

## PART VI.—LAW, CRIME, ETC.

Transfer of  
Land  
Statute.

237. The amount of business transacted in the office of Titles in carrying out the provisions of the Transfer of Land Statute\* was rather less in 1875 than in 1874. The following are the figures:—

## TRANSFER OF LAND STATUTE.

		1874.	1875.
Applications to bring land under the Act	... number	1,052	1,032
Extent of land included	... acres	55,747	31,019
Value of land included	... £	1,078,570	900,594
Certificates of title issued	... number	9,870	9,535
Transfers, mortgages, leases, releases, surrenders, &c.	..	12,364	11,912
Registering proprietors	... ..	191	47
Other transactions	... ..	13,055	11,584
Forms sold	... ..	903	720
Fees received	... ..	21,504	20,262

Proportion of  
land under  
Transfer of  
Land  
Statute.

238. At the end of 1875 the quantity of land under the Transfer of Land Statute was 5,969,232 acres, valued at £13,471,380. The whole quantity granted and sold up to the same period amounted to 10,351,194 acres. It therefore follows that at least 58 per cent. of the alienated land in the colony is subject to the provisions of this Statute.

Transfers  
and convey-  
ances.

239. The number of transfers and conveyances of land, also the value of land conveyed under both the Transfer of Land Statute and the old system, were as follow during the year under review:—

## TRANSFERS AND CONVEYANCES OF LAND, 1875.

Transfers and Conveyances—	Number of Transactions.	Value of Land conveyed.
Under the Transfer of Land Statute	7,994	£ 2,586,942
Under the old system ... ..	4,640	1,576,903
Total ... ..	12,634	4,163,845

Equity.

240. The transactions in Equity numbered 495 in 1874, and 559 in 1875. The probates issued numbered 568 in the former year, and 711 in the latter; and the letters of administration numbered 587 in the former year, and 538 in the latter.

Estates of  
deceased  
persons:  
value, 1874  
and 1875.

241. The sworn value of the property left by deceased persons in 1875 was less by a sixth than that in 1874. The following figures show the sworn value of such property in the two years:—

	Property sworn under—
	£
1874 ... ..	3,426,470
1875 ... ..	2,833,962

\* For information respecting the working of this Statute, see *Victorian Year-Book*, 1874, paragraph 271 *et sequitur*.

242. In the eleven years ended with 1875, the value of the property respecting which probates and letters of administration were issued amounted to close upon fifteen millions sterling (£14,984,119). Estates of deceased persons: value in 11 years.

243. The amounts realised by the State from duties on the estates of deceased persons during the five years ended with the year under review have been as follow:— Duties on estates of deceased persons.

						Amount realised from Duties on Estates of Deceased Persons.
						£
1871	...	...	...	...	...	17,069
1872	...	...	...	...	...	37,643
1873	...	...	...	...	...	39,026
1874	...	...	...	...	...	67,998
1875	...	...	...	...	...	50,057

244. Under the head of Divorce and Matrimonial Causes the business was as follows in 1874 and 1875. It will be observed that no decree for dissolution of marriage was pronounced in the latter year:— Divorce and matrimonial.

						1874.	1875.
Petitions for dissolution of marriage	...	...	...	...	...	14	20
„ judicial separation	...	...	...	...	...	12	5
„ alimony	...	...	...	...	...	9	8
Decrees dismissing petitions	...	...	...	...	...	—	2
„ for dissolution of marriage	...	...	...	...	...	5	—
„ for judicial separation	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
„ for alimony	...	...	...	...	...	1	1

245. The fees in Equity amounted in the aggregate to £1,133 in 1874, and to £1,053 in 1875; those on Probates amounted to £954 in 1874, and to £1,110 in 1875; and those in Divorce suits amounted to £89 in 1874, and £116 in 1875. Fees in Equity.

246. The moneys collected by the Master-in-Lunacy amounted to £6,092 in 1874, and to £5,619 in 1875. Collections in Lunacy.

247. Almost exactly the same number of insolvencies occurred in 1874 and 1875, but, according to the insolvents' schedules, the amount of both liabilities and assets was greater, and the amount of deficiency was less in the latter year than in the former. The following are the figures:— Insolvencies.

**INSOLVENCIES, 1874 AND 1875.**

Year.	Number of Insolvencies.	As shown by the Insolvents' Schedules.		
		Liabilities.	Assets.	Deficiency.
		£	£	£
1874	776	543,157	269,130	274,027
1875	773	641,390	389,330	252,060

Occupations  
of insol-  
vents.

