

LAW, CRIME, ETC.

**Legal System
in Victoria.**

A statement, giving the basic principles and main provisions of the law of Victoria, appears in the *Year-Book* for 1928-29, page 189.

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 1883* (now incorporated in the *Supreme Court Act 1928*). There were in 1930 seven Judges, viz., a Chief Justice and six Puisne Judges.

The following is a statement of Supreme Court business during the last five years :—

SUPREME COURT CIVIL CASES, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.	Writs of Summons.		Causes Entered for Trial.	Causes Tried.	Verdicts for—		Amount Awarded.
	Number Issued.	Amount Claimed.			Plaintiff.	Defendant.	
		£					£
1925 ..	992	229,398	182	71	27	18	35,187
1926 ..	1,074	227,253	224	73	46	10	21,560
1927 ..	1,288	244,320	250	112	48	14	34,560
1928 ..	1,087	264,332	253	124	53	33	16,432
1929 ..	1,204	219,588	231	88	66	22	65,709

**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 1929 there were 103 sessions, lasting 435 days and held in 32 places. Particulars of litigation in each of the last five years are as follows :—

COUNTY COURT CASES, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.					Number of Cases Tried.	Amount Sued For.	Amount Awarded.
						£	£
1925	..	..	..	..	961	613,781	305,997
1926	..	..	..	..	1,003	680,502	309,087
1927	..	..	..	..	937	761,250	354,292
1928	..	..	..	..	1,019	725,872	355,687
1929	..	..	..	..	934	777,536	402,131

The number of requests for arbitration under the Workers' Compensation Act during the year 1929 was 321. The aggregate amount of compensation claimed was £50,113, and the amount awarded, £48,735. These figures are not included in the above table.

Courts of Petty Sessions were held at 229 places in Victoria in 1929 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 the last five years are given hereunder :—

COURTS OF PETTY SESSIONS: CIVIL CASES, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.				Cases Heard.	Amount Claimed.	Amount Awarded.
					£	£
1925	..	..		82,589	727,013	552,788
1926	..	..		90,299	809,240	611,528
1927	..	..		97,993	851,029	653,548
1928	..	..		103,906	873,199	680,151
1929	..	..		111,832	982,945	776,238

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 1929, 375 appeals against municipal ratings, 27 Children's Maintenance Act cases, 893 ejectment cases, 2,091 fraud summons cases against debtors, 2,616 garnishee cases, 12,832 cases relating to licences and certificates, 1,904 maintenance cases, 146 prohibition cases, and 2,434 miscellaneous cases were heard, and 267 persons alleged to be lunatics were examined.

Writs by
the Sheriff.

A statement is given below of the number of writs received by the Sheriff in the last five years :—

WRITS RECEIVED BY THE SHERIFF, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.	King's Writs against Person and Property.	Subjects' Writs against—		Total.
		The Person.	Property.	
1925	1	5	315	321
1926	4	8	350	362
1927	4	12	397	413
1928	3	12	315	330
1929	15	9	413	437

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.

BANKRUPTCIES.

A Bankruptcy Act passed by the Federal Parliament in October, 1924, and amended in 1927, was brought into operation on 1st August, 1928. It supersedes the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Acts of the States, with the exception of any provisions relating to matters not dealt with in the Federal Act.

The number of sequestrations, &c., in Victoria during **Bankruptcies.** the years ended 31st July, 1929 and 1930, under the *Commonwealth Bankruptcy Act* 1924-28 and the amount of liabilities and assets relating thereto, were as follows :—

Year ended 31st July—	Sequestrations.	Cases under Part XI. of the Act.	Deeds of Arrangement under Part XII. of the Act.	Total.
NUMBER.				
1929 ..	300	15	159	474
1930 ..	418	11	276	705
LIABILITIES.				
	£	£	£	£
1929 ..	419,005	2,502	1,175,992	1,597,499
1930 ..	410,870	6,500	827,073	1,244,443
ASSETS.				
	£	£	£	£
1929 ..	123,472	3,061	1,102,766	1,229,299
1930 ..	219,555	4,619	751,861	976,035

The average yearly number of sequestrations and average declared liabilities are shown in this table for the five decennial periods ended with 1928 :—

Period.	Average Yearly Number.	Average declared liabilities. £
1879 to 1888 ..	612	661,720
1889 to 1898* ..	833	2,213,592
1899 to 1908 ..	445	244,538
1909 to 1918 ..	358	226,517
1919 to 1928 ..	438	396,845

* The failures resulting from the financial crisis of that period swelled these returns.

