

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS.

ONLY of recent years has the question of Local Government received the attention which its importance demands, the States of the Commonwealth that have adopted general systems being Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and Tasmania. New Zealand, however, has also for a number of years been divided into districts with local governing powers. It will be noted, from the information given in the following pages, that the Acts controlling Local Government vary considerably, especially as regards the election of representatives and presiding officers, method of valuation, and rating powers; and the particulars available in regard to each State are not sufficiently exhaustive to admit of the making of any effective comparison between the systems of the different provinces.

The first portion of this chapter is devoted to an account of the local bodies operating under the various Municipal Acts, while the particulars relating to Boards and Trusts, for the establishment and control of which special Acts have in most cases been passed, will be found in the second part.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

The first Act providing for the establishment of a Local Council in this State was passed in 1842, when the City of Sydney was incorporated. In 1867, the Municipalities Act became law, but as that Act left it optional for any district to become constituted as a municipality, only a small proportion of the area of the State is incorporated.

Under the provisions of the original Acts, the aldermen were elected by the ratepayers (except in the City of Sydney, where both owners and occupiers voted), and the mayors were chosen by the aldermen. By legislation enacted in 1900 the franchise was extended to tenants and lodgers in the city of Sydney, and a similar extension is proposed in the Bill to amend the Municipalities Act of 1867.

The legislation of 1900 and 1901 relating to municipal matters consisted of two important measures, viz., the Sydney Corporation Amending Act and the Municipalities Amendment Bill. Under the provisions of the first-mentioned Act, the City of Sydney is divided into twelve wards, each returning two aldermen, instead of into eight wards, each represented by three aldermen, as heretofore. The mayor is still to be

elected by the aldermen, as the proposal to provide for his election by the citizens was not carried. Other important amendments are those providing (1) for the abolition of auditors elected by citizens, with the substitution of Government inspectors to audit the accounts ; and (2) for the resumption of land for the opening or enlarging of streets or public places. The rating powers have not been altered, the general rate remaining at not more than 2s. in the £ of the annual value, but lighting and other special rates may also be imposed, if necessary.

The Municipalities Act of 1867 provided that the general rate should not exceed 1s. in the £ of the annual value, but that special rates could be levied, so long as the general and special rates together did not come to more than 2s. in the £. A further charge, limited to 6d. in the £, could be made for street-watering, and an additional rate for water supply, where necessary, the amount not to exceed 1s. in the £. The amending Bill proposes to give power to the councils to increase the general rate to as much as 1s. 6d. in the £ of the annual value if necessary, but the special rates still remain as quoted in the original Act. A most important alteration in the principles of municipal taxation is the authority to be conferred on the municipalities to levy their rates on the unimproved capital value of the land instead of on the annual value of all property, provided that the ratepayers agree to the alteration by a special vote. The assessment of the unimproved value must not exceed 2d. in the £ of the assessed capital value. The Bill referred to has not yet been passed into law, but was before Parliament when this volume went to press.

New South Wales, as already indicated, is the most backward of the states in regard to local government. The principle of self-government is on all sides recognised as a sound one, and various measures to secure its application have from time to time been placed before Parliament, but so far the Legislature has not succeeded in giving effect to the manifest wishes of the constituencies. The total area incorporated at the close of the municipal year 1900 was only 2,849 square miles, so that it will be seen that a large area still remains under the control of the central government in New South Wales. For this some justification is claimed on account of the largeness of the territory and the sparseness of the population residing in the unincorporated areas ; but this is hardly tenable, seeing that both these conditions exist to a greater degree in Queensland, where the whole territory is under local government. The total area still unincorporated in New South Wales amounts to 307,851 square miles.

The total capital value of all property in municipalities is returned as £124,546,200, and the annual value as £7,905,760, so that the annual return from property is about 6·35 per cent.

Taking the municipalities as a whole, the following particulars in regard to the number of municipalities, the area incorporated, and the annual and capital values of property assessed for municipal purposes,

will not be without interest. The figures relate to all municipalities, and cover eleven years :—

Year.	No. of Municipalities.	Area Incorporated.	Annual Value.	Capital Value.
		acres.	£	£
1890	158	1,527,772	7,792,350	127,212,046
1891	165	1,564,406	8,356,803	134,009,758
1892	168	1,637,046	8,697,503	144,277,400
1893	171	1,660,675	8,929,475	150,938,000
1894	175	1,683,990	8,460,674	151,226,000
1895	182	1,754,941	7,895,645	136,202,100
1896	183	1,767,079	7,603,735	127,499,700
1897	183	1,767,749	7,430,120	122,787,000
1898	184	1,768,500	7,379,350	120,625,600
1899	184	1,768,500	7,412,100	121,213,800
1900	190	1,823,522	7,905,760	124,546,200

The annual and capital values of Sydney and suburbs since 1891 are shown below :—

Year.	Sydney and Suburbs.		Year.	Sydney and Suburbs.	
	Annual Value.	Capital Value.		Annual Value.	Capital Value.
	£	£		£	£
1891	5,851,589	99,224,810	1897	5,022,910	88,464,400
1892	6,013,697	106,891,100	1898	4,965,400	86,927,600
1893	6,067,882	110,061,000	1899	4,995,200	87,464,000
1894	5,686,197	108,951,000	1900	5,069,630	88,116,600
1895	5,352,920	96,692,200	1901	5,188,700	90,060,600
1896	5,141,990	91,427,100			

A reference to these figures will show the depreciation which has taken place in the value of real estate during the past few years, but it is satisfactory to note that the year 1900 shows an increase compared with the previous year; while the annual value for 1901 exceeds that of any previous year since 1895, and the capital value is higher than in any year since 1896.