248. The following are the occupations or callings of the persons who filed their schedules in 1875:—

## OCCUPATIONS OR CALLINGS OF INSOLVENTS.

Civil servant ... ..	1	Clothfinisher ... ..	1
Police ... ..	2	Currier, leather finishers ... ..	3
Chemists and druggists ... ..	3	Saddlers ... ..	3
Lawyers ... ..	6	Shipwrights, &c. ... ..	3
Teachers ... ..	2	Watchmakers and jewellers ... ..	3
Civil engineers, surveyors ... ..	5	Plumbers ... ..	2
Journalists ... ..	3	Miners, &c. ... ..	66
Merchants and dealers ... ..	31	Graziers ... ..	3
Shop and storekeepers and assistants	46	Cattled dealers ... ..	5
Grocers and tobacconists ... ..	15	Veterinary surgeon ... ..	1
Drapers ... ..	11	Horse-trainer, groom ... ..	2
Ironmongers ... ..	2	Drovers ... ..	3
Hawkers ... ..	7	Farmers, market gardeners ... ..	44
Bookseller ... ..	1	Carters, carriers, cabowner, drivers	17
Agents, collectors, brokers, &c. ... ..	24	Mail-guards, letter-carriers ... ..	3
Clerks, accountants ... ..	21	Mariners ... ..	2
Hotel and boardinghouse-keepers ... ..	82	Butchers, fishmongers ... ..	35
Bootmakers ... ..	21	Bakers, confectioners, &c. ... ..	16
Tailors ... ..	11	Fruiterer ... ..	1
Dressmakers ... ..	2	Millers ... ..	4
Hairdressers ... ..	2	Brewers, bottlers ... ..	9
Manufacturers (undefined) ... ..	8	Dairymen ... ..	3
Contractors, masons, bricklayers, &c.	33	Laborers ... ..	57
Quarryman ... ..	1	Woodcarters ... ..	4
Brickmaker ... ..	1	Sawyers ... ..	7
Blacksmiths, &c. ... ..	11	Musicians ... ..	6
Carpenters, cabinetmakers, builders, &c. ... ..	46	Actors ... ..	4
Saw-mill proprietors ... ..	3	"Gentlemen," "ladies" ... ..	16
Coachbuilders ... ..	6	Unspecified ... ..	36
Printers, photographers ... ..	7	Total ... ..	773

Intestate  
estates.

249. The number of intestate estates which came under the charge of the Curator in 1875 was 305, and their estimated value was £33,725. In the nine years ended with 1875, the number of intestate estates dealt with was 2,068, and their estimated value was £246,769.

Offences re-  
ported to  
police.

250. The number of offences reported to the Victorian police in the year 1875 was 29,891. In respect to 25,247 of these offences, arrests were made; but in the case of the remaining 4,644,\* no one had been apprehended up to the end of March 1876.

Persons ar-  
rested, 1865,  
1870, and  
1875.

251. The persons † arrested in 1875 exceeded those arrested in 1874 by 1,391. The following table gives a statement of the numbers taken into custody, and the manner in which they were dealt with by magistrates in 1875 and in the first year of each of the two previous quinquennial periods:—

\* It does not follow that in all these cases the offender escaped altogether. He may have been arrested for other offences.

† In cases where the arrested person is charged with several offences, and in cases where the same person is arrested more than once during a year, he is, according to the manner the returns are made up, treated as a separate individual for each offence.

PERSONS ARRESTED\* BY THE POLICE, 1865, 1870, AND 1875.

	1865.	1870.	1875.
Taken into custody ... ..	25,499	23,790	25,247
Discharged by magistrates ... ..	7,813	7,204	7,674
Summarily convicted or held to bail ... ..	16,519	15,678	16,829
Committed for trial ... ..	1,167	908	744

252. The diminution of crime generally is marked by the circumstance that, notwithstanding the increase in the population of the colony, fewer arrests were made in 1875 than in 1865. The diminution in the number of serious offences is indicated by the fact that a smaller number of persons were committed for trial in 1875 than at either of the other periods. Diminution of crime.

253. The following table shows the sexes of the persons arrested, and of those of them who were discharged by magistrates, were summarily dealt with, and who were sent for trial, in the year under notice :— Sexes of persons arrested.

SEXES OF PERSONS ARRESTED, ETC., 1875.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Taken into custody ... ..	19,967	5,280	25,247
Discharged by magistrates ... ..	5,936	1,738	7,674
Summarily convicted or held to bail ... ..	13,373	3,456	16,829
Committed for trial ... ..	658	86	744†

254. Of the persons taken into custody and of those summarily convicted by magistrates, rather more than a fifth were females ; but of those committed for trial, only about a ninth were females. Proportion of females arrested.