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 provisions of these Acts are now embodied in the Consolidated Act of 1928. 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, 9,062 decrees for dissolution of marriage and 121 decrees for judicial separation have been granted. Of these, 8,714 and 50 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 223 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 1929:—

DIVORCES, 1929.

	Petitions filed by—			Decrees granted to—		
	Husband.	Wife.	Total.	Husband.	Wife.	Total.
Dissolution of Marriage	238	290	528	225	317	542
Judicial Separation ...	...	3	3	...	2	2
Nullity of Marriage ...	4	5	9	3	1	4
Total ...	242	298	540	228	320	548

Grounds of divorce. The grounds upon which divorces were granted during the year 1929 were as follows:—

Grounds on which Granted.	Dissolution of Marriage.		Judicial Separation.		Nullit Marriage.	
	Husband.	Wife.	Husband.	Wife.	Husband.	Wife.
Adultery ...	61	71	...	2	...	...
Bigamy ...	...	3	...	...	...	...
Consanguinity ...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Cruelty, repeated acts of	...	2	...	...	...	...
Desertion ...	157	223	...	...	...	...
Desertion and adultery ...	1	2	...	...	...	...
Drunkenness (habitual) ...	1	7	...	...	...	...
Drunkenness and cruelty	...	5	...	...	...	...
Impotence ...	...	...	...	...	2	1
Insanity ...	5	1	...	...	...	...
Sentences for crime ...	...	3	...	...	...	...
Total ...	225	317	...	2	3	1

Divorces, 1925 to 1929. 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 five years, also of the proportion of decrees per 100,000 married couples living:—

DIVORCES AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS IN VICTORIA, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.	Petitions for—		Decrees for—		Divorces and Separations per 100,000 Married Couples Living.
	Dissolution of Marriage.	Judicial Separation.	Dissolution of Marriage.	Judicial Separation.	
1925	535	3	445	1	146
1926	576	9	466	2	151
1927	590	4	513	2	163
1928	604	9	481	..	150
1929	528	3	542	2	168

In New South Wales, where the law in regard to divorce does not differ much from that in Victoria, there were, in 1929, 1,149 decrees for dissolution of marriage and judicial separation. The number of divorces and separations in that year per 100,000 married couples living was 250. The average annual number for the five-year period 1925-29, in proportion to a like number of married couples, was 245, as compared with an average of 157 for the same period in Victoria.

CRIME.

Information relating to the administration of the criminal law in Victoria appears in the *Year-Book* for 1928-29, page 196.

Indeterminate sentences. The Indeterminate Sentences Act came into force on 1st July, 1908. It is now incorporated in the *Crimes Act* 1928. The 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 chief functions 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 operation and effect of the provisions as to indeterminate sentences of the Act and the regulations. Other important powers vested in the Board 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.

In the early part of the financial year 1916-17 the Board brought 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 has since been much improved by the addition of the necessary plant and tools for technical instruction, the erection of a new schoolroom with modern equipment and the construction of a swimming pool. The school is in charge of a trained teacher from the Education Department.

Instruction is also given in the use of tools, framing, jointing, &c., and in sheet-metal work by an officer of the Education Department trained in technical subjects.

The swimming pool constructed by the inmates themselves under expert guidance is much appreciated. Classes in life-saving operations and in first aid to the injured are held, and all inmates are put through a course of physical drill.

At the farm, three miles from the Reformatory, there is accommodation for fifteen inmates and for two officers with their families. Many improvements have been made on the farm, and recently two large dams have been constructed for water storage for irrigation purposes.

