

PART V.—LAW, CRIME, ETC.

Transfer of
Land
Statute.

384. The system whereby persons acquiring possession of land, either by transfer, inheritance, or other means, may receive a title thereto direct from the Crown, was first introduced into Victoria in the year 1862, and continues in force to the present period.

Lands under
the Statute.

385. All lands alienated from the Crown since the introduction of the system have come at once under its provisions; and lands alienated prior to its inauguration can be brought under them, provided a clear title be produced, or a title containing only a slight imperfection. In the latter case the title is given subject to such imperfection, which is noted on the deed.

Assurance
fund.

386. The assurance and indemnity fund established under the Transfer of Land Statute to secure the Government against possible losses is formed chiefly by the payment of an amount equal to one halfpenny in the pound of the value of all lands which become subject to its operation. The balance to the credit of this fund at the end of 1878 was £52,160, of which £27,480 had been invested in Government stock. Three claims upon the fund have been substantiated since its first formation, and £718 0s. 4d. has been paid to claimants.

Transactions
under the
Statute,
1877 and
1878.

387. The following is a statement of the transactions which took place under the Transfer of Land Statute in 1877 and 1878. A decrease will be observed in most of the items; in 1878 the number of applications to bring land under the Statute was less by 200, and the value of land included in applications was less by a fourth, than in 1877:—

TRANSFER OF LAND STATUTE, 1877 AND 1878.

	1877.	1878.
Applications to bring land under the Act ... number	1,275	1,075
Extent of land included ... acres	85,956	31,686
Value of land included ... £	1,299,030	986,133
Certificates of title issued ... number	10,894	10,347
Transfers, mortgages, leases, releases, surrenders, &c. „	15,319	17,661
Registering proprietors ... „	495	63
Other transactions* ... „	14,920	17,012
Forms sold ... „	415	347
Fees received ... £	25,784	25,573

Proportion of
land under
the Statute.

388. The total quantity of land under the Transfer of Land Statute at the end of 1878 was 7,229,376 acres, the declared value of which, at the time it was placed under the Act, was £17,808,231. The land granted and sold up to the end of 1878 was 11,458,634 acres. It therefore follows that at that period 63 per cent. of the alienated land in the colony was subject to the provisions of this Statute.

Transactions
in Equity.

389. The transactions in Equity during 1877 and 1878 were as follow. The business was not heavy in either year.

* Not including copies of documents supplied.

TRANSACTIONS IN EQUITY, 1877 AND 1878.

	1877	1878.
Suits by bill number	83	84
Petitions filed "	6	4
Commissions issued "	11	11
Decrees issued "	42	51
Orders issued "	149	166
Reports issued "	92	30
Writs of injunction issued "	6	8
Conveyances settled by Master "	—	1
Leases settled by Master "	—	1
Recognizances entered into "	4	1
Rolls filed "	51	32

390. The probates and letters of administration issued in 1878 were fewer by upwards of a seventh than those in 1877, and the value of property bequeathed was less by about an eighth. The average value of each estate in 1877 was £2,104, and in 1878 £2,177 :—

Probates and letters of administration.

PROBATES AND LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION, 1877 AND 1878.

Year.	Probates.		Letters of Administration.*		Both.	
	Number.	Property sworn under— £	Number.	Property sworn under— £	Number.	Property sworn under— £
1877 ...	840	2,804,856	739	517,174	1,579	3,322,030
1878 ...	762	2,393,659	579	525,556	1,341	2,919,215
Increase	...	...	...	8,382	...	...
Decrease	78	411,197	160	...	238	402,815

391. During the fourteen years ended with 1878 the value of the property respecting which probates and letters of administration were issued amounted to nearly twenty-four millions sterling (£23,905,636).

Value of property bequeathed.

392. According to the present law † duties are levied in Victoria on the net value of real and personal estates of deceased persons within the colony upon the following scale ; half duty only being paid by widows, children, or grandchildren, on estates of a value not exceeding £20,000 :—

Scale of probate, &c. duties.

SCALE OF DUTIES ON ESTATES OF DECEASED PERSONS.

Estates of less than	£1,000 in value	...	1 per cent.
"	£1,000 to £5,000	"	2 "
"	£5,000 to £10,000	"	3 "
"	£10,000 to £20,000	"	4 "
"	£20,000 to £30,000	"	5 "
"	£30,000 to £40,000	"	6 "
"	£40,000 to £60,000	"	7 "
"	£60,000 to £80,000	"	8 "
"	£80,000 to £100,000	"	9 "
"	£100,000 and upwards	"	10 "

* Including those granted to the Curator of Intestate Estates.

† The Acts relating to Estates of Deceased Persons are 34 Vict. No. 388, 35 Vict. No. 403, 36 Vict. No. 427, and 39 Vict. No. 523.

Amount of probate, &c., duties.

393. The amounts realized by the State from duties on estates of deceased persons fluctuate greatly. During the eight years ended with 1878 they were as follow:—

DUTIES ON ESTATES OF DECEASED PERSONS, 1871 TO 1878.

						£
1871	...	...	...	...	...	17,069
1872	...	...	...	...	...	37,643
1873	...	...	...	...	...	39,026
1874	...	...	...	...	...	67,998
1875	...	...	...	...	...	50,057
1876	...	...	...	...	...	33,638
1877	...	...	...	...	...	82,201
1878	...	...	...	...	...	45,470

Divorce and matrimonial.

394. The following business was done under the head of Divorce and Matrimonial Causes in 1877 and 1878. It will be observed that the petitions in 1878 were much fewer than in the previous year; that no decree for judicial separation took place in 1877, and but one in 1878; and that the decrees for dissolution of marriage decreased from 11 in 1877 to 8 in 1878:—

DIVORCE AND MATRIMONIAL, 1877 AND 1878.