255. The offences for which arrests were made during the past year, and during the first year of each of the two previous quinquenniads, were as follow :— Causes of arrest, 1865, 1870, and 1875.

\* This table does not contain a statement of offenders brought before magistrates by summons, who were neither before nor afterwards in the hands of the police. These numbered 27,559 in 1865, 17,457 in 1870, and 18,051 in 1875. The proceedings were generally on account of offences of a lighter nature than those for which arrests were made, viz., offences against Masters and Servants and Wines and Spirits Statutes, breaches of municipal bye-laws, &c. Of the whole number in 1875, only 38 were committed for trial.

† Not including 38 persons committed for trial, who did not either before or afterwards pass into the hands of the police.

## CAUSES OF ARREST, 1865, 1870, AND 1875.

Offence.	1865.	1870.	1875.
Murder and attempts at murder ... ..	52	44	15
Manslaughter ... ..	18	15	16
Shooting at or wounding with intent to do bodily harm	56	52	43
Assaults ... ..	1,177	1,622	1,693
Rape and indecent assaults on females ...	87	86	38
Unnatural offences and assaults with intent to commit the same	15	15	11
Other offences against the person ... ..	108	120	136
Robbery with violence, burglary, &c. ...	405	243	212
Horse, sheep, and cattle stealing, &c. ...	251	185	205
Other offences against property ... ..	4,330	3,780	3,410
Forgery and offences against the currency ...	115	103	110
Drunkenness ... ..	9,625	10,603	11,541
Other offences against good order ... ..	6,324	4,975	5,741
Offences relating to carrying out laws ...	952	564	426
Smuggling and other offences against the revenue	183	82	89
Offences against public welfare ... ..	1,801	1,301	1,561
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>25,499</b>	<b>23,790</b>	<b>25,247</b>

Diminution  
of serious  
offences.

256. Diminished numbers are observed in respect to all the more serious crimes, especially murder, wounding or poisoning, rape, unnatural offences, and robbery with violence. Horse, sheep, and cattle stealing decreased as compared with the first, but not as compared with the second period. The numbers arrested for drunkenness show a steady advance at each successive period.

Age and  
education  
of persons  
arrested.

257. The degree of instruction professed by persons taken into custody, in connection with the age of such persons, is given in the following table:—

## DEGREE OF INSTRUCTION AND AGE OF PERSONS ARRESTED, 1875.

Ages.	Superior Instruction.	Read and Write well.	Read only, or Read and Write imperfectly.	Unable to Read.	Total.
Under 10 years ... ..	...	7	68	422	497
10 to 15 " ... ..	...	66	358	186	610
15 to 20 " ... ..	2	367	1,102	191	1,662
20 to 25 " ... ..	23	770	1,588	330	2,711
25 to 30 " ... ..	21	703	1,733	375	2,832
30 to 40 " ... ..	68	1,624	3,877	1,119	6,688
40 to 50 " ... ..	42	1,300	3,363	1,027	5,732
50 to 60 " ... ..	28	676	1,670	683	3,057
60 years and upwards	14	238	810	393	1,455
Unknown ... ..	...	...	3	...	3
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>5,751</b>	<b>14,572</b>	<b>4,726</b>	<b>25,247</b>

258. The total number of persons over 15 years of age taken into custody was 24,140, and of these, including those possessed of superior instruction, 5,876 could read and write well, and 4,118 could not read; the number at the same age summarily convicted was 16,113, and of these, 3,775 could read and write well, and 2,774 were uninstructed; the number committed for trial at the same age was 737, and of these, 227 could read and write well, and 92 were uninstructed. According to these figures the persons charged with offences serious enough to call for their commitment for trial were better educated than the other arrested persons, as many as one-third of the former being able to write well, and only one-eighth being entirely illiterate; whilst, of the whole number arrested and of those summarily convicted, as few as one-fourth could read and write well, and as many as one-sixth were illiterate. When the last census was taken all the population over 15 years of age, except about a seventh, were returned as able to read and write, and only a tenth were returned as entirely uneducated.

Education of persons arrested and committed for trial.

259. The following table shows the birthplaces and religions of the persons taken into custody and of those committed for trial during the year under review, and the ratio of those of each country and sect to the numbers of the same country and sect in the mean population, calculated according to the proportions which prevailed at the last census:—

Birthplaces and religions of criminals.