At the Afforestation Camp, French Island, known as the McLeod Settlement, marked improvements have been effected in recent years. Land that was formerly a swamp has been reclaimed and is now under crop. Other areas which were covered with dense scrub have been cleared and ploughed, portion being devoted to agriculture and portion to tree plantations. During the planting season, which extends from May to September each year approximately, pine transplants are planted. The pine seedlings are raised in the nursery at the Settlement. Prisoners for the Settlement are chosen from those under indeterminate detention at Pentridge. They enjoy considerable freedom and are placed largely on their honour. Any who fail to rise to the standard of conduct and industry required of them are immediately returned to Pentridge.

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.				
	1926.	1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.
Pentridge Reformatory Prison ..	54	59	76	97	93
Castlemaine Reformatory Prison ..	86	84	86	105	97
Reformatory for Females, Coburg ..	1	2	3	1	2
McLeod Settlement, French Island ..	39	38	42	42	40
Geelong Reformatory Prison ..	7	9	10	13	16
Beechworth Reformatory Prison ..	..	21	29	29	53
Metropolitan Gaol Reformatory Prison	..	..	..	1	2
Total	187	213	246	288	303

Probation officers to supervise first offenders released by the courts on recognizance under the provisions of the *Crimes Act* 1928 are appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board. The position is honorary, and a number of persons connected with religious and philanthropic organizations have been appointed to the office.

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 1929 :—

ARRESTS AND SUMMONSES FOR VARIOUS OFFENCES, 1929.

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	18	...	...	2	...	14	2
Manslaughter	17	...	...	...	...	16	1
Shooting at, wounding, &c.	48	5	...	13	2	28	...
Assaults	1,301	696	50	501	53	1	...
Others	256	53	7	55	4	128	9
Total	1,640	754	57	571	59	187	12
Against Property—							
Robbery, burglary, &c.	521	97	1	49	5	363	6
Larceny and similar offences	2,952	1,898	166	541	51	276	20
Wilful damage	512	334	11	155	12	...	...
Others	767	521	21	182	14	28	1
Total	4,752	2,850	199	927	82	667	27
Forgery and Offences against the Currency	22	...	...	2	...	19	1
Against Good Order—							
Drunkenness	9,335	5,281	585	3,152	367	...	...
Others	7,399	5,183	584	1,408	223	1	...
Total	16,734	10,464	1,169	4,560	590	1	...
Other Offences—							
Perjury	15	...	...	...	...	13	2
Breaches of—							
Defence Act	275	232	...	43	...	...	...
Education Act	8,020	5,970	1,200	706	144	...	...
Electoral Act	527	259	55	154	59	...	...
Licensing Act	4,813	3,340	366	872	235	...	...
Pure Food Act	595	430	39	103	23	...	...
Miscellaneous	20,654	16,859	1,075	2,462	237	17	4
Total	34,899	27,090	2,735	4,340	698	30	6
Grand Total	58,097	41,158	4,160	10,400	1,429	904	46

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 39,460 summons cases, 32,978 were summarily convicted, 6,442 were discharged, and 40 were committed for trial. Of the total persons dealt with (58,097), 45,318 were summarily convicted, 11,829 were discharged, and 950 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 1929 :—

CHILDREN'S COURTS: ARRESTS AND SUMMONSES FOR VARIOUS OFFENCES, 1929.

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	43	..	33	1	..	..	76	1
Others	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Total	44	..	33	1	..	..	77	1
Against Property—								
Larceny, &c. ..	734	27	1,163	27	..	..	1,897	54
Wilful Damage ..	66	4	286	..	..	..	352	4
Others	21	1	47	3	..	..	68	4
Total	821	32	1,496	30	..	..	2,317	62
Against Good Order—								
Drunkenness ..	4	..	..	..	..	..	4	..
Others	35	32	259	3	..	..	294	35
Total	39	32	259	3	..	..	298	35
Other Offences—								
Breach of Licensing Act ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Miscellaneous	108	47	871	36	78	50	1,057	133
Total	108	47	871	36	78	50	1,057	133
Grand Total ..	1,012	111	2,659	70	78	50	3,749	231

The number of arrests and summons cases which were disposed of in Children's Courts in the previous five years were :—3,428 in 1924, 3,514 in 1925, 4,031 in 1926, 4,248 in 1927, and 3,760 in 1928.