The values of five of the principal towns are given in the subjoined table, and for the purposes of comparison, the corresponding figures for 1891 are shown. With regard to Broken Hill, it should be remembered that the mines were not fully developed in 1891, and although the capital value in 1899 had increased by about £364,000, the values in the years 1894 and 1895 were stated to be £2,952,000, and £2,862,000 respectively, but for 1897 the figures declined to £1,232,600, which was practically the value in 1899. The annual and capital values shown for 1900 include the assessments on the output of the silver mines, but the mining companies successfully

appealed against the rating of their products. The annual and capital values of the dwellings and shops for 1900 would be about £158,000 and £872,000 respectively :—

Town.	1891.		1900.	
	Annual Value.	Capital Value.	Annual Value.	Capital Value.
	£	£	£	£
Bathurst	69,426	735,710	54,465	931,000
Broken Hill	136,217	865,580	562,290	3,103,900
Goulburn	88,200	930,000	61,510	945,400
Newcastle and suburbs ...	411,028	5,525,500	326,005	5,176,700
Parramatta	83,986	1,692,000	62,270	1,245,300

The revenues of municipalities are derived chiefly from rates, but under the Act of 1867 the Government allows an endowment for the first fifteen years following incorporation, the scale being £ for £ of general rates received during the first five years, 10s. per £ during the next five years, and 5s. per £ for the remaining period. The Government also contributes grants in aid of roads and other works, and occasionally a special endowment is given. Rates are levied on nine-tenths of the annual value of improved property, and on 5 per cent. of the capital value of unimproved land, except in the City of Sydney, where the maximum percentage on unimproved is 6 per cent. The following table shows the receipts during 1900, the Government endowments and grants being specified :—

Total receipts—	£
Government.....	44,882
Rates	471,415
Other Revenue	262,974
Total	<u>779,271</u>
Receipts per inhabitant in incorporated area—	£ s. d.
Government.....	0 1 0
Rates	0 11 0
Other Revenue	0 6 1
Total	<u>0 18 1</u>

The burthen of rates is, therefore, 1s. 2½d. per £ of annual improved value, and about 2d. per £ of estimated unimproved capital value.

The total expenditure for the same period amounted to £836,601, distributed as follows :—

	£
Public works, services, and improvements.....	472,538
Interest on loans and overdrafts	138,789
Repayments of loans	96,634
Salaries and office expenses	73,728
Payments to sinking funds.....	13,558
Other expenditure	41,354
	<u>£836,601</u>

The proportion of the expenditure incurred for salaries and office expenses was 8·81 per cent., and for interest on loans and overdrafts it was about 16½ per cent., while the average rate of interest payable on the liabilities was 4·69 per cent.

The amount of loans and secured overdrafts outstanding on the 5th February, 1900, was £2,730,934, of which £1,344,004 was due to investors in London, principally by the city of Sydney, while of the balance, £18,849 was floated in Victoria, and £1,368,081 in New South Wales. The unsecured overdrafts amounted to £229,843, so that the total liability on which interest was payable was £2,960,777. The interest charged ranged from 3½ to 8 per cent. for the secured loans, and from 4 to 8½ per cent. on the unsecured overdrafts. Against the total liability, sinking funds have been established, the total amount at the credit of such funds being £322,059.

VICTORIA.

In Victoria a comprehensive system of local government has been in force for many years. In 1842 the Act of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, which incorporated Sydney, also constituted Melbourne a municipality, and in 1874 the general system was inaugurated. Under this system the State is divided into cities, towns, boroughs, and shires, and the total area under local control is 87,322 square miles, only 562 square miles remaining unincorporated.

The councillors are elected by the ratepayers, and the mayors of cities, towns, and boroughs, or presidents of shire councils, are elected by the councillors. A general rate of not more than 2s. 6d. or less than 6d. in the £ of the annual value may be imposed, but special rates may be levied, provided that general and special rates together do not exceed 2s. 6d. in the £. A further special rate, limited to 6d., may also be charged for works in particular parts of any district.

The number of municipalities with the annual and capital values of property assessed for local purposes for the ten years ending with 1900, were as follows :—

Year.	No. of Municipalities.	Annual Value.	Capital Value.
		£	£
1891	197	13,265,543	194,313,646
1892	198	13,733,770	203,351,360
1893	201	13,605,990	197,366,940
1894	203	12,779,600	189,461,350
1895	207	11,676,079	174,984,851
1896	208	10,641,200	167,197,780
1897	208	10,393,000	168,427,700
1898	208	10,345,535	171,253,984
1899	208	10,152,500	168,611,906
1900	208	10,283,500	169,911,900

The total capital value of property assessed for municipal purposes in 1900 was £169,911,900, while the annual value was £10,283,500, the figures for Melbourne and suburbs being £60,255,735 and £4,042,497 respectively. The values for the metropolitan district since 1891 are given below, and it will be noticed how great has been the decrease during the period under review, though the annual value for 1900 shows a small increase over that of the previous year, while the capital value for the last year is the lowest for the decade:—

Year.	Melbourne and Suburbs.		Year.	Melbourne and Suburbs.	
	Annual Value.	Capital Value.		Annual Value.	Capital Value.
1891	£ 6,533,717	£ 87,939,287	1896	£ 4,209,515	£ 60,962,705
1892	6,815,315	92,358,629	1897	4,168,182	60,352,040
1893	6,639,014	88,510,328	1898	3,968,888	60,404,877
1894	5,847,079	78,916,730	1899	3,973,357	60,626,915
1895	4,984,596	66,824,384	1900	4,042,497	60,255,735

The annual and capital values for the five principal provincial centres for 1891 and 1900 will be found in the following statement, the annual return from property having been estimated at 7 per cent.