**BIRTHPLACES AND RELIGIONS OF PERSONS\* ARRESTED AND COMMITTED FOR TRIAL, 1875.**

Native Country.	Persons Arrested.		Persons Committed for Trial.	
	Number.	Proportion per 1,000 of the Population.	Number.	Proportion per 1,000 of the Population.
Victoria ... ..	3,558†	9·63	118‡	·32
Other Australian colonies ...	989	30·77	47	1·46
England ... ..	7,779	42·23	260	1·41
Wales ... ..	216	29·13	5	·67
Scotland ... ..	2,572	40·81	51	·81
Ireland ... ..	8,212	72·90	165	1·46
China ... ..	508	25·37	38	1·90
Others ... ..	1,413	...	60	...
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>25,247</b>	<b>30·98</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>·91</b>
Religion.				
Protestants ... ..	14,442	24·51	471	·80
Roman Catholics ... ..	10,052	51·76	227	1·17
Jews ... ..	84	20·67	4	·98
Pagans ... ..	499	24·84	37	1·84
Others ... ..	170	...	5	...

\* See footnote to paragraph 251 ante.

† Including 68 Aborigines.

‡ Including 3 Aborigines.

Relative numbers of each birth-place and religion.

260. It will be observed that, in proportion to their numbers in the population, more Irish and more Roman Catholics were arrested during the year than persons of any other nationality or religion, but more Chinese were committed for trial than Irish, and more Pagans than Roman Catholics. Natives of "Other Australian colonies" committed for trial were, relatively to their numbers, as numerous as the Irish, and the English committed for trial were not far behind. As may be supposed, from the large number of children included amongst them, fewer natives of Victoria, in proportion to their numbers, were arrested, and fewer were committed for trial than persons of any other nationality. With this exception, fewer Chinese, according to their numbers, notwithstanding the large proportion committed for trial, were arrested than persons of any other country. An explanation of this apparent anomaly is no doubt to be found in the fact that, whilst the Chinese commit rather more than their share of serious offences, they rarely fall into the hands of the police for drunkenness, which is the most common cause of arrest as affecting persons of all other nationalities forming component parts of the Victorian population.

Occupations of criminals.

261. The following are the occupations of the males and females taken into custody in 1875. It will be seen that very few of the males, and only the prostitutes amongst the females, are set down as belonging to the criminal classes. Others which should be grouped under this head are probably returned as of no occupation :—

#### OCCUPATIONS OF MALES AND FEMALES ARRESTED, 1875.

Occupations.	Males.	Females.
Government officers ... ..	11	...
Local Government officers ... ..	3	...
Others ministering to government, defence, or protection	18	...
Clergy ... ..	3	...
Medical men, dentists, druggists, nurses ... ..	58	8
Lawyers, law-court officers ... ..	35	...
Teachers, governesses ... ..	38	9
Architects, civil engineers, surveyors ... ..	47	...
Actors, vocalists ... ..	41	1
Authors, editors, reporters ... ..	15	...
Artists, sculptors, photographers ... ..	13	...
Merchants, shopkeepers, dealers, &c. ... ..	678	38
Bank officials ... ..	6	...
Accountants, agents, brokers, collectors ... ..	85	...
Commercial clerks ... ..	371	...
Others assisting in the exchange of money or goods ... ..	37	...
Hotel, boarding, eating-house keepers, servants ... ..	162	9
Tailors, shoemakers, dressmakers, hatters, barbers, &c. ... ..	1,100	84
Domestic servants ... ..	292	711
Contractors, artisans, and mechanics ... ..	2,759	1
Miners and others engaged in mining ... ..	1,276	...
Squatters, station laborers, herdsmen ... ..	103	...

OCCUPATIONS OF MALES AND FEMALES ARRESTED, 1875—continued.

Occupations.	Males.	Females.
Farmers, gardeners, farm servants ... ..	688	1
Engaged in pursuits subsidiary to grazing and agriculture	230	...
Engaged in land carriage, &c. ... ..	604	...
Engaged in water carriage and navigation ... ..	1,928	...
Butchers, bakers, and others dealing in food ... ..	610	6
Laborers ... ..	7,334	...
Miscellaneous pursuits ... ..	83	...
Of independent means ... ..	6	...
Criminal and pauper classes ... ..	22	1,798*
No occupation, unspecified † ... ..	1,311	2,614
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>19,967</b>	<b>5,280</b>

262. The cases summarily disposed of by magistrates in 1875 were dealt with in the following manner:—

Results of summary disposal.

SUMMARY DISPOSAL BY MAGISTRATES, 1875.