The arrests of neglected children, which in 1929 numbered 82, viz., 58 males and 24 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.

**Arrests and
summons
cases.**

Of the persons who were brought before magistrates during the last five years, 28 per cent. were arrested, and 72 per cent. summoned. Particulars for the last five years are given in the subjoined table:—

ARRESTS AND SUMMONSES, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.				Arrested by the Police.	Brought before Magistrates on Summons.	Total.
1925	...	...	...	17,922	55,424	73,346
1926	...	...	...	18,853	56,703	75,556
1927	...	...	...	19,507	47,769	67,276
1928	...	...	...	18,559	42,003	60,562
1929	...	...	..	18,637	39,460	58,097

**Neglected
children
arrested.**

The arrests of neglected children, which are excluded from the above table and the tables which follow, numbered 104 in 1925, 67 in 1926, 132 in 1927, 109 in 1928, and 82 in 1929.

**Arrests and
summons
cases.**

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, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.	Total.	Summarily Convicted.	Discharged by Magistrates.	Committed for Trial.	Convicted after Commitment.
1925	73,346	58,879	13,723	744	510
1926	75,556	60,728	14,067	761	461
1927	67,276	53,612	12,890	774	474
1928	60,562	47,865	11,965	731	521
1929	58,097	45,318	11,829	950	630
Number per 10,000 of Population.					
1925	438·8	352·3	82·1	4·4	3·1
1926	445·3	357·9	82·9	4·5	2·7
1927	389·5	310·4	74·6	4·5	2·7
1928	345·8	273·3	68·3	4·2	3·0
1929	328·4	256·2	66·8	5·4	3·6

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 1929.

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
1920	...	...	...	1,909	4,877	7,154	42,758	56,698
1925	...	...	...	1,637	3,672	9,430	58,607	73,346
1926	...	...	...	1,748	3,841	10,150	59,817	75,556
1927	...	...	...	1,632	4,372	10,793	50,479	67,276
1928	...	...	...	1,615	4,198	9,635	45,114	60,562
1929	...	...	...	1,640	4,752	9,385	42,320	58,097
				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
1920	...	...	...	1·26	3·23	4·73	28·27	37·49
1925	...	...	...	·98	2·20	5·64	35·06	43·88
1926	...	...	...	1·03	2·26	5·98	35·26	44·53
1927	...	...	...	·95	2·53	6·25	29·22	38·95
1928	...	...	...	·92	2·40	5·50	25·76	34·58
1929	...	...	...	·93	2·69	5·30	23·92	32·84

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 the years prior to 1920.

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.

Other Offences. The only serious crimes included under "Other Offences" are forgery, counterfeiting, conspiracy, and perjury, and these are very few in number, there having been in Victoria in 1929 only 43 of such crimes out of a total of 58,097 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.

Sentenced by magistrates. The results of summary disposal of cases by magistrates during 1929 were as follows:—

SUMMARY DISPOSAL BY MAGISTRATES OF PERSONS ARRESTED, 1929.

Sentence	Males.	Females.	Total.
Fines paid	4,599	428	5,027
Imprisonment for—			
Under 1 month	3,167	400	3,567
1 and under 6 months	1,580	184	1,764
6 and under 12 months	254	35	289
1 year	3	...	3
2 years	6	...	6
Ordered to find bail or sentence suspended on entering surety ...	498	113	611
Admonished	782	121	903
Sent to Industrial or Reformatory Schools	106	3	109
Otherwise dealt with	58	3	61
Total sentenced	11,053	1,287	12,340
Discharged	4,788	599	5,387
Total summarily disposed of ...	15,841	1,886	17,727
Sentenced per 10,000 of population ...	125.88	12.44	69.75

Sentences in
superior
courts.

The following were the sentences of the arrested persons tried and convicted in superior courts during 1929 :—

SENTENCES OF ARRESTED PERSONS TRIED AND CONVICTED, 1929.