						1877.	1878.
Petitions for dissolution of marriage	...	...	number	27	...	17
„ judicial separation	...	...	„	13	...	5
„ alimony	...	...	„	14	...	11
Decrees dismissing petitions	...	...	„	—	...	1
„ for dissolution of marriage	...	...	„	11	...	8
„ for judicial separation	...	...	„	—	...	1
„ for alimony	...	...	„	1	...	7

Divorces in seventeen years.

395. Since the Act 25 Vict. No. 125, which first conferred upon the Supreme Court of Victoria jurisdiction in matters matrimonial, came into operation in 1861, 120 decrees of dissolution of marriage and 34 decrees of judicial separation have been granted.

Fees in Equity, &c.

396. The fees in Equity amounted in the aggregate to £936 in 1877, and to £1,047 in 1878; those on Probates amounted to £1,203 in 1877, and to £1,134 in 1878; those in Divorce amounted to £213 in 1877, and to £144 in 1878.

Collections in Lunacy.

397. The moneys collected in the department of the Master-in-Lunacy increased from £9,695 in 1877 to £14,350 in 1878.

Insolvencies.

398. A greater number of insolvencies with in the aggregate larger liabilities took place in 1878 than in any other year since 1872. The deficiency, as shown by the insolvents' schedules, was greater than in 1877, 1875, or 1873, but was less than in the other two years of the quinquenniad. The following are the figures of the last two years.

INSOLVENCIES, 1877 AND 1878.

Year.	Number of Insolvencies.	As shown by the Insolvents' Schedules.		
		Liabilities.	Assets.	Deficiency.
1877	715	£ 462,651	£ 272,720	£ 189,931
1878	781	677,364	408,677	268,687
Increase	66	214,713	135,957	78,756

399. The deficiency, as shown by the insolvents' schedules, amounted in 1876 to 49 per cent., in 1877 to 41 per cent., but in 1878 only to 39 per cent. of the liabilities. Deficiency of insolvents.

400. In the fifteen years ended with 1878, the number of insolvents who filed their schedules was 13,060; their declared liabilities amounted to £8,406,523, and the declared deficiency to £4,635,425. The liabilities were thus in the proportion of £643 to each insolvent, and the deficiency was in the proportion of 55 per cent. to the liabilities. Insolvencies in fifteen years.

401. According to *Kemp's Mercantile Gazette*, the failures which occurred in England and Wales during the eight years ended with 1877, and according to the statistics of Messrs. Dun, Barlow, and Co., the failures which occurred in the United States during the same eight years, numbered as follow. The information given is the latest available :— Insolvencies in England and United States.

FAILURES IN ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES.

Year.	Number of Failures in—		Year.	Number of Failures in—	
	England and Wales.	The United States.		England and Wales.	The United States.
1870 ...	8,151	3,551	1875 ...	9,194	7,740
1871 ...	8,164	2,915	1876 ...	10,848	9,092
1872 ...	8,112	4,069	1877 ...	11,247	8,822
1873 ...	9,064	5,183			
1874 ...	9,250	5,830	Total ...	74,030	47,202

402. The intestate estates respecting which administration was granted to the Curator in 1877 numbered 191; those in 1878 numbered 256. The estimated value of such estates amounted to £33,644 in the former, and to £36,987 in the latter year.* The sums received by the Curator on these estates and on others remaining from former years were £49,393 in 1877, and £38,020 in 1878. In the eleven years ended with 1878 the number of intestate estates dealt with was 2,501, and their estimated value £363,779. The amount received by the Curator in respect to these estates during the eleven years was £337,747. Intestate estates.

* These numbers and values are included in those given in the table following paragraph 390 ante.

Offences reported.

403. The number of offences reported to the police or magistrates during 1877 and 1878 is given in the following table. Those offences being distinguished:—1. In respect to which persons were brought before magistrates on summons, but were never in custody. 2. In respect to which arrests were made by the police. 3. In respect to which no person had been arrested or brought before magistrates* up to the end of the month of March of the year following that in which the offence was reported. A decrease will be observed under each head, the total number of offences being 8 per cent. less in 1878 than in 1877:—

OFFENCES, 1877 AND 1878.

Offences in respect to which—	1877.	1878.	Decrease.
1. Persons were brought before magistrates on summons	19,312	19,198	114
2. " " apprehended by the police	26,532	25,544	988
3. The offenders were still at large † ...	5,351	4,892	459
Total number of offences ...	51,195	49,634	1,561

Summons cases.

404. More than a third of the total number of offences in 1878 and 1877 consisted of those in respect to which persons were brought before magistrates on summons but were not taken into custody. These do not demand lengthened consideration, as they consist chiefly of breaches of the Local Government Act or of municipal bye-laws, offences against Masters and Servants or Wines and Spirits Statutes, &c., and must obviously be of a lighter character than those for which arrests are made. The following are the particulars given respecting those which were dealt with in 1877 and 1878:—

OFFENCES DEALT WITH BY SUMMONS, ‡ 1877 AND 1878.

	1877.	1878.	Increase.	Decrease.
Offences against the person ...	2,540	2,631	91	...
" " property ...	673	652	...	21
Other offences ...	16,099	15,915	...	184
Total ...	19,312	19,198	...	114 §
Cases dismissed by magistrates ...	7,616	7,184	...	432
Offender summarily convicted or held to bail	11,696	12,014	318	...

* It does not follow that in the remaining instances the offender escaped altogether. He may have been arrested after the date at which the returns were made up, or, on other charges, even prior to that period.

† It should be pointed out that the offences for which arrests are and are not made are not strictly comparable. They are reckoned in the former case according to the individual arrests effected, in the latter according to the offences reported, although in the perpetration of many of these more than one person may have been concerned.

‡ This table does not embrace cases in which the offender was sentenced to imprisonment or was committed for trial. Although he might in the first instance have appeared before the magistrates on summons, such disposal would place him in custody of the police and he would be included in subsequent tables.

§ Net figures.