City, Town, or Borough.	1891.		1900.	
	Annual Value.	Capital Value.	Annual Value.	Capital Value.
	£	£	£	£
Ballarat	171,484	2,449,771	156,790	2,239,857
Ballarat, East.....	78,264	1,118,057	78,340	1,119,143
Bendigo	167,305	2,390,071	188,850	2,697,857
Geelong	92,697	1,324,243	87,870	1,255,286
Geelong, West	28,317	404,529	26,140	373,428

The revenue of the local governing bodies is chiefly derived from taxation, under the headings of general and special rates (which are levied on the net annual value), licenses, dog fees, market and weighbridge dues, &c. The total amount collected from all sources during the year was £1,236,124, of which £165,837 was contributed by the Government, either as endowment or special grant, while the amount of rates received was £709,122, and £144,572 was received from licenses; fees, &c., the total local taxation thus being £853,694. The balance, £216,593, includes sanitary fees amounting to £47,288, and also £51,962 received as rents of municipal property. The receipts per inhabitant in incorporated areas amounted to £1 0s. 11d. The amount received as rates shown above represents a tax of 1s. 2½d. in the £ of annual value, and 1½d. per £ of the estimated unimproved capital value.

The total expenditure for the year was £1,200,805, of which £731,471 were spent on public works, &c., while the amount paid for interest was £181,496. The payments to sinking funds were £16,495, and the repayments of loans from revenue, £12,872, the principal items in the balance being—salaries, £134,178, representing 11·17 per cent. of the total, and printing, &c., £21,125. The proportion paid as interest on loans and overdrafts was about 15 per cent. of the total, while the average interest payable on loans and overdrafts amounted to about £4 13s. 2d. per cent.

The municipal loans outstanding were £3,827,437, and the bank overdrafts amounted to £70,656, giving a total interest-bearing liability of £3,898,093. The total liabilities were £4,135 719, other items being—arrears due to sinking funds, £20,403; overdue interest on loans, £18,583; and amounts due on contracts, £72,932. The assets totalled £3,444,925, the chief items being—municipal property, £2,191,257; sinking funds, £646,092; outstanding rates, £205,698; and bank balances and cash in hand, £57,144.

QUEENSLAND.

The beginning of local government in Queensland was the proclamation constituting Brisbane a municipality, the date of which was the 6th September, 1859, or about three months prior to the separation of the colony from New South Wales. A general system of government by local authorities was inaugurated in 1878, when the colony was divided into boroughs, shires, and divisions.

The aldermen, councillors, and members are elected by ratepayers in boroughs, shires, and divisions respectively, while mayors of boroughs and chairmen of shires and divisions are chosen by the representatives.

Under the provisions of the original Act, the rates were levied on the annual value, and the maximum general rate was 1s. in the £ for boroughs, shires, and divisions, but the minimum was 6d. per £ for boroughs and shires, and 4d. per £ in divisions. Special rates could also be imposed for sewerage, drainage, lighting, street-watering, or particular works. By an amending Act passed in December, 1890, the rates thenceforward were to be charged on the unimproved capital value of the land, the maximum being 2d. in the £ for boroughs and shires, and 1½d. in the £ for divisions, while the minimum is ½d. in both cases. The separate rates may still be charged, and if waterworks have been established a further rate may be imposed for that service.

The total area controlled by local bodies is 668,252 square miles, leaving only 245 square miles unincorporated. The total capital value was estimated at the beginning of 1901 to be £42,722,000. This represents the value of land without improvements; if improvements had been considered, the capital value would have been approximately £70,631,000, and the annual value £4,485,000.

The unimproved capital value is now slightly less than it was ten years ago, as will be seen by the following statement, which shows the assessed value during each year since 1891 :—

Year.	Assessed Value of Unimproved Property.	Year.	Assessed Value of Unimproved Property.
	£		£
1891.....	49,154,977	1896	40,810,384
1892.....	44,188,693	1897	41,009,739
1893.....	43,427,923	1898	41,486,971
1894.....	41,772,975	1899	42,195,693
1895.....	40,821,733	1900	42,722,000

The capital values of Brisbane and some of the other large boroughs are given below for 1891 and 1900 :—

Municipality.	1891.	1900.
	Unimproved Capital Value.	Unimproved Capital Value.
	£	£
Brisbane	8,800,350	5,842,280
South Brisbane	2,605,840	1,422,640
Other Brisbane Suburbs	6,067,359	3,818,298
Rockhampton	1,323,600	1,064,710
North Rockhampton	190,500	155,930
Townsville	1,590,000	874,740
Toowoomba	711,420	599,300

North Rockhampton has been included, as it is a suburb of Rockhampton.

The receipts for the year 1900 amounted to £640,622, the chief sources being—Government endowments, grants, and loans, £220,925, and rates, £268,478 (levied, as already stated, on the unimproved capital value), leaving £151,219 derived from other sources. The amount collected for rates represents 1s. 10½d. per £1 of the annual value and 1½d. per £ of capital value. The expenditure for the same period was £653,187, the amount spent on public works being £401,708, while repayments of loans and interest amounted to £103,432, salaries and office expenses to £54,960, or 8·41 per cent. of total, and all other disbursements £93,087.

The outstanding loans, including overdue instalments payable to the Government, amounted to £982,406, the whole of which, with the exception of the loans of the city of Brisbane (£305,000), and part of the indebtedness of South Brisbane (£105,000), is due to the

Government, as no local body, except the two mentioned, is allowed to borrow from outside sources. The amount of other liabilities was £196,869, making a total of £1,179,275 owing by local bodies.

The total assets on the same date were given as £1,448,590, the only item specified being outstanding rates, which amounted to £122,153.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, was proclaimed a municipality as far back as 1840, and was thus the first local body established in Australasia. The present general system of corporations and district councils was instituted in 1887.