Sentence.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Fines paid	6	...	6
Imprisonment for—			
Under 1 month	3	2	5
1 and under 6 months	59	1	60
6 " 12 "	223	9	232
1 year and under 4 years	81	1	82
4 years " 7 "	10	...	10
10 " "	2	1	3
15 " "	3	..	3
Ordered to find bail or sentence suspended on entering surety	135	12	147
Sent to Reformatory Prison	60	...	60
" " school	1	...	1
Total convicted	583	26	609
Acquitted	248	12	260
Not prosecuted	32	3	35
Convictions per 10,000 of population...	6·64	·29	3·44

In addition to being sent to gaol, seven prisoners were ordered one whipping each, and two prisoners two whippings each with a birch.

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.

Arrests of
distinct
individuals.

A statement, showing the number of distinct individuals arrested in 1928, is shown in the *Year-Book* for 1928-29, pages 205 to 208.

Drunkness,
1925 to 1929.

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, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.	Number of Persons —			Number per 1,000 of Population.
	Arrested.	Summoned.	Total.	
1925 ...	9,318	112	9,430	5·64
1926 ...	10,066	84	10,150	5·98
1927 ...	10,655	138	10,793	6·25
1928 ...	9,582	73	9,635	5·50
1929 ...	9,294	91	9,385	5·30

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	1908-12	68
1879-85	88	1913-17	59
1886-92	106	1918-22	32
1893-97	65	1923-27	41
1898-1902	84	1928	37
1903-07	77	1929	36

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 fourteen 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 arrested 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, 1925 TO 1929.

Year.	Number.	Number per 100,000 of the Population under 20 years of age.
1925	130	20·27
1926	142	21·81
1927	162	24·44
1928	137	20·39
1929	143	21·06

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.

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

	Yearly Average Quantity Consumed. 1st July, 1924, to 30th June, 1929.			Consumption per Head.		
	Spirits.	Beer.	Wine.	Spirits.	Beer.	Wine.
	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.
Commonwealth of Australia ..	2,506,000	69,418,600	3,014,300	·41	11·39	·49
*Dominion of New Zealand ..	645,100	12,962,800	221,000	·47	9·45	·16

* Average for five years ended 31st December, 1929.

The quantities consumed per head in Australia and New Zealand during three quinquennial periods in the years 1915 to 1929, were as follows:—

		Australia.			New Zealand.		
		Average Consumption per Head for Five Years ended—					
		30th June—			31st December—		
		1919.	1924.	1929.	1919.	1924.	1929.
		gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.	gallons.
Spirits	..	·60	·40	·41	·68	·58	·47
Beer	..	12·30	11·88	11·39	10·49	11·01	9·45
Wine	..	·44	·46	·49	·13	·15	·16

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 ..	10,650,300	20,805,600	3,014,300	34,470,200	5 12 10	9 15 0
†Dominion of New Zealand ..	2,741,700	3,888,800	221,000	6,851,500	5 0 0	8 9 3

* Average for five years ended 30th June, 1929.

† Average for five years ended 31st December, 1929.

These figures show that the average yearly expenditure on drink in Australia during the five years ended 30th June, 1929, was £34,470,200, and that in New Zealand during the quinquennium 1924 to 1929 it was £6,851,500. The expenditure per head for the Commonwealth was £5 12s. 10d., and for New Zealand, £5. The corresponding expenditures for the quinquennium 1915-19 were £3 7s. 8d. and £3 5s. 4d. per head, and for a similar period in the years 1919 to 1924, £5 0s. 7d. and £5 5s. per head.

LOCAL OPTION.

**Local Option
Acts of 1920
and 1922.**

A statement, giving particulars of the provisions of the Local Option Acts of 1920 and 1922, appears in the *Year-Book* of 1928-29, pages 211 and 212.

**Local Option
Poll held 21st
October, 1920.**

In accordance with the *Licensing Act* 1915 certain resolutions were submitted to the electors throughout the State for approval on 21st October, 1920. One of these (Resolution C) "That no licence be granted" was carried in two licensing districts in the State, viz., Boroondara and Nunawading. 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.

**Licensing
Poll, 1930.**

On the 29th March, 1930, a Referendum, called a Licensing Poll, was conducted under Part XIV. of the *Licensing Act* 1928 (as amended) to determine whether or not licences shall be abolished. The poll was State-wide, and was the first of the octennial polls provided for by the *Licensing Act* of 1922 (now incorporated in the *Licensing Act* 1928).