405. Very full details are given of the offences which gave occasion for the apprehensions made by the police; but, in making up the returns, a person arrested more than once during the year, or arrested at one time on several charges, is counted as a separate individual in respect to each arrest or charge,* and this, except where the contrary is stated, must be borne in mind by those consulting the following paragraphs and tables.

Charges counted as persons.

406. The persons † who were taken in charge by the Victorian police in 1878, and in the first year of each of the two previous quinquenniads, were as follow:—

Arrests, 1868, 1873, and 1878.

PERSONS † ARRESTED, 1868, 1873, AND 1878. ‡

	1868.	1873.	1878.
Taken into custody	24,384	24,959	25,544
Discharged by magistrates... ..	8,154	7,262	7,448
Summarily convicted or held to bail	15,329	16,968	17,438
Committed for trial	901	729	658

407. It will be observed that more arrests were made at the last period than at either of the others. In proportion to the number of persons in the colony, however, arrests were far more numerous at the first period than they were at the second or last. The estimated average population in 1868 was 671,222; in 1873, 780,362; and in 1878, 869,040. The arrests were therefore in the proportion of 1 to every 28 persons living at the first period, and of 1 to every 31 persons living at the second period, and of 1 to every 34 persons living at the third period.

Arrests proportion to population.

408. The persons summarily convicted, held to bail, or committed for trial, were, to the whole number arrested, in the proportion of 67 per cent. at the first period, and of 71 per cent. at the second and third periods.

Proportion of times charge was sustained.

409. The diminution in the number of serious offences is shown by the decreasing number of commitments for trial at each successive period. These were in the proportion of 1 to every 27 arrests at the first period, of 1 to every 34 arrests at the middle period, and of 1 to every 39 arrests at the third period.

Diminution of serious offences.

* An attempt has been made to show the distinct individuals arrested in one year. See paragraphs 428 to 432 post.

† See last paragraph.

‡ A statement showing, during a series of years, the numbers taken into custody, the numbers committed for trial, and the numbers convicted after commitment, will be found in the Statistical Summary of Victoria (first folding sheet) ante.

Males and females arrested.

410. The sexes of the persons arrested, and of such of them as were discharged by magistrates, were summarily dealt with, or were sent for trial, were as follow at the same three periods :—

MALES AND FEMALES* ARRESTED, 1868, 1873, AND 1878.

	1868.		1873.		1878.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Taken into custody	19,564	4,820	19,911	5,048	19,714	5,830
Discharged by magistrates ...	6,549	1,605	5,724	1,538	5,684	1,764
Summarily convicted or held to bail	12,190	3,139	13,530	3,438	13,442	3,996
Committed for trial	825	76	657	72	588	70

Cases in which charge was sustained.

411. The males and females summarily convicted, held to bail, or committed for trial, were to the whole numbers of the same sexes arrested in the proportions respectively of $66\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and $66\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. in 1868; of $71\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. and $69\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in 1873; and of 71 per cent. and 70 per cent. in 1878.

Relative proportions of the sexes.

412. The next table shows the relative proportions of males and females arrested, and of those of them who were discharged, summarily dealt with, or committed for trial at the same three periods. It will be observed that the proportion of females to males in all the groups was much greater at the last period than at either of the former periods; but that at neither period was it anything like equal to the proportion that females bore to males in the total population. At the first period the females in the colony were in the proportion of 81 and at the second and third periods of 84 to every 100 males :—

MALES AND FEMALES.—RELATIVE PROPORTIONS ARRESTED, 1868, 1873, AND 1878.

	Number of Females to 100 Males.		
	1868.	1873.	1878.
Taken into custody	24·64	25·35	29·57
Discharged by magistrates	24·51	26·87	31·03
Summarily convicted or held to bail ...	25·75	25·41	29·73
Committed for trial	9·21	10·96	11·90

Causes of arrest.

413. A condensed statement of the offences for which arrests were made in the same three years, together with the numbers arrested for each offence, will be found in the following table.

* See paragraph 405 ante.

CAUSES OF ARREST, 1868, 1873, AND 1878.

Offence.	1868.	1873.	1878.
Murder and attempt at murder	31	25	21
Manslaughter	22	20	15
Shooting at or wounding with intent to do bodily harm	51	55	73
Assaults	1,394	1,408	1,636
Rape and indecent assaults on females	72	74	54
Unnatural offence, and assaults with intent to commit	18	19	2
Other offences against the person	95	108	114
Robbery with violence, burglary, &c.	271	187	187
Horse, sheep, and cattle stealing, &c.	213	155	173
Other offences against property	4,025	3,435	3,622
Forgery and offences against the currency	95	99	122
Drunkenness	9,743	11,195	11,825
Other offences against good order	6,191	5,955	5,978
Offences relating to carrying out laws	546	593	308
Smuggling and other offences against the revenue	85	73	68
Offences against public welfare	1,532	1,558	1,346
Total	24,384	24,959	25,544

414. Arrests for murder and attempt at murder, for manslaughter, for sexual offences, for offences relating to carrying out laws, for smuggling, and for offences against public welfare, were less numerous at the last period than at either the second or the first. Apprehensions for shooting at with intent to do bodily harm, for assaults, for miscellaneous offences against the person, for forgery and offences against the currency, and for drunkenness, were more numerous at the last period than at either of the other periods.

Offences at last period.

415. Sexual offences were most rife at the middle period, as also were offences relating to carrying out laws and offences against public welfare. At the same time, horse, sheep, and cattle stealing, and other offences against property, and miscellaneous offences against good order, were, according to the arrests made, less common than at either of the other periods.

Offences at middle period.

416. Arrests for drunkenness in 1878 were much more numerous than in 1868 and slightly more so than in 1873. This offence would appear to be increasing at a greater ratio than other offences, for in 1868 one in every 2·60, in 1873 one in every 2·22, and in 1878 one in every 2·16, of the total number of arrests was for drunkenness. It is, however, not quite certain that the offence increases to the extent shown by the arrests. It is possible that as the more serious offences diminish and consequently demand less attention, the police may find leisure to exercise greater vigilance in respect to drunkards, and hence the large number of apprehensions made.