Sentence.	Males.	Females.
Imprisonment for 2 years ... ..	4	...
"    1 year and under 2 years ... ..	152	46
"    6 months and under 1 year ... ..	300	191
"    4 months ... ..	14	3
"    3 months ... ..	687	368
"    2 months and under 3 months ... ..	234	78
"    1 month and under 2 months ... ..	734	221
"    15 days and under 1 month ... ..	58	4
"    8 days and under 15 days ... ..	538	184
"    7 days and under ... ..	3,620	1,263
Fined ... ..	6,074	639
Ordered to find bail ... ..	241	66
Sent to industrial school or reformatory ... ..	335	233
Otherwise dealt with ‡ ... ..	382	160
<b>Total sentenced ... ..</b>	<b>13,373</b>	<b>3,456</b>
Discharged ... ..	5,936	1,738
<b>Total summarily disposed of ... ..</b>	<b>19,309</b>	<b>5,194</b>

263. Two offenders were sentenced to be whipped in addition to terms of imprisonment, each offender being ordered one whipping. The total number of lashes ordered was 49, or an average of 24½ to each individual. In 1874, 6 criminals were sentenced by magistrates to be whipped, one of whom was ordered to be whipped twice and to receive 25 lashes on each occasion. The others were sentenced to one whipping each, the average number of lashes ordered being 35.

Whipping ordered by magistrates.

\* Prostitutes. † Including 675 male and 312 female children.  
‡ Of these, 282 males and 154 females were sent to lunatic asylums.



Results of commitments for trial.

264. The results of the commitments for trial in 1875 and in the first year of each of the two quinquennial periods, were as follow:—

RESULTS OF COMMITMENTS FOR TRIAL, 1865, 1870, AND 1875.

	1865.	1870.	1875.
Committed for trial ... ..	1,167	908	744
Convicted and sentenced... ..	697	568	427
Acquitted ... ..	336	270	170
Not prosecuted* ... ..	134	70	147

Proportion of convictions obtained.

265. About  $71\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the prisoners tried in 1875 were convicted. This is a larger proportion of convictions than at either of the former periods. In 1870, 68 per cent., and in 1865,  $67\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., of those tried were convicted. In 1874, according to figures in the *Victorian Year-Book* for that year, convictions were obtained in the case of 69 per cent. of those put on their trial.

Sentences in superior courts.

266. The following are the sentences of those who were convicted after commitment for trial in the year under review:—

SENTENCES OF PRISONERS TRIED AND CONVICTED, 1875.

Sentence.	Males.	Females.
Death ... ..	4	...
Hard labor for 10 years and under 15 years ... ..	9	...
"    7 years and under 10 years ... ..	11	...
"    4 years and under 7 years ... ..	51	2
Imprisonment for 2 years and under 4 years ... ..	124	6
"    1 year and under 2 years ... ..	89	10
"    6 months and under 1 year ... ..	56	7
"    1 month and under 6 months ... ..	32	7
"    under 1 month ... ..	7	2
Sent to industrial school or reformatory ... ..	2	...
Held to bail ... ..	1	1
Fined ... ..	6	...
Total sentenced... ..	392	35
Acquitted or not prosecuted ... ..	266	51
Total committed for trial ... ..	658	86

Whipping ordered by superior courts.

267. In addition to terms of imprisonment, whipping was ordered in three instances, in two of which the offender was sentenced to be whipped twice, receiving 18 lashes on each occasion, and in the other instance three times, receiving 20 lashes on each occasion. In 1874, five criminals were sentenced by superior courts to be whipped, of

\* Including those awaiting trial.

whom two were ordered to be whipped once, two twice, and one three times. The total number of lashes ordered was 200, or a fraction over 22 at each whipping.

268. Four criminals were executed in 1875. Two of these were natives of England and returned themselves as members of the Church of England; the other two were Chinese Pagans. In the case of one of the former the offence was wounding with intent to murder, and in the other three cases murder. Executions have taken place in each year since the separation of Victoria from New South Wales, except 1874. In the eleven years ended with 1875 the total number of executions was 38. The persons executed were all males, and no native of Victoria is included in the list. The following are the particulars:—

Criminals executed.

CRIMINALS EXECUTED, 1865 TO 1875.

Offence, Birthplace, and Religion.								Number.
Total number executed								38
Offence—Murder								35
„ Attempt at murder								1
„ Rape								1
„ Unnatural offence								1
Birthplace—Australian Colonies, not Victoria								2
„ England								9
„ Wales								1
„ Ireland								15
„ Scotland								2
„ Belgium								1
„ France								1
„ The United States								1
„ The West Indies								1
„ China								4
„ At sea								1
Religion—Church of England								10
„ Presbyterian								2
„ Wesleyan								3
„ Roman Catholic								20
„ Pagan								3

269. It has been already stated\* that, in the case of 4,644 offences reported to the police in 1875, no arrests had been made up to the end of the first quarter of the following year. This information has resulted from an attempt now made for the first time, but which will, I hope, be continued in future years, to ascertain the extent to which crimes in

Undetected crime.