The resolution submitted to electors was "Abolition—That licences shall be abolished (Resolution 1)." The number of votes recorded for the said resolution was, therefore, 418,902, whilst 552,339 votes were recorded against the resolution.

The number of electors on the roll and the number who recorded their votes at the Licensing Poll held on the 29th March, 1930, was as follows:—

	Number.
Electors on the electoral roll ..	1,029,420
Electors who voted—	
Male	474,232
Female	503,280
Total	977,512
Informal votes	6,271

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.

Information relating to the nature and the powers vested in the Licences Reduction Board is given in the *Year-Book* for 1928-29, page 213.

Up to 30th September, 1930, 1,709 hotels had been closed by the Board or had surrendered their licences. The total sum paid in compensation was £1,117,881, or an average of £654 each. Five hundred and fourteen of these hotels were located in the Greater Melbourne district; the compensation paid in connexion with these totalled £553,792, making an average of £1,077 each. There were 1,195 hotels closed in country districts, whose owners and licensees received £564,089, or an average of £472 for each hotel.

In addition to the above closings, the following have been deprived of their licences, as a result of the local option poll held on 21st October, 1920:—5 spirit merchants, 4 grocers, 1 club, and 4 Australian wine licensees. The amount of compensation awarded was £550. Since 1922, 5 spirit merchants', 2 grocers', and 55 Australian wine licences have been taken away, for which compensation to the amount of £11,355 has been awarded.

Improvement and Extension of Licensed accommodation A section of the Board's work which has grown rapidly in extent and importance, is the improvement in the type of structure and in the class of accommodation of licensed houses.

Since 1922 plans have been passed by the Board for new and improved licensed premises, the estimated cost being £3,296,353.

Hotels, 1885, 1906 and 1930. The return given hereunder shows the number of hotels, including roadside licences, in Victoria in 1885, 1906 and 1930, 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 1930.

Year.	Estimated Population.	Number of Hotels.*	Persons to each Hotel.
1885	969,200	4,339	223
1906	1,244,470	3,520	354
1930 (30th September) ...	1,787,600	1,808	989
Increase, 1885 to 1930 ...	818,400	...	766
Decrease, ,, ,, ...	...	2,531	...

* Including Roadside Licences.

While the population has increased by 84 per cent. since 1885, the number of hotels has decreased by 58 per cent., and the number of persons to an hotel is now 343 per cent. more than it was in that year. During the period 1885-1930, 227 hotels were closed as the result of local option polls, 1,709 were deprived of their licences by the Licences Reduction Board, or surrendered their licences to the Board, and 664 were closed voluntarily. During the period of twenty-four years, 1907 to 1930, 69 new licences were granted.

LICENSING FUND.

The following is a statement of the receipts and expenditure of the Licensing Fund for the year ended 30th June, 1930:—

LICENSING FUND.—RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE, 1929-1930.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Balance, 30th June, 1929	100,714	10 0	Salaries and expenses of Board, office, &c.	5,659	6 2
Fees	3,270	2 6	Incidental Expenses	15,170	11 10
Fines	9,314	14 7	Annual payment to municipalities ..	61,308	0 0
Sale of confiscated liquor	301	4 1	Compensation ..	12,725	0 10
<div> <div>Licences.</div> <div> <div>Spirit Merchants and Grocers ..</div> <div>Victuallers ..</div> <div>Temporary ..</div> <div>Railway Refreshment Rooms ..</div> <div>Packet ..</div> <div>Australian Wine ..</div> <div>Billiard-table ..</div> <div>Brewers ..</div> <div>Vignerons ..</div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>37,764</div> <div>294,853</div> <div>4,011</div> <div>1,264</div> <div>114</div> <div>4,308</div> <div>6,044</div> <div>2,403</div> <div>60</div> </div>	<div> <div>4 6</div> <div>0 0</div> <div>9 0</div> <div>3 0</div> <div>4 6</div> <div>0 0</div> <div>0 0</div> <div>12 0</div> <div>0 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>Expenses of Licensing Poll</div> <div>Transferred to Police Superannuation Fund under section 311 of Act No. 3717</div> <div>Transferred to Revenue under section 312 of Act No. 3717</div> <div>Balance £461,714 10 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>24,338</div> <div>23,000</div> <div>227,044</div> </div>	<div> <div>6 6</div> <div>0 10</div> <div>5 2</div> </div>
Club certificates ..	7,893	7 0	Deduct Investments in Stock	341,000	0 0
Permits—Extra Bars ..	2,040	0 0			
" Extended Hours ..	1,366	8 0			
Expenses of holding extended annual sitting of court ..	16	16 0			
Interest	14,170	0 0			
Cost of taking poll ..	50	0 0			
Total ..	£489,959	19 8	Total ..	£489,959	19 8