In all cases the councillors and mayors are elected by the citizens, the representatives not being empowered to choose their presiding officer. The rates are assessed on the annual value, and the general rate must not exceed 1s. in the £; while lighting rates are limited to 4d., and park improvement rates to 3d. Water rates may also be imposed where necessary, and special rates for works in particular portions of municipalities.

The total area incorporated at the close of the last municipal year was 42,493 square miles, leaving 337,577 square miles still under the control of the central government. The unincorporated territory consists chiefly of the unsettled portion of the State, as the populous centres have all been brought under municipal government. The figures in this chapter relating to South Australia are in all cases exclusive of the Northern Territory.

The annual and capital values of all the incorporated districts for the past ten years are as shown in the following table:—

Year.	Annual Value.	Capital Value.
	£	£
1890	2,535,714	39,388,200
1891	2,543,526	39,509,540
1892	2,538,094	39,425,160
1893	2,561,806	39,793,490
1894	2,552,820	39,653,900
1895	2,494,326	38,745,300
1896	2,463,564	38,267,460
1897	2,485,995	38,615,890
1898	2,518,688	39,123,720
1899	2,553,415	39,663,150
1900	2,576,729	39,928,780

The capital value of the incorporated districts as shown above is estimated at £39,928,780, and the annual value at £2,576,729.

Adelaide, and its suburbs are the largest corporations, and the following were the values of the most important centres for 1900, compared with those for 1891 :—

Corporation.	1891.	1900.
	Annual Value.	Annual Value.
	£	£
Adelaide	392,819	429,369
Unley	79,061	113,828
Port Adelaide	78,177	102,045
Kensington and Norwood	68,941	75,512
Hindmarsh	44,808	55,532
St. Peters	39,296	51,347
Semaphore	43,800	50,014
Glenelg	37,018	37,398
Thebarton	22,502	29,289
Brighton	11,040	10,471

The total receipts for 1900 were £348,768, the amount contributed by the Government as subsidy and grants being £115,073, while the rates collected were £142,207, leaving £91,488 from other sources. The rates collected which are levied on the annual value equal 1s. 1½d. in the £ of the annual value and 1½d. per £ of unimproved capital value. The expenditure was £346,081 the amount spent on works being £190,124, while salaries and office expenses absorbed £31,669, or 9·15 per cent. and miscellaneous services, £124,288.

The loans outstanding at the close of 1900 amounted to only £78,400. These loans, with the exception of £6,000 owing by the corporation of Kensington and Norwood, were floated by the Adelaide City Council. The interest payable ranges from 3 to 6 per cent., the average being 4·60 per cent.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

The great resources of this State have only been made manifest during recent years, and the limited population, compared with the vast area of the province, has prevented any great extension of local government.

The first Municipalities Act was passed in 1871, but only a few districts were incorporated under it. In 1895, the existing Act became law, and a considerable increase in the area locally controlled has resulted from its provisions. The local bodies are termed Municipalities, Road Boards, and Health Boards; the latter may be established within or outside municipal boundaries.

The Municipal Act provides for the election of both councillors and mayors by the ratepayers. With regard to Road Boards, however, the members are elected by the ratepayers, and the chairmen by the members.

The general rate imposed in municipalities must not exceed 1s. 6d. in the £ of annual value, and a special rate of 3d. in the £ may be levied under the Health Act. In the City of Perth, however, an additional rate is charged for water-supply; this rate must not exceed 1s. in the £ of annual value. In the Road Board districts the general rate is limited to 1s. in the £ of annual value.

The total area of municipalities is only slightly over 100 square miles. The remainder of the State comprises 975,820 square miles, a large proportion of which is still under the central government. The Road Board districts occupy a considerable area, but as the general government exercises a certain amount of control over the expenditure, these districts cannot be said to be endowed with full local government.

The capital value for the year 1900 was estimated at £7,860,600, and the annual value at £943,300. The figures for some of the most important towns are given below. The particulars for 1891 are not available, but it may be said generally that since 1895, the earliest year for which figures are obtainable, there has been a considerable increase both in the annual and capital values. The following table shows the capital values for 1895 and 1900. The annual values as shown in the official figures range from 10 to 13 per cent. of the capital values, but as this return from property in old settled districts like Perth and Albany seems improbable, and as the assessments are on the annual value the capital values cannot be said to have been properly ascertained, and, therefore, are not given.

Municipality.	Annual Value.	
	1895.	1900.
	£	£
Perth	95,852	286,083
Albany	26,013	29,884
Fremantle	71,579	111,818
„ North.....	*	20,081
„ East	*	18,269
Coolgardie	21,570	56,539
Kalgoorlie	*	86,954

* Not incorporated.

The total receipts for 1900 amounted to £221,155, included in which is the sum of £59,828 given by the Central Government as subsidy and special allowances. The general and special rates received were £82,301, while the remainder, £79,026, represents £43,939 collections from rents, license fees, &c., and £35,087 proceeds of loans. The disbursements in

the same year came to £216,997, of which the large proportion of £146,569 was spent on works and improvements. The other important items are:—Salaries and office expenses, £14,547, or 6·70 per cent.; and interest on loans and overdrafts, £13,351; leaving £42,530 expended on other services, including £9,921 for payments to sinking funds.

The amount shown for rates represents a tax of 1s. 9d. per £ of annual value, and 4d. per £ of estimated unimproved capital value.

The total liabilities at the close of the year were £330,070, the principal item being outstanding loans, which amounted to £293,600. The unsecured overdrafts amounted to £2,111, the balance, £34,359, being due for amounts owing on contracts, outstanding accounts, &c. Against the loan indebtedness, however, must be placed the accumulated sinking fund, which amounts to £39,308.