Drunkenness.

Proportion of drunkards to population.

417. Making every allowance, however, drunkenness is quite common enough to show that vigorous effort on the part of those who are seeking to suppress or mitigate the evil is not uncalled for. It must be remembered that arrests for this offence are very seldom made unless it is accompanied with disorderly conduct, but, notwithstanding this, in the five years ended with 1878 they numbered 10,981, 11,541, 11,624, 12,447, and 11,825. In many cases, no doubt, the same individual was arrested over and over again. Supposing, however, each arrest represented a distinct individual, there was taken into custody for drunkenness:—

In 1874,	one person in every	73	living in	Victoria.
„ 1875,	„	71	„	„
„ 1876,	„	72	„	„
„ 1877,	„	68	„	„
„ 1878,	„	73	„	„

Age and education of arrested persons.

418. The ages of those taken into custody in 1878, and the degree of instruction possessed by them, are shown in the following table:—

DEGREE OF INSTRUCTION AND AGE OF PERSONS* ARRESTED, 1878.

Ages.	Superior Instruction.	Read and Write well.	Read only, or Read and Write imperfectly.	Unable to Read.	Total.	
Under 10 years	66	384	450	
10 to 15	...	69	455	146	670	
15 to 20	...	7	517	193	1,935	
20 to 25	...	9	1,078	309	3,121	
25 to 30	...	27	857	314	2,788	
30 to 40	...	60	1,488	850	5,857	
40 to 50	...	62	1,220	1,000	5,811	
50 to 60	...	43	577	614	3,152	
60 years and upwards	...	14	272	415	1,743	
Unknown	...	4	12	1	17	
Total	...	222	6,082	15,014	4,226	25,544

Education of children arrested.

419. The returns of those under 15 years of age taken in charge by the police embrace neglected and deserted children as well as criminals. The whole number in 1878, according to the table, was 1,120, and of these not one was possessed of superior instruction; only 69, or about a sixteenth, could read and write well; and 530, or 47 per cent., were unable to read. The number of children under 15 committed for trial was 2. One of these could read only, and 1 was entirely uneducated.

Education of adults.

420. Those over 15 years arrested numbered 24,424, and of these, 6,235, or a fourth (including those possessed of superior instruction), could read and write well, and 3,696, or more than a seventh, could not read. Those over 15 years of age committed for trial numbered 656, of whom 175, or rather more than a fourth, could read and write well

* See paragraph 405 ante, also table following paragraph 428 post.

or were possessed of superior instruction, and 81, or an eighth, were unable to read. According to these figures, the persons charged with offences serious enough to call for their commitment for trial were better educated than the other arrested persons. Those arrested, whether committed for trial or otherwise dealt with, were on the average not nearly so well educated as the general population, for, at the last census, all over 15 years of age, except about a seventh, were returned as being able to read and write, and only a tenth were returned as entirely illiterate.

421. The following table shows the birthplaces and religions of the persons taken into custody and of those committed for trial in 1878, also the ratio of those of each country and sect to the estimated numbers of the same country and sect in the mean population, calculated, except in the case of the Australian-born,* according to the proportions which prevailed at the last census :—

Birthplaces and religions of criminals.

BIRTHPLACES AND RELIGIONS OF PERSONS † ARRESTED AND COMMITTED FOR TRIAL, 1878.

Birthplace and Religion.	Persons Arrested.		Persons Committed for Trial.	
	Number.	Proportion per 1,000 of the estimated Population.‡	Number.	Proportion per 10,000 of the estimated Population.‡
BIRTHPLACE.				
Victoria	4,861§	10·37	164	3·50
Other Australian colonies ...	1,078	26·44	35	8·58
England and Wales ...	7,361	44·42	207	12·49
Scotland	2,380	43·72	50	9·19
Ireland	8,131	83·87	116	11·96
China	291	16·48	14	7·93
Other countries	1,442	...	72	...
Total	25,544	29·39	658	7·57
RELIGION.				
Protestants	14,102	22·44	412	6·55
Roman Catholics	10,857	52·39	205	9·89
Jews	68	15·69	7	16·15
Pagans	295	13·85	13	6·10
Others	222	...	21	...

422. It is always found that fewer Victorians are arrested, and fewer are committed for trial, in proportion to their numbers in the population, than persons of any other nationality. This is no doubt mainly due to the fact of a very large proportion of children being embraced within

Relative numbers of each birth-place.

* See paragraph 48 *ante*.

† See paragraph 405 *ante*, also table following paragraph 428 *post*.

‡ The estimated population of each birthplace and religion with which these calculations have been made will be found in the tables following paragraphs 48 and 50 *ante*.

§ Including 71 Aborigines.

their numbers. The country which supplies the largest number of arrested persons is generally Ireland. In 1878, those arrested of this nationality exceeded the English and Welsh arrested by 770, and this although natives of England and Wales in the population outnumbered the Irish by nearly 70,000. The offences with which the Irish were charged could not, however, as a whole, have been of so serious a nature as those in respect of which the English were arrested, as the number of the former committed for trial was, in proportion to population, smaller than that of the latter. It, however, exceeded the ratio of any other nationality. Proportionately to the numbers in the population, the Scotch arrested were slightly, and those committed for trial were much, below the English, whilst the Chinese arrested and committed for trial were below persons of any nationality except Victorians. Arrests and commitments of natives of other Australasian colonies were the least numerous after those of Chinese and Victorians.

Relative
numbers of
each
religion.

423. In proportion to their numbers in the community, the Roman Catholics supplied more than twice as many arrested persons as the Protestants, more than three times as many as the Jews, and more than three and a half times as many as the Pagans. In view of a similar proportion, fewer Protestants were committed for trial than were members of any of the other sects distinguished, except Pagans. Seven Jews were committed for trial during the year, which, as the numbers of this sect in the population are but small, renders the proportion of committals of Jews nearly twice as high as that of Roman Catholics, and much more than twice as high as that of adherents to any other sect. A statement of the offences which formed the grounds of arrest of the members of the respective religious sects will be found in the next table but one.