Racecourse licences and percentage fees. The *Lotteries Gaming and Betting Act 1906* (now Section 152 of the *Police Offences Act 1928*) 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 last ten years were as follows :—

REVENUE FROM RACECOURSE LICENCES AND PERCENTAGE FEES, 1921 TO 1930.

Year ended 30th June.			Amount.	Year ended 30th June.			Amount.
			£				£
1921	..	..	17,731	1926	..	..	23,270
1922	..	..	17,578	1927	..	..	24,148
1923	..	..	20,124	1928	..	..	25,036
1924	..	..	20,516	1929	..	..	24,952
1925	..	..	21,714	1930	..	..	27,789

GAOLS AND PRISONERS.

Gaols and prisoners. There are six gaols in Victoria, including the Pentridge Penal Establishment, and six reformatory prisons, also three police gaols which are used as receiving stations. The following statement contains information for the year 1929 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, 1929.

Name of Institution.	Number of Prisoners.							
	For whom there is Accommodation.		Daily Average.		Total Received.		In Confinement, 31.12.29.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Pentridge ..	665	..	570	..	1,529	..	560	..
Pentridge Reformatory Prison..	68	..	93	..	137	..	100	..
Ballarat ..	62	18	18	..	256	6	17	..
Beechworth Reformatory Prison	78	..	31	..	26	..	41	..
Bendigo ..	116	28	16	..	228	7	13	2
Castlemaine Reformatory Prison	97	..	94	..	175	..	85	..
Geelong ..	150	29	93	..	433	3	128	..
Geelong Reformatory Prison ..	37	..	12	..	18	..	15	..
McLeod Settlement Reformatory Prison ..	46	..	42	..	36	..	37	..
Metropolitan ..	201	52	147	55	4,681	661	160	48
Metropolitan Reformatory Prison, Coburg	6	3	1	1	28	1	2	1
Sale ..	30	5	6	..	87	..	9	..
Police Gaols ..	35	3	5	1	204	8	4	..
Total ..	1,591	138	1,128	57	7,838	686	1,171	51

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 to 1921 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 1929, 34 per cent. less than in 1901, 62 per cent. less than in 1891, 68 per cent. less than in 1881, and 75 per cent. less than in 1871.

Prisoners in
confinement,
1871 to 1929
—decrease.

PRISONERS IN CONFINEMENT, 1871 TO 1929.

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
1921 ...	741	54	795	14·56	·98	7·40
1925 ...	850	45	895	14·74	·75	7·63
1926 ...	932	47	979	15·93	·78	8·22
1927 ...	949	50	999	15·92	·81	8·24
1928 ...	1,008	36	1,044	16·70	·59	8·49
1929 ...	1,128	57	1,185	18·54	·90	9·55

Birthplaces
and ages of
prisoners.

The birthplaces and ages of prisoners constantly detained as deduced from the numbers passing through the gaols, also the number per 10,000 of population, are shown below for the years 1911, 1921, and 1929 :—

BIRTHPLACES AND AGES OF PRISONERS CONSTANTLY DETAINED 1911 TO 1929.