\* See paragraph 250 ante.

Victoria remain undetected. The offences coming under this category on the present occasion are classified as follow :—

UNDETECTED CRIME,\* 1875.

Offences against the person... ..	321
" property ... ..	3,830
Other offences... ..	493
Total... ..	4,644

NOTE.—This return was made up in April 1876.

Supreme  
Court  
Criminal  
Sessions.

270. Besides the Central Criminal Court, Melbourne, Courts of Assize were held at 10 places in Victoria during the year under review. The number of courts held was 37, and their aggregate duration 139 days. The cases tried numbered 298, of which 197 were for felonies, and 101 for misdemeanors. The convictions for felonies numbered 137, or 70 per cent. of the cases tried; those for misdemeanors numbered 70, or 70 per cent. of the cases tried.

Supreme  
Court civil  
sittings.

271. The civil cases entered in the Supreme Court, Melbourne, and in the Courts of Assize throughout the colony, numbered 250, of which 2 were for assessment of damages, and the remainder for trial. The causes tried numbered 153, viz., 131 by juries of four, and 22 by juries of twelve. Only one of these causes was undefended. The damages laid amounted to £187,579, and the damages awarded by juries to £53,699, or less than a third. In 112 instances the verdict was for the plaintiff, and in 33 for the defendant. The nonsuits amounted to 7, and the writs of summons issued, to 3,520.

Courts of  
General  
Sessions.

272. Courts of General Sessions have jurisdiction in criminal cases within certain limitations, and have also appellate jurisdiction in civil cases from petty sessions. The places at which such courts were held in 1875 numbered 26, and the courts held, 96. The total duration of courts was 149 days. The number of cases tried was 349, in 250 of which, or 72 per cent., convictions were obtained. The number of appeals heard was 107.

County  
Courts.

273. County Courts have jurisdiction in civil cases up to £250. The number of places at which they were held in 1875 was 55, and the number of courts held was 188, extending over 457 days. The total number of causes tried was 10,248, the amount sued for was £237,607, and the amount recovered, £92,479, or 39 per cent. of the amount sued for. The amount of costs awarded to the plaintiff was £12,823, and the amount to the defendant, £4,642.

Courts of  
Mines.

274. Courts of Mines have jurisdiction concerning all questions or disputes which may arise out of mining on Crown lands. The places at which they were held during the year numbered 23, and the courts

\* See footnote to paragraph 250 ante.

held numbered 70, occupying 72 days. The total number of suits was 42, and the aggregate amount or value of demand, £11,287. The amount of costs awarded to the plaintiff was £99, and to the defendant, £406.

275. Courts of Petty Sessions have jurisdiction in ordinary civil cases up to £20, and in master and servant cases up to £50. Such courts were held at 189 places during the year. The civil cases heard numbered 22,224, in which the total amount of debts or damages claimed was £99,519, and the total amount awarded was £62,235, or about 62 per cent. of the amount claimed. The cases of indictable offences brought before these courts numbered 1,707, in 782\* of which, or 46 per cent., the offender was committed for trial. The cases summarily adjudicated upon numbered 41,591, in 27,498 of which, or 66 per cent., convictions were obtained.

Courts of Petty Sessions.

276. The number of writs issued during the year was 1,556, of which 34 were Queen's writs, and 1,522 were subjects' writs. The former were against both person and property, and of the latter 53 were against the person, and 1,469 against property.

Writs.

277. Places for the reception of prisoners in Victoria are of three kinds, ordinary gaols, police gaols, and penal establishments. The ordinary gaols are both houses of correction and debtors' prisons, the penal establishments are houses of correction only. The police gaols are used for the detention of prisoners sentenced to short periods of imprisonment, or awaiting trial or transfer to some other gaol or penal establishment, or to a lunatic asylum.

Gaols and penal establishments.

278. The following table shows, for each of the three descriptions of prison, the total and average number of prisoners detained, the prisoners transferred to another gaol or penal establishment, the cases of sickness, the deaths, and the punishments for offences within the prison during the year 1875 :—

Gaols and prisoners.

GAOLS AND PENAL ESTABLISHMENTS, 1875.

Description of Prison.	Number of Institutions.	Prisoners Detained during the Year.		Prisoners transferred from one establishment to another.	Cases of Sickness.	Deaths.	Punishments for Offences within the Prison.
		Total Number.	Average at One Time.				
Gaols ...	9	8,764	926	2,087	3,050	21	870
Police gaols ...	21	1,196	30	322	57	1	33
Penal establishments	3	1,400	700	245	506	10	1,168
Total ...	33	11,360	1,656	2,654	3,613	32	2,071

\* Including 38 cases in which the offender was neither before nor afterwards in the hands of the police.