Religions of
persons con-
victed and
sentenced.

424. It is generally assumed that nearly every person sent to trial is guilty of the offence for which he was committed, and although he may subsequently be acquitted, the probability is that a conviction would have been obtained if there had been sufficient evidence. On the other hand, it is maintained by some that many of those discharged had been unjustly apprehended, and should not be classed as criminals. If the latter assumption be correct, it would appear by the following table—which shows the number of the various religions committed for trial and the number convicted during 1878, together with the percentage of convictions obtained—that a greater proportion of Protestants were unjustly committed than of Roman Catholics, that the latter were more unjustly committed than Jews and Pagans, and that persons of other beliefs than those named were the most wrongly accused of all.

RELIGIONS OF PERSONS CONVICTED AND SENTENCED, 1878.

Religions.	Committed for Trial, 1878.	Convicted and Sentenced.	
		Total Number.	Percentage of Committals.
Protestants	372	238	64·00
Roman Catholics	181	127	70·17
Jews	7	5	71·43
Pagans	13	10	76·92
Others	21	9	42·86
Total	594*	389	65·49

425. The following table shows the religions of the persons taken into custody in connection with their offences. It will be observed that 13 Protestants and 8 Roman Catholics were arrested for murder and attempts at murder ; 47 Protestants, 27 Roman Catholics, and 5 Pagans were arrested for manslaughter, shooting, or serious wounding ; 39 Protestants, 14 Roman Catholics, 2 Jews, and 1 Pagan were arrested for sexual offences against females or males. About 6,500 Protestants, 5,000 Roman Catholics, 11 Jews, but only 7 Pagans, were arrested for drunkenness. No Jew was arrested during the year for murder, manslaughter, or seriously wounding. It will also be noticed that 21,000 out of the 25,000 arrests were for drunkenness and other offences against good order, and for minor offences against property :—

Causes of arrest and religions, 1878.

CAUSES OF ARREST, AND RELIGIONS, 1878.

Offences.	Religions.					Total.
	Protestants.	Roman Catholics.	Jews.	Pagans.	Others.	
Murder and attempts at murder	13	8	...	...	...	21
Manslaughter	9	3	...	...	3	15
Shooting at or wounding with intent to do bodily harm	38	24	...	5	6	73
Assaults	817	774	6	23	16	1,636
Rape and indecent assaults on females	37	14	2	1	...	54
Unnatural offence, and assaults with intent to commit	2	...	...	...	...	2
Other offences against the person	77	32	...	5	...	114

* Exclusive of 64 who were awaiting trial at the end of the year.

CAUSES OF ARREST, AND RELIGIONS, 1878—continued.

Offences.	Religions.					Total.
	Protestants.	Roman Catholics.	Jews.	Pagans.	Others.	
Robbery with violence, burglary, &c.	102	74	...	7	4	187
Horse, sheep, and cattle stealing, &c.	104	61	...	3	5	173
Other offences against property	2,075	1,404	19	104	20	3,622
Forgery and offences against the currency	93	25	2	1	1	122
Drunkenness	6,473	5,227	11	7	107	11,825
Other offences against good order	3,194	2,615	20	111	38	5,978
Offences relating to carrying out laws	180	118	2	6	2	308
Smuggling and other offences against the revenue	35	19	4	9	1	68
Offences against public welfare	853	459	2	13	19	1,346
Total	14,102	10,857	68	295	222	25,544

Religions of drunkards.

426. Arrests for drunkenness and other offences against good order were in the proportion of 69 per cent. of the total arrests of Protestants, of 72 per cent. of those of Roman Catholics, of 46 per cent. of those of Jews, of 40 per cent. of those of Pagans, and of 65 per cent. of those of persons of other beliefs. In the case of Protestants and Roman Catholics the results are nearly identical with those in the previous year.

Occupations of persons arrested.

427. The next table shows the occupations of the males and females taken into custody in 1878. It will be observed that, of the males, more laborers were arrested than persons of any other calling, also that artisans and mechanics, sailors, tailors, bootmakers, &c., were frequently arrested; but that only 17 males were set down as belonging to the criminal or pauper classes. Three arrests of clergymen will also be noticed. Of females, nearly a third are contained in the criminal or pauper group; these were all public prostitutes. More than half the arrested females were of no specified occupation. Of females returned as following regular occupations more than three-fourths were domestic servants, and the bulk of the remainder were dressmakers, tailoresses, &c.

OCCUPATIONS OF MALES AND FEMALES ARRESTED, 1878.

Occupations.	Males.	Females.
Local government officer	1	...
Others ministering to government, defence, or protection	13	...
Clergy	3	...
Medical men, dentists, druggists, nurses	72	10
Lawyers, law-court officers	31	...
Teachers, governesses, &c.	52	3
Architects, civil engineers, surveyors	32	...
Actors, vocalists, musicians, &c.	39	4
Authors, editors, reporters	18	...
Artists, sculptors	3	...
Photographers	3	...
Merchants, shopkeepers, dealers	618	26
Bank official	1	...
Accountants, agents, brokers, collectors	84	...
Commercial clerks	290	...
Others assisting in the exchange of money or goods	40	...
Hotel, boarding, eating house—keepers, servants	153	5
Tailors, shoemakers, dressmakers, hatters, barbers, &c.	1,081	95
Domestic servants	254	663
Artisans, mechanics, contractors, &c.	2,618	10
Miners, &c.	959	...
Squatters, station laborers, herdsmen, and others engaged about animals	339	...
Farmers, gardeners, farm servants	871	6
Carriers, carters, cab, omnibus—owners, drivers, railway officials	514	...
Ships' officers, sailors, boatmen, stevedores, lumpers	1,558	...
Butchers, bakers, greengrocers, millers, brewers, dairy-men, and others dealing in food	634	8
Laborers, woodsplitters, bushmen	7,691	...
Rag and bottle gatherers, shoeblacks, nightmen, lamp-lighters, &c.	100	1
Of independent means	4	...
Criminal and pauper classes	17	1,858*
No occupation, unspecified †	1,621	3,141
Total	19,714	5,830