The assets on the same date were estimated at £320,466. The largest proportion of this amount is accounted for by the value of landed property, plant, and furniture, which was stated to be £229,017. The outstanding rates amounted to £12,675; while other important items were:—Bank and cash balances, £26,553, and sinking fund, £39,308, leaving £12,913 for other assets.

TASMANIA.

In this State, the city of Hobart was incorporated by a special Act in 1852, and in 1858 the Rural Municipalities Act was passed which provided for the establishment of corporations throughout the Colony. The whole area is not under the provisions of this Act alone, as there are other bodies, notably Town Boards and Road Trusts, which are authorised to control outlying districts.

In the urban municipalities—Hobart and Launceston—the aldermen are elected by the ratepayers, and the mayors by the aldermen. The ratepayers in the rural districts also elect their representatives, who are termed councillors, and the latter have the privilege of choosing their presiding officer, who is called warden.

The general rate in each class of corporation is limited to 1s. 6d. in the £ of the annual value, while special rates may be levied in rural districts, provided that the general and special rates together do not exceed 1s. 6d. in the £. Police and road rates may also be imposed in addition to municipal rates.

The area of municipal districts may be set down as 10,615 square miles, leaving 15,600 square miles under the control of the other local bodies, or of the central government. The total capital value at the close of 1900 was estimated at £29,770,300, and the annual value at £1,417,547. These figures may be somewhat over-stated, as the same property may be rated by more than one of the local authorities. The values of the two principal municipalities will be found below, and a reference to the corresponding particulars for 1891 will show that

Tasmania has not been very much affected by the depreciation of property, which was so severely felt in the mainland States :—

Municipality.	1891.		1900.	
	Annual Value.	Capital Value.	Annual Value.	Capital Value.
	£	£	£	£
Hobart.....	174,950	2,915,833	173,565	2,892,750
Launceston.....	135,168	2,252,800	126,470	2,107,833

The total receipts of Municipalities, Town Boards, and Road Trusts for 1900 were £157,570, the proportion contributed by the central government being only £23,537. The bulk of the collections consisted of rates (which are levied on the annual value), the amount of which was £91,915; and the remainder, £42,118, was accounted for by fees, licenses, proceeds of loans, &c. The total expenditure for the same year amounted to £158,576, but no details relating to this sum are available. The collections for rates are equal to 1s. 3½d. in the £ of annual value, and 1¼d. per £ of the estimated unimproved value.

The total loans outstanding at the close of 1900 for the local bodies under review amounted to £561,002, and in the majority of cases sinking funds have been established for the extinction of the debts, the total amount accumulated at the end of 1900 being £57,048.

NEW ZEALAND.

In New Zealand an Act was passed in 1852 which divided the colony into six provinces, the local administration being vested in provincial councils. This system continued till 1876, when the provincial system was abolished, and the whole colony, except the area within the forty-one boroughs then existing, was subdivided into counties, each county having full control of its local affairs.

The provisions for election differ in the boroughs and counties. In the former bodies both the councillors and mayors are elected by "burgesses," but in counties, the councillors are elected by the "county electors," and the chairmen by the councillors. The rating powers are also different. In boroughs, the rates are in most cases levied on the annual value, and the general rate is limited to 1s. 3d. in the £. Special rates may also be imposed, but general and special rates together must not exceed 1s. 3d. in the £. In counties, and in a few of the boroughs (the latter having taken advantage of the "Rating on Unimproved Value Act of 1896"), the rates are charged on the capital value, and the general rate must not exceed three farthings in the £ in counties or boroughs where road boards or town districts exist, and six farthings in other local areas. Separate rates may also be levied, provided the general and special rates do not exceed three farthings and six farthings

in the £ respectively ; and extra rates for special works, for interest and sinking funds on loans, and, where necessary for hospitals and charitable aid, may be charged.

In addition to the boroughs and counties, road districts and town districts have been proclaimed, and the area locally governed may practically be set down at 104,471 square miles, the total area of the Colony.

The capital value for 1901 may be estimated at £138,591,347, and the annual value at £6,427,000. The remarks with regard to the overstatement of the values in Tasmania may also be applied to New Zealand, as the boundaries of the various districts may overlap in some cases.

The distribution of the population of New Zealand differs from that of the Commonwealth. In the Australian States, especially those in the eastern portion of the continent, the great majority of the people are centred in the metropolitan areas, and consequently the capital and annual values are proportionately great in the chief cities. In New Zealand, however, there are four large centres of population, and the values of the assessed properties are shown below. The figures for 1891 are also shown, and it will be noticed that the values have on the whole largely improved, as New Zealand, like Tasmania, did not experience the great depreciation which took place in some of the other States after the Bank reconstructions in 1893 :—

Borough.	1891.		1901.	
	Annual Value.	Capital Value.	Annual Value.	Capital Value.
	£	£	£	£
Wellington	315,709	5,261,816	458,052	7,634,200
Auckland	297,468	4,956,800	335,537	5,592,300
Dunedin	251,870	4,197,833	246,600	4,110,000
Christchurch	195,251	3,254,183	236,798	3,946,600

The total receipts for 1901 amounted to £1,721,055, the Government contributions being £326,486, inclusive of loans. The collections from rates were £660,982, (which are levied chiefly on capital values) and from other sources £733,587, represented chiefly by fees for licenses and rents. The expenditure for the same period was £1,630,830, the amount spent on works being £981,466 ; on hospitals and charitable aid, £71,877 ; on management, £122,540 or 7·51 per cent. of the total ; and on other services, £454,947. The contributions to sinking funds and repayments of loans are not shown separately in the total expenditure, and the amounts disbursed under these heads are, therefore, not available. The rates collected represent 2s. 0½d. per £ of annual value, and 1¾d. per £ of estimated unimproved value.