Number of  
distinct  
prisoners.

279. Of the total number of prisoners detained during the year in all the institutions it is not possible to determine accurately how many are separate individuals, as not only are some imprisoned more than once during the year, but a prisoner, on being transferred from one establishment to another, is reckoned afresh at the institution he enters. The prisoners transferred during the year amounted, according to the table, to 2,654. These are certainly counted twice over, and therefore should be deducted from the whole, which would leave 8,706. Supposing the three last figures of this number to represent those imprisoned two or more times during the year, and on this assumption substituting cyphers in place of them, the residue would be 8,000, which may possibly express a rough approximation to the number of distinct persons incarcerated during the whole or some part of the year.

Sexes of pri-  
soners.

280. The sexes of the prisoners are given in the Statistical Register, and by means of the returns of these it may be estimated that the assumed number of distinct individual prisoners just arrived at consists of 6,015 males and 1,985 females. These numbers, compared with the numbers of the estimated mean population of the year—viz., 442,623 males and 372,411 females—indicate that on the average 1 male in every 73 males and 1 female in every 172 females living in the colony passed some portion of the year 1875 in prison. In this estimate no account is taken of persons temporarily lodged in watchhouses, “lock-ups,” &c., pending examination before magistrates, the prisoners here referred to being only those detained in regular gaols or penal establishments.

Mean num-  
ber of males  
and females  
in prisons.

281. The mean number of males detained throughout the year was 1,361, and the mean number of females 295. From these figures and those of the mean population of either sex quoted in the last paragraph, it follows that on the average 1 male in every 325 living, and 1 female in every 1,262 living, were constantly in gaol during the year.

Sickness in  
prisons.

282. The cases of sickness in the year (3,613) were in the proportion of 1 to every  $2\frac{1}{5}$  individual prisoners (estimated at 8,000); but if the calculation be made upon the average number of prisoners detained (1,656), the proportion will be 1 prisoner to every 2 cases of sickness.

Deaths in  
prisons.

283. The deaths in prisons (32) were in the proportion of 1 to every 250 of the estimated individual prisoners, or 1 to every 52 of the average number of prisoners.

Punishments  
in prisons.

284. The punishments for offences committed within the prison were in the proportion of 1 to every 4 of the estimated individual prisoners. The average number of prisoners were in the proportion of 1 to every  $1\frac{1}{4}$  punishments.

285. In the following table the ages of the population at the last census have been brought on to suit the numbers of the estimated mean population during 1875, and the numbers so obtained have been compared with the mean number of prisoners at the same ages :—

AGES OF PRISONERS, 1875.

Ages.	Estimated Mean Population.	Average Number of Prisoners continually confined.	Prisoners per 10,000 of the Population.
Under 10 years ... ..	248,913	9	·36
10 to 15 „ ... ..	95,460	22	2·30
15 to 20 „ ... ..	61,268	144	23·50
20 to 30 „ ... ..	115,327	391	33·90
30 to 40 „ ... ..	132,689	426	32·11
40 to 50 „ ... ..	95,930	358	37·32
50 to 60 „ ... ..	42,952	191	44·47
60 years and upwards ... ..	22,495	115	51·12
Total ... ..	815,034	1,656	20·32

Ages of prisoners.

286. By means of this table it is ascertained that, of persons of both sexes over 15 years of age living in the colony, 1 in every 290, of those between 20 and 40, 1 in every 304, and of those over 40, 1 in every 243 were constantly in prison throughout the year.

Proportion of prisoners of various ages.

287. The following are the birthplaces and religions of the prisoners confined during the year, reduced from the total numbers of each nationality and religion given as passing through the institutions to the average number confined, in order that the result may be comparable with the estimated totals of the same nationality and religion in the mean population of the year :—

Birthplaces and religion of prisoners.

BIRTHPLACES AND RELIGIONS OF PRISONERS, 1875.

Native Country.	Estimated Mean Population.	Average Number of Prisoners continually confined.	Prisoners per 10,000 of the Population.
Australian Colonies ... ..	401,677	355	8·84
England and Wales ... ..	191,609	575	30·01
Scotland ... ..	63,021	131	20·79
Ireland ... ..	112,641	445	39·51
China ... ..	20,021	55	27·47
Others ... ..	26,065	95	36·45
Total ... ..	815,034	1,656	20·32
Religion.	Estimated Mean Population.	Average Number of Prisoners continually confined.	Prisoners per 10,000 of the Population.
Protestants ... ..	589,122	969	16·45
Roman Catholics ... ..	194,219	614	31·61
Jews ... ..	4,064	10	24·61
Pagans ... ..	20,091	55	25·88
Others ... ..	7,538	8	10·61

Relative numbers of each country and sect.