428. It has been already stated † that, in making up the tables, a person arrested more than once during the year, or arrested at one time on several charges, is counted as a separate individual in respect to each arrest or charge. In the last two issues of the *Victorian Year-Book* a table was given showing the actual number of individuals who passed into the hands of the police during 1876 so far as the particulars could be gathered from a comparison of the names, ages, birthplaces, religions, localities, &c., appearing in the returns furnished by the police; also the number of offences the arrested persons were respectively charged with. The preparation of this table involved such an amount of time

Arrests of distinct individuals.

* Prostitutes.

† Including 822 male and 297 female children.

‡ See paragraph 405 ante.

and labor as I did not feel justified in again causing to be devoted to the construction of a similar table, more especially as the proportions would probably not differ greatly from those for the year named. The table for 1876, in which the results are given according to sex, age, and birthplace, is therefore re-published. The offences for which arrests were made during that year numbered 25,281, or 263 less than those in 1878:—

DISTINCT INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED, 1876.

Sex, Age, and Birthplace of Arrested Persons.	Number of charges on which arrests were made.	Number of distinct individuals arrested.	Number of charges on which distinct individuals were arrested.											
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11 and upwards.*	
SEX.														
Males ...	19,528	14,948	12,004	2,029	566	180	87	31	24	10	4	4	9	
Females ...	5,753	3,846	2,898	539	201	82	48	35	14	9	3	5	12	
Total ...	25,281	18,794	14,902	2,568	767	262	135	66	38	19	7	9	21	
AGE.														
Under 10 years ...	481	470	461	8	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10 to 15 „ ...	704	629	572	45	9	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
15 to 20 „ ...	1,841	1,404	1,140	178	46	17	10	5	5	3	...	...	...
20 to 25 „ ...	2,745	2,079	1,633	314	87	23	12	7	1	...	...	1	1
25 to 30 „ ...	2,827	2,110	1,659	316	78	28	16	3	3	3	...	...	4
30 to 40 „ ...	6,265	4,554	3,550	650	203	69	37	17	11	6	1	2	8	
40 to 50 „ ...	5,792	4,219	3,294	582	201	70	37	15	9	2	2	4	3	
50 to 60 „ ...	3,045	2,182	1,676	328	102	38	12	11	6	4	2	...	3	
60 years & upwards	1,552	1,120	892	145	41	15	10	7	3	1	2	2	2	
Unknown ...	29	27	25	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BIRTHPLACE.														
Victoria ...	4,105	3,293†	2,776	361	91	31	17	8	4	2	...	1	2	
Other Australasian colonies	1,069	774	608	111	26	12	8	4	...	2	...	...	3
England and Wales	7,492	5,675	4,569	737	218	70	39	13	17	1	3	4	4	
Scotland ...	2,587	1,822	1,381	286	91	28	15	8	4	3	...	1	5	
Ireland ...	8,258	5,780	4,360	886	301	109	56	32	11	11	4	3	7	
China ...	343	290	245	38	6	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other countries ...	1,427	1,160	963	149	34	11	...	1	2	...	...	...	...

429. The charges on which individuals are arrested, as shown in the first column of the table, correspond in the majority of cases with the number of times they are arrested. Instances sometimes occur, however, of an individual being arrested at the same time on two charges, less frequently on three, and occasionally, but not often, on four or even more. In such cases, the individual, although arrested only once, would

* Two males and 1 female were arrested on 12, 1 male and 1 female on 13, 1 female on 14, 1 female on 16, and 1 female on 17 charges during the year.

† Including 60 Aborigines, of whom 46 were arrested on 1, 7 on 2, 4 on 3, and 3 on 4 charges during the year

be the occasion of as many entries being made in the tables of arrested persons as he had offences laid to his charge.

430. It appears that the tendency of females to become arrested over and over again, or at any rate on a variety of charges, is greater than that of males, for, whereas the arrested persons respecting whom particulars are given in the table were distinct individuals in as many as 77 per cent. of the cases of arrests of males, they were so in only 67 per cent. of the cases of arrests of females; also, whilst only 1 male in every 5 males arrested was charged with more than one offence, the proportion of the other sex was 1 to every 4.

Sexes of those arrested more than once.

431. The persons arrested more than once, or on more than one charge, during 1876 amounted to only 6 per cent. of those under 15 years of age, to 20 per cent. of those between 15 and 25 and of those over 60 years of age, and to 22 per cent. of those between 25 and 60 years of age.

Ages of those arrested more than once.

432. Sixteen per cent. of the Victorians arrested during 1876 were taken into custody more than once or on more than one charge, as also were 22 per cent. of the natives of other Australasian colonies, 19 per cent. of the English, 24 per cent. of the Scotch, 25 per cent. of the Irish, and 15 per cent. of the Chinese.

Countries of those arrested more than once.

433. The results of the summary disposal of cases by magistrates in the year 1878 were as follow :—

Results of summary disposal.

SUMMARY DISPOSAL BY MAGISTRATES OF ARRESTED PERSONS, 1878.

Sentence.	Males.	Females.
Imprisonment for 2 years	14	...
" 1 year and under 2 years	134	26
" 6 months and under 1 year	231	145
" 5 months	1	3
" 4 months	18	10
" 3 months	804	333
" 2 months and under 3 months	230	84
" 1 month and under 2 months	810	394
" 15 days and under 1 month	19	6
" 8 days and under 15 days	471	219
" 7 days and under	3,835	1,483
Fined	5,895	836
Ordered to find bail	284	63
Sent to industrial school or reformatory	355	226
Otherwise dealt with	338	168
Total sentenced	13,439	3,996
Discharged	5,684	1,764
Total summarily disposed of	19,123	5,760
Escaped whilst on remand	3	...
Total arrested	19,126	5,760

Sentences by magistrates.