The total loans outstanding at the close of 1901 for the bodies referred to amounted to £4,165,637, and the sinking fund was £371,021,

the net indebtedness, therefore, being £3,794,616. The annual charge for interest and sinking fund is approximately £235,308, the rates of interest ranging from $3\frac{1}{4}$ to 7 per cent.

COMPARISON OF CITIES.

Estimated by the annual value of its ratable property, Sydney is, and has been for many years, the second city of the British Empire; next comes Glasgow, and then Melbourne, as Manchester, exclusive of Salford, is valued at £3,394,879. None of the other Australasian cities ranks high on the list, but the extreme value of property in relation to population in the Australasian population centres as compared with the principal British cities, will be seen from the following table:—

Cities and Towns.	Population.	Annual Value.	
		Total.	Per Inhabitant.
		£	£ s. d.
Australasia—			
Sydney	481,830	5,069,630	10 10 5
Newcastle and suburbs	46,744	326,005	6 19 6
Melbourne	461,617	4,042,497	8 15 2
Ballarat and Ballarat East	39,920	235,130	5 17 10
Brisbane	119,900	1,098,362	9 3 3
Adelaide	160,690	1,154,703	7 3 8
Perth	36,200	390,388	10 15 8
Hobart	34,580	173,565	5 0 5
Wellington	50,273	485,995	9 13 4
United Kingdom—			
London (County)	4,536,063	39,768,491	8 15 4
Glasgow	735,906	5,027,000	6 16 8
Manchester (including Salford)	765,459	4,362,992	5 14 0
Liverpool	686,332	3,787,364	5 10 5
Edinburgh	316,479	2,542,640	8 0 8
Birmingham	522,132	2,735,426	5 4 9
Leeds	428,953	1,741,373	4 1 2
Bristol	328,836	1,578,300	4 16 0
Sheffield	410,120	1,579,857	3 17 1
Bradford	279,809	1,421,200	5 1 7
Newcastle-on-Tyne	214,803	1,299,388	6 1 0
Belfast	348,965	1,160,051	3 6 6
Cardiff	164,420	1,058,294	6 8 9
Nottingham	239,753	1,003,000	4 3 8
Hull	240,739	1,004,702	4 3 6
Dublin	289,108	844,476	2 18 7

The populations of the Australasian cities and towns are the estimates at the dates of the annual valuations of the incorporated districts and not the present populations.

BOARDS AND TRUSTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

In addition to the municipalities, there are bodies known as Boards or Trusts whose function it is to construct and supervise certain works which have been established for the benefit of districts generally

comprising one or more of the ordinary municipalities. These bodies are usually composed of members representing respectively the central Government, the municipalities affected, and other persons directly interested in the particular undertakings; and as a rule they raise the funds necessary for carrying out the works they control, by means of rates on the assessed value of the properties benefited, just as do the municipalities.

In New South Wales there are the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage, having charge of the water supply, which it assumed in 1888, and of the sewerage system, which it has controlled since 1889, and the Hunter River District Board of Water Supply and Sewerage, formed in 1892. The Wollongong Harbour Trust, which was instituted in 1889, was the only one of the kind in the state up to the year 1900—the works connected with shipping, and the improvements to navigation, at Sydney, Newcastle, and other ports, having always been carried out at the expense and under the supervision of the central Government. The Wollongong Trust, however, failed, and its powers have been assumed by the Government. During the year 1900, an Act was passed for the establishment of a Harbour Trust for the port of Sydney, and in the same year the Wharfs Resumption Act became law, which enabled the Government to acquire certain wharf properties in Darling Harbour; these wharfs, and others, originally the property of the Government, will be controlled by the Harbour Trust. There is a Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, on which the municipalities within the metropolitan area are represented, and towards the annual expenses of which they contribute one-third. The fire insurance companies and the State are also represented, and contribute equally with the municipalities in maintaining the Fire Brigade Board. Thirty-seven country boards have also been established under the Fire Brigades Act of 1884, four of which are, however, within the area administered by the Metropolitan Board, and contribute to its funds. There are Irrigation Trusts at Hay and Balranald. A similar trust at Wentworth has been taken over by the Government, and the dissolution of the Balranald trust is under consideration.

The Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Act of New South Wales was passed in 1880. Under the provisions of this measure municipalities outside the area under the control of the Metropolitan and Hunter District Water Supply and Sewerage Boards were entitled to construct, or to have constructed for them by the Government, works for water supply and sewerage, provided the construction of the same were approved by the Governor-in-Council, and the municipalities agreed to pay back the original cost of the works, with interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum. The Government were to pay the certified cost of the works, and the municipalities were to repay the Government by instalments extending over a period of sixty years. Under the operations of this Act twenty-four water-supply works have been carried out by the Government (exclusive of Richmond, now administered by

the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage), and three by municipal councils, while works in ten other places were in course of construction on the 31st December, 1900, including additions to existing works. The amount advanced by the Government to local bodies under the Act to the end of 1892 was £370,549, and instalments to the amount of £85,886 were then overdue. It was found that the liability of some of the municipal councils was too heavy for their resources, and in 1894 an amending Act was passed distributing the payments over 100 years and reducing the interest to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. On the 31st December, 1900, the total amount expended by Government, inclusive of interest, stood at £769,046, viz. : £565,236 for works completed under Government control ; £27,344 for works carried out under the supervision of municipal councils ; and £176,466 for works still in course of construction. Of the total amount of £592,580 due on account of completed works to the 31st December, 1900, £19,266 had been repaid, and £76,698 had been remitted by Government, leaving the debt at £496,616, which is repayable by annual instalments of £17,960.

BOARDS AND TRUSTS IN VICTORIA.