288. About 1 in every 500 of the inhabitants of the colony was constantly in prison throughout the year. This proportion was exceeded in the case of natives of all the countries named except the Australian Colonies, the comparative immunity of these being doubtless to a great extent, if not altogether, due to the large proportion of children included in their numbers. The same proportion was also exceeded in the case of the Roman Catholics, Pagans, and Jews, but was not reached by nearly a fourth in the case of the Protestants. Thirty-nine of the total number—equivalent to 6 of the average number—of prisoners confined, stated themselves to be of no religion. These numbers, as compared with the numbers of no religion in the population, according to the proportion at the last census, give an average of  $10\frac{2}{3}$  per 10,000, which was only half the average of those professing some religion. It is possible, however, that in consequence of some leading questions being put to prisoners on entering prison, or for the sake of some supposed advantage to themselves, or some other reason, they may be in the habit of returning themselves as of some religion, when in reality they follow none, and therefore that this proportion may not be altogether reliable.

Birthplaces and religions in reformatories.

289. The children in reformatories during the year numbered 192, of whom 170, or 89 per cent., were Australian born. Of the remainder, 4 were born in England and Wales, 4 in Ireland, 2 in Scotland, 7 in other British Possessions, and of 5 the birthplace was unknown. Of the whole number, 98, or rather more than half, were Protestants; 93, or rather less than half, were Roman Catholics; and 1 was a Jew.

Inquests.

290. The number of inquests held in 1875 was 1,704, or 102 more than in the previous year. According to the verdicts returned, 892 of the deaths resulted from natural causes, 27 from intemperance, 546 from accident, 5 from homicide, 84 from suicide, 4 from execution, 96 from external causes of a doubtful nature, and 42 from unknown or uncertain causes. In 8 instances verdicts of "still-born" were returned. I pointed out last year that the practice of holding inquests in cases of other than violent deaths is increasing, and the present returns fully bear out that conclusion, since, in the case of 52 per cent. of the inquests held in 1875, the verdict was to the effect that death had resulted from natural causes, whereas in the ten years prior to that year a similar verdict was returned in the case of only 45 per cent. of the inquests.

Fire inquests.

291. Ten fire inquests were held during the year. In the case of 2 of these the verdict was that the fire had been occasioned purposely, and in 8 cases an open verdict was returned. Fire inquests are not held

as often now as formerly, which is instanced by the fact that, in the five years ended with 1870, as many as 620 such enquiries were held, as against only 80 in the succeeding five years. This change has occurred, not because fires are less numerous than formerly, but chiefly owing to the circumstance that now fire inquests are not held except upon payment of a fee of £5 5s., by some one applying to have the enquiry made, or in pursuance of instructions from the Crown Law Officers, which are issued only when the circumstances appear sufficiently suspicious to warrant action being taken; whereas formerly it was left entirely to the discretion of the coroner to hold an enquiry on any fire occurring within his district.

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PART VII.—ACCUMULATION.

292. The gold received at the Royal Mint, Melbourne, in 1875 Royal Mint, 1875. amounted to 489,732 oz., valued at £1,947,713. Of this gold, 3,553 oz., valued at £13,857, was issued as bullion, and the remainder was coined into 1,888,000 sovereigns. The Mint receipts during the year amounted to £7,928.

293. The business of the Mint is increasing. In 1875, 154,414 oz. Increase of business at Mint. were received in excess of the quantity in 1874, and 267,861 oz. in excess of the quantity in 1873. The coin and bullion issued and the Mint receipts increased in like proportion.

294. Since the opening of the Mint in 1872, 1,237,657 oz. of gold Victorian and other gold sent to Mint. have been received thereat; but this was not all raised in Victoria. The following figures show the quantities from different countries:—

GOLD RECEIVED AT THE MELBOURNE MINT, 1872 TO 1875.

					oz.
Produce of Victoria	...	...	...	...	884,853
” New South Wales	...	...	...	...	1,211
” Queensland	...	...	...	...	1,141
” South Australia	...	...	...	...	24,455
” New Zealand	...	...	...	...	310,056
” Tasmania	...	...	...	...	12,341
” Natal	...	...	...	...	446
” Unknown	...	...	...	...	3,154
					1,237,657
					1,237,657