434. Of the persons sentenced by magistrates during 1878, 44 per cent. of the males, and 21 per cent. of the females, were fined ; 32 per cent. of the former, and 43 per cent. of the latter, were imprisoned for various terms under a month, and 16 and 24 per cent., respectively, for periods varying from 1 to 12 months ; but little more than 1 per cent. of the males, and less than 1 per cent. of the females, were sentenced to more than 1 year's imprisonment ; the balance, or 7 per cent. of the males, and 11 per cent. of the females, were otherwise disposed of.

Whipping ordered by magistrates.

435. Corporal punishment to males only may be ordered by magistrates for certain offences. In such cases the offender may be sentenced to be whipped once, twice, or thrice, at the discretion of the bench. Two offenders were so sentenced in 1878, in addition to terms of imprisonment. Of these, 1 was ordered to be whipped once, and 1 twice. The man sentenced to one whipping was to receive 25 lashes, and the other was to receive 40 lashes on each occasion. In both instances the offence was indecent exposure. One of the offenders was between 30 and 40 years of age, and the other was between 40 and 50.

Results of committals for trial.

436. The results of the commitments for trial at the three periods already referred to were as follow :—

RESULTS OF COMMITMENTS FOR TRIAL, 1868, 1873, AND 1878.

	1868.	1873.	1878.
Number for trial	901	729	764*
Convicted and sentenced... ..	543	476	458
Acquitted	282	201	178
Not prosecuted	76	52	64
Awaiting trial ... ..	...	...	64

Proportion of convictions obtained.

437. Of those committed for trial in 1868 and 1873 respectively, 825 and 677 were eventually tried. Including 106 remaining for trial from the previous year, 636 were tried in 1878. At the first period 66 per cent., at the second period 70 per cent., and at the third period 72 per cent. of the trials resulted in convictions.

Sentences in superior courts.

438. The following are the sentences of the prisoners tried and convicted in the year under review.

* Including 106 remaining for trial from the previous year. In 1868 and 1873 the returns were not made up until the result of the commitments for trial was known, so that none were shown as remaining for trial at the beginning of the year or awaiting trial at its close.

SENTENCES OF PERSONS TRIED AND CONVICTED, 1878.

Sentence.	Males.	Females.
Death	3	1
Hard labor on roads or public works for 15 years... ..	1*	...
" " 10 years and under 15 years	2	...
" " 7 years and under 10 years	4	...
" " 4 years and under 7 years	79	...
Imprisonment for 2 years and under 4 years	134	15
" 1 year and under 2 years	108	6
" 6 months and under 1 year	52	8
" 1 month and under 6 months	21	9
" under 1 month	5	5
Fined	2†	...
Awaiting the pleasure of the Crown	1	...
To find bail to appear when called upon	2	...
Total tried and convicted	414	44

439. Of persons convicted in superior courts, nearly four-fifths of the males were sentenced to terms of imprisonment of one year or upwards, and more than half to over 2 years ; but scarcely a fifth were sentenced for periods less than one year. Of the females, half were sentenced to over one, and half to under one year's imprisonment. No female was sentenced to be imprisoned for a longer period than 4 years, whereas sentences of males extended to 15 years.

Length of sentences in superior courts.

440. In addition to the terms of imprisonment named in the foregoing table, several of the persons sentenced were ordered to be kept in solitary confinement for certain periods, and fifteen were ordered to be whipped. Rape or indecent assaults on females were the crimes of nine of these, for seven of whom three whippings were prescribed, and for two one whipping was ordered. Of the former, one was to receive 25 lashes, one 20, four 15, and one 12 lashes on each occasion ; of the latter, one was to receive 25 and the other 20 lashes. Unnatural offence was the crime of two ; the

Whipping ordered by superior courts.

* This individual was sentenced to wear irons during the first three years of his sentence.

† Besides these, one of whom was fined £20, and the other a small amount, three were fined in addition to terms of imprisonment, viz., one £500, besides hard labor for 4 years, one £50, in addition to 2 years' imprisonment, and one £30 and imprisonment for under a month.

number of whippings to be administered in both cases being 3 of 12 lashes each. Robbery under arms was the crime of the remaining four offenders, one of whom was sentenced to 3 whippings of 12 lashes on each occasion, two to 1 whipping of 20 lashes, and one to 1 whipping of 12 lashes. Judges of the Supreme Court and Courts of General Sessions can sentence males to receive corporal punishment under Act 27 Vict. No. 233 for unnatural offences, attempts to choke in order to commit an offence, for robbery under arms, and in the case of youths under sixteen for several other offences; also, under Act 35 Vict. No. 399, for attempts to commit rape, or for rape itself where sentence of death is commuted. The greatest number of whippings an individual can be sentenced to receive for one offence is 3, and the greatest number of lashes at each whipping is 50.

Whippings ordered by magistrates more severe than by judges.

441. Although the offences for which whipping is ordered by courts of petty sessions are only light as compared with those for which it is generally ordered by superior courts, and the power magistrates possess to order corporal punishment is comparatively seldom exercised, yet the experience of the last two years goes to show that, on the occasions of their exercising it, the punishment they prescribe is, in the majority of cases, more severe than that ordered by the higher courts.

Whippings ordered, 1874-1878.

442. The number of individuals sentenced to corporal punishment in 1874 was 11, viz., 6 by magistrates and 5 by superior courts; the number in 1875 was 5, viz., 2 by magistrates and 3 by superior courts; the number in 1876 was 11, viz., 1 by magistrates and 10 by superior courts; the number in 1877 was 11, viz., 5 by magistrates and 6 by superior courts; the number in 1878 was 17, viz., 2 by magistrates and 15 by superior courts. The total number of whippings directed to be administered in the five years was 112, of which 21 were ordered by magistrates and 91 by superior courts. The number of persons sentenced to be whipped was not only greater in 1878 than in any year of the quinquenniad, but the average number of whippings to each individual was greater. The proportion was $1\frac{1}{2}$ whippings per individual in the four years 1874 to 1877, and $2\frac{1}{4}$ whippings in 1878.