In Victoria the port of Melbourne is under the control of a Harbour Trust, which was established as far back as 1877. A Tramway Trust, representing twelve of the metropolitan municipalities, viz. :—Melbourne, Prahran, Richmond, Fitzroy, Collingwood, South Melbourne, Hawthorne, Kew, St. Kilda, North Melbourne, Brunswick, and Port Melbourne, has been formed under the provisions of an Act passed in 1883. This body was entrusted with power to construct tramways through the streets of the municipalities interested, the requisite funds being raised by loans on the security of the tramways and the revenues of the municipal bodies connected with the undertaking. The trustees had the option either of working the tramways themselves or of leasing them to a private company. They adopted the latter alternative, and the tramways are being worked on a thirty-two years' lease, commencing from 1884. In 1891 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works was established for the purpose of constructing and supervising all works connected with water supply, sewerage, and drainage in Melbourne and suburbs. The Government is not directly represented on this Board, which differs from the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply in Sydney, of which three members are nominated by the State. The reason for this difference is that in New South Wales the Government constructed the works and is responsible for the debt incurred in doing so, while in Victoria the Board carries out the work of construction, in addition to the maintenance and management to which the operations of the Sydney Board are confined. Throughout Victoria there are Water Works Trusts and Irrigation and Water Supply Trusts. During 1899-1900 there were seventy-one Water Works Trusts and thirty-two

Irrigation and Water Supply Trusts. The Government authorised an advance of £1,206,674 for the former service, and for the latter £1,441,400, and the amounts outstanding in June, 1900, were £730,422 and £384,090 respectively, the large sum of £720,252 having been written off during the year. As in New South Wales, the municipal bodies are represented on the Fire Brigade Boards, and bear a proportionate share of the expenses.

The Government of Victoria, prior to the establishment of the Trusts for Water Works, Irrigation, and Water Supply, advanced money from the Public Loans Account to local bodies requiring assistance to construct these works. The amount advanced for the development of the services to June, 1900, including arrears of interest capitalised, was £404,214, which has to be repaid into a sinking fund, or by annual instalments. The amount outstanding on the date mentioned was only £137,636, owing to large sums having been written off during the year. The figures just given are exclusive of the advances to the city of Ballarat for the water-supply works, as these are now under a special commission. The outstanding debt of the Ballarat Water Commission on the 30th June, 1900, was £328,197. Under a special Act the Government have power to advance funds to shires for the construction of tramways, and £60,811 had been so advanced up to June, 1900. The Government, under two different Acts, can also make advances to shires for the purchase of rabbit-proof fencing. The amount so advanced to June, 1900, was £192,370, of which £36,749, was outstanding on that date.

BOARDS AND TRUSTS IN OTHER STATES.

In Queensland the water supply service forms part of the local government system; the works are proposed by the municipal bodies, but the Government constructs and supervises them, and when completed hands them over to the local authorities with their attendant liabilities. The latter form a debt to the State which is repaid in instalments. The total cost of construction to 31st December, 1900, was £1,096,716, and the amount due to the Government on the same date was £794,318.

In South Australia there are no Boards or Trusts of any importance beyond the municipal bodies already mentioned; extensive municipal powers exist, however, for raising loans for the construction of local works, and each corporation and District Council is constituted a Board of Health.

In Western Australia there are Road Boards, Local Boards of Health, and a Metropolitan Water Works Board.

In Tasmania seven Marine Boards, forming part of the local government system, have been established in different parts of the State, and there are fifteen Water Trusts in connection with municipal bodies. The rural police come under the local government system, the ratepayers

who enjoy the benefits of police protection being obliged to bear the cost of administration. The control of the police is, however, under officers appointed by the central government.

In New Zealand there are, in addition to the ordinary forms of municipal government, River and Harbour Boards, which are established throughout the colony. The number of these at the end of 1900 was respectively thirty and twenty-six. There is a Drainage Board at Christchurch, while there are fifteen Land Drainage Boards, and a Water Supply Board at Waimakariri—Ashley.

Complete returns of the Boards and Trusts in each state are not readily obtainable; the following table, however, gives important details in connection with some of these bodies:—

Board or Trust.	Receipts.			Expenditure, including Interest.	Out-standing Loans.
	Government.	Other.	Total.		
New South Wales—	£	£	£	£	£
Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage .....	...	314,278	314,278	333,353	6,967,923
* Hunter District Water Supply and Sewerage .....	...	26,356	26,356	30,723	480,689
Victoria—					
Melbourne Harbour Trust .....	...	143,362	143,362	148,612	2,000,000
Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works .....	...	269,213	269,213	337,079	7,002,737
Melbourne Tramways Trust .....	...	483,452	483,452	385,650	1,650,000
Fire Brigade Boards	15,629	33,812	49,441	51,049	130,000
Water Works Trusts .....	...	...	...	...	730,422
Irrigation and Water Supply Trusts .....	...	...	...	...	334,090
Ballarat Water Commission .....	...	...	...	...	328,127
Queensland—					
Water Works, Brisbane	6,532	58,152	64,684	54,519	476,581
" " Country Towns	2,717	53,014	55,731	52,999	317,737
Western Australia—					
Road Boards	48,749	14,349	63,098	55,581	.....
Boards of Health in Municipalities ..	2,502	27,722	30,224	29,378	.. ..
" " outside Municipalities ..	1,723	3,955	5,678	5,263	.....
Metropolitan Water Works Board ..	8,144	24,084	32,228	32,032	372,852
Tasmania—					
Marine Boards	34,700	30,568	65,268	63,927	80,339
Light-houses	585	47,584	8,169	8,410	.....
Water Trusts	1,500	7,390	8,890	6,990	33,200
Road Trusts	5,097	20,317	25,414	24,663	1,200
Town Boards	10,535	17,772	28,307	28,328	43,175
New Zealand—					
River Boards	208	26,202	26,410	17,791	43,670
Harbour Boards	6,389	693,568	699,957	571,777	4,035,331
Drainage Boards	2,476	24,832	27,308	27,059	200,000
Water Supply Boards	1,000	3,163	4,163	3,116	21,200

* Water supply only.