	Number Constantly Detained.			Number per 10,000 of Population.*		
	1911.	1921.	1929.	1911.	1921.	1929.
Birthplace—						
Australia and New Zealand	595	660	918	5·32	4·92	5·92
England and Wales ..	87	64	112	9·73	} 6·53	11·46
Scotland ..	26	18	50	9·78		
Ireland ..	62	23	51	14·95		
China ..	4	1	2	7·14	3·54	6·29
Others ..	39	29	52	11·64	11·13	17·28
Age—						
Under 20 years ..	54	85	141	1·01	1·45	2·08
20 to 30 years ..	205	287	435	8·67	10·93	14·34
30 to 40 years ..	211	190	340	11·66	8·35	12·93
40 to 50 years ..	193	126	150	11·64	7·20	7·47
50 to 60 years ..	96	68	77	9·60	4·50	4·40
60 years and over ..	54	39	42	5·58	3·07	2·86

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

POLICE PROTECTION.

The following table shows the numbers in the various grades of the police force in Victoria on the 31st December, 1929 :—

POLICE IN VICTORIA, 31ST DECEMBER, 1929.

Designation.	Number.		
	Metropolitan.	Country.	Total.
<i>Foot.</i>			
Chief Commissioner	1	...	1
Superintendents	4	7	11
Inspectors	8	7	15
Sub-Inspectors	20	4	24
Sergeants, First class	39	9	48
" Second class	35	13	48
Senior Constables	145	87	232
First Constables	128	110	238
Constables	1,013	241	1,254
Total	1,393	478	1,871
<i>Detectives.</i>			
Sergeants, First Class	3	...	3
" Second Class	2	...	2
Senior Detectives	16	1	17
First Detectives	19	...	19
Detectives	26	...	26
Total	66	1	67
<i>Mounted.</i>			
Senior Constables	1	...	1
First Constables	10	45	55
Constables	19	128	147
Total	30	173	203
Grand Total	1,489	652	2,141

Strength of
police force in
proportion to
population.

The number of police in Victoria per 100,000 of the population and the corresponding proportions for other States, at the end of 1929, were as follows:—Victoria, 120·5; New South Wales, 146·2; Queensland, 132·7; South Australia, 135·1; Western Australia, 136·0; Tasmania, 109·6; and Northern Territory, 715·9.

Expenditure
on police,
gaols, &c.

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 1913-14 and in each of the five years ended with 1928-29 :—

EXPENDITURE ON POLICE AND GAOLS, 1913-14 TO 1928-29.

Year ended 30th June.	Amount Expended (exclusive of Pensions) on—					Amount per Head of Population.
	Maintenance, &c.		Buildings.		Total.	
	Police.	Gaols and Penal Es- tablishments.	Police.	Gaols and Penal Es- tablishments.		
	£	£	£	£	£	s. d.
1914 ..	343,518	54,083	20,174	2,472	420,247	5 11
1925 ..	602,222	92,635	20,109	7,097	722,063	8 9
1926 ..	622,509	101,794	24,566	14,747	763,616	9 1
1927 ..	678,812	106,059	31,637	8,338	824,846	9 8
1928 ..	681,814	106,978	39,292	4,523	832,607	9 7
1929 ..	718,007	109,062	23,223	4,190	854,482	9 8

Executions. During the twenty-five years ended with 1929 there were only eight executions in Victoria, one of which took place in 1908, one in 1912, two in 1916, two in 1918, one in 1922, and one in 1924. Since the first settlement of Port Phillip in 1835, 176 criminals have been executed within the State, of whom only four were females.

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

INQUESTS, 1925 TO 1929.

Cause of Death found to be due to—	1925.	1926.	1927.	1928.	1929.
External Causes—					
Accident	619	718	690	691	677
Homicide	11	10	8	10	10
Suicide	170	144	174	199	195
Execution .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..
Doubtful	21	26	23	24	27
Disease or Natural Causes	603	599	619	624	647
Intemperance .. .. .	..	1	2	1	..
Unspecified or Doubtful Causes	3	5	3	2	4
Being "Still Born"	1	1	3	1	2
Total	1,428	1,504	1,522	1,552	1,562
Number per 10,000 of Population	8.54	8.86	8.81	8.86	8.83

Of the deaths from external causes during the last five years, 76 per cent. were due to accidental causes, 1 per cent. to homicide, and 20 per cent. to suicide; in 3 per cent. of the cases the nature or motive of the violence which caused death was doubtful.