490 a table showing the offences for which criminals were executed, also their birthplaces and religions, for the years 1842 to 1916.

Inquests. The number of inquiries into the causes of deaths of individuals during each of the last five years is given below:—

INQUESTS, 1919 TO 1923.

Cause of Death found to be due to—	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.	1923.
External Causes—					
Accident	385	466	509	461	524
Homicide	12	12	8	10	11
Suicide	129	143	165	123	125
Execution .. .. .	..	..	..	1	..
Doubtful	28	24	20	17	18
Disease or Natural Causes ..	720	697	645	556	714
Intemperance	1	1	1	..	6
Unspecified or Doubtful Causes ..	10	7	7	5	3
Being "Still Born" .. .. .	..	..	2	1	..
Total	1,285	1,350	1,357	1,174	1,401
Number per 10,000 of Population ..	8·72	8·93	8·83	7·47	8·71

Of the deaths from external causes during the last five years, 74 per cent. were due to accidental causes, 2 per cent. to homicide, and 21 per cent. to suicide; in 3 per cent. of the cases the nature or motive of the violence which caused death was doubtful.