† Including £1,239 from other Governments.

The Melbourne Tramways Trust shows an expenditure on working and interest of £385,650; to this should be added £37,733 placed to reserve, £48,000 paid in dividends, and £12,069 carried forward in excess of the amount brought over from the previous year.

The amounts shown in the foregoing table under Road Trusts and Town Boards in Tasmania are included in the figures given on page 491. The outstanding loans for Tasmania are gross, sinking funds amounting to £16,142, £1,270, £415, and £2,929 respectively being established in connection with the debts of Marine Boards, Water Trusts, Road Trusts, and Town Boards. In New Zealand, also, sinking funds amounting to £9,871, £370,951, £34,184 and £791 respectively, exist in connection with the liabilities of River, Harbour, Drainage, and Water Supply Boards.

The outstanding loans of the Boards and Trusts of New South Wales constitute part of the public debt. This is true also with regard to the amounts for Victoria, except the loans of the Tramway Trust and the Melbourne Harbour Trust, the Fire Brigades Boards, and part of the loans of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, which are not guaranteed. The liabilities shown for Queensland and Western Australia, and a small portion of the Tasmanian indebtedness, also form part of the public debt of those states; but the amounts given for New Zealand are not included in the debt of the Central Government. In the foregoing table the advances made by the Governments to the borrowing bodies are included.

TOTAL REVENUE OF LOCAL BODIES.

The total revenue of all local bodies was as follows, the receipts from the various Governments being distinguished from the ordinary receipts:—

State.	Receipts from Government.	Other Receipts.	Total.
	£	£	£
New South Wales	44,882	1,075,023	1,119,905
Victoria	181,466	2,000,126	2,181,592
Queensland	230,174	530,863	761,037
South Australia	115,073	233,695	348,768
Western Australia	91,566	266,912	358,478
Tasmania.....	75,954	217,664	293,618
Commonwealth	739,115	4,324,283	5,063,398
New Zealand	336,559	2,142,334	2,478,893
Australasia.....	1,075,674	6,466,617	7,542,291

INDEBTEDNESS OF LOCAL BODISE.

The following table shows the total indebtedness of local bodies in each of the states for which returns are available. The figures include the liabilities to the Government. It must also be explained that the liabilities of Road Trusts and Town Boards in Tasmania have been included with municipalities :—

State.	Outstanding Loans.		
	Municipalities.	Boards, Trusts, &c.	Total for local purposes.
	£	£	£
New South Wales	2,730,934	7,448,612	10,179,546
Victoria	3,900,934	12,267,691	16,168,625
Queensland	982,406	794,318	1,776,724
South Australia	78,400	.....	78,400
Western Australia.....	275,100	372,852	647,952
Tasmania	561,002	113,864	674,866
Commonwealth	8,528,776	20,997,337	29,526,113
New Zealand	4,165,637	4,300,201	8,465,838
Australasia	12,694,413	25,297,538	37,991,951

For the amounts that have just been given the local bodies are responsible directly to their creditors in part, and the general governments hold themselves directly liable for the balance. In the following table is given a division of the indebtedness of local bodies into the sum due to the State and that due to the public. It may be mentioned that the amount owing to the State is included with the general debt of the state; and in order to estimate the total State and municipal indebtedness the figures in the second column only have to be added to the figures given later on under State Finance.

State.	Amount of Corporation Indebtedness included in the Public Debt.	Loans of Local Bodies floated in open market.	Total Indebtedness.
	£	£	£
New South Wales	7,448,612	2,730,934	10,179,546
Victoria	4,121,672	12,046,953	16,168,625
Queensland	1,366,724	410,000	1,776,724
South Australia .....	.....	78,400	78,400
Western Australia.....	372,852	275,100	647,952
Tasmania	160,614	514,252	674,866
Commonwealth	13,470,474	16,055,639	29,526,113
New Zealand	902,769	7,563,069	8,465,838
Australasia	14,373,243	23,618,708	37,991,951

STATE AND MUNICIPAL RATES AND LAND VALUES.

The extent of the charges on land levied by the various corporations and other local bodies as rates will have been gathered from the foregoing pages; in addition thereto a land tax is levied by the General Government in all the States except Queensland and Western Australia, and the income tax imposed by Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania, includes income derived from land and its use; in New South Wales, however, incomes derived from the use and occupancy of land are untaxed. In Tasmania, a police rate is also imposed, based on land values, the rates being 9d. in the £ on freehold, and 4½d. in the £ on Crown Lands. The following table shows the collections for rates and the other taxes mentioned, and also the capital values of property and of land and improvements, with the amount per £ on the value of unimproved land which the rates would equal:—

State.	Amount of Rates and Land and Property taxes collected.	Capital Value.		Amount per £ of—	
		Unimproved Land.	Land and Improvements	Unimproved Land.	Land and Improvements.
	£	£	£	d.	d.
New South Wales	1,107,650	142,617,000	263,052,000	1·86	1·01
Victoria	1,165,860	112,396,000	204,294,000	2·49	1·37
Queensland	374,887	35,887,000	63,796,000	2·51	1·41
South Australia	340,640	34,080,000	56,060,000	2·44	1·48
Western Australia	124,847	8,813,000	14,360,000	3·40	2·09
Tasmania	173,942	16,488,000	26,243,000	2·53	1·59
Commonwealth	3,287,826	350,281,000	627,805,000	2·25	1·26
New Zealand	1,028,607	61,466,000	111,105,000	4·02	2·22
Australasia	4,316,433	411,747,000	738,910,000	2·51	1·40