Executions.

443. No criminal was executed during the year under review. Executions have taken place in Victoria in each year since its separation from New South Wales, except 1874 and 1878. In the thirteen years prior to 1878 the total number of executions was 42. Those executed were all males, and no native of Victoria is included in the list. The following table shows their birthplaces, the religions they professed, and the crimes they expiated on the scaffold.

CRIMINALS EXECUTED, 1865 TO 1878.

Birthplace, Religion, and Offence.								Number.
Total number executed								42
Birthplace—Australian colonies, not Victoria								2
„	England	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
„	Wales	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„	Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
„	Scotland	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„	Belgium	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„	France	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„	Switzerland	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„	United States of America	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„	West Indies	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„	China	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
„	At sea	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Religion—Church of England...								13
„	Roman Catholic	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
„	Presbyterian	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„	Wesleyan	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„	Pagan	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Offence—Murder								37
„	Attempt to murder	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„	Rape	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„	Unnatural offence on a child	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

444. The offences in respect to which no person was apprehended were 9 per cent. less numerous in 1878 than in 1877, in which year they were 13 per cent. more numerous than in 1876. The following are the numbers in the last two years classified as being against the person, against property, and others—the decrease occurring in the two latter classes. It should be remarked that in all probability the malefactor did not in all these cases escape entirely; the returns are made up in the month of April of the year following that in which the offence is reported, and he who committed it might be arrested after that date, or might even before that date have been arrested, and perhaps punished for other misdeeds:—

Undetected crime.

UNDETECTED CRIME, 1877 AND 1878.

Year.	Number of Offences.			
	Against the Person.	Against Property.	Other Offences.	Total.
1877	457	4,431	463	5,351
1878	496	4,011	385	4,892
Increase	39	...	...	...
Decrease	...	420	78	459

Crime in
Australasian
colonies.

445. The next four tables, giving details of crime in the various Australasian colonies, have been compiled in this office from their respective *Statistical Registers*. The first of these gives for each colony, and for the whole of Australasia, during the years 1876 and 1877, a statement of the number of offences for which persons were apprehended or summoned, were summarily convicted or held to bail, were committed for trial, and were convicted after commitment; also, for each colony, except Western Australia and New Zealand, the amount of undetected crime as represented by the number of offences reported, but in respect of which no arrest was made:—

CRIME IN AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES, 1876 AND 1877.

Name of Colony.	Number of Offences for which Persons were—				Number of Reported Offences for which no one was Apprehended. (Undetected Crime.)	
	Apprehended or Summoned.*	Summarily Convicted or held to Bail.	Committed for Trial.	Convicted after Commitment.		
Victoria ...	{ 1876	42,297	27,505	680	384	4,727
	{ 1877	45,844	29,528	594	340	5,351
New South Wales	{ 1876	45,105†	30,404	1,391	822	19,111
	{ 1877	47,739†	33,003	1,517	829	21,604
Queensland ...	{ 1876	10,180†	6,126	285	132	4,646
	{ 1877	9,929†	6,444	312	177	4,522
South Australia	{ 1876	9,375	7,929	239	124	857
	{ 1877	10,314	8,696	240	137	862
Western Australia	{ 1876	7,509	5,847	95	47	...
	{ 1877	6,855	5,272	83	27	...
Tasmania ...	{ 1876	9,207	7,208	96	51	482
	{ 1877	7,619	6,092	102	49	494
New Zealand ...	{ 1876	22,141	16,100	414	249	...
	{ 1877	21,953	16,293	405	250	...
Australasia ...	{ 1876	145,814	101,119	3,200	1,809	...
	{ 1877	150,253	105,328	3,253	1,809	...

Large
amount of
crime in
New South
Wales.

446. By this table it would appear that, notwithstanding the smaller population, crime is much more prevalent in New South Wales than in Victoria, there being, in both years, under all the heads, larger numbers

* Not including civil cases.

† Not including cases brought up for lunacy. In New South Wales 814 lunatics during 1876 and 955 during 1877, and in Queensland 320 during 1876 and 288 during 1877, were admitted to asylums. Probably four-fifths of these were apprehended by the police.

in the former colony than in the latter. In New South Wales, the commitments for trial and convictions thereafter are more than twice as numerous as in Victoria; the apprehensions and summonses exceed those in Victoria by nearly 6 per cent., and the summary convictions by a ninth; at the same time the reported offences for which no one was arrested are more than four times as numerous in New South Wales as in Victoria. Undetected crime, both in New South Wales and Queensland, is, according to the figures, enormous, being equivalent to nearly half the crime detected.

447. The position of the respective colonies in respect to crime will be better ascertained by means of the next table, which shows the proportion that the mean number of apprehensions and summons cases,* of summary convictions, of commitments for trial, and of convictions after commitment, occurring in each colony during the last two years, bore to the average population of the same colony; also the proportion in each colony of summary convictions to apprehensions and summons cases, and of convictions after commitment to commitments:—

PROPORTION OF ARRESTS, COMMITMENTS, AND CONVICTIONS TO POPULATION IN AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES—MEAN OF 1876 and 1877.

Name of Colony.	Proportion per 1,000 of—		Proportion per 10,000 of—		Proportion per cent. of—	
	Apprehensions and Summons Cases* to Population.	Summary Convictions to Population.	Commitments for Trial to Population.	Convictions after Commitment to Population.	Summary Convictions to Apprehensions and Summons Cases*	Convictions after Commitment to Commitments.
Victoria	52·44	33·94	7·58	4·30	64·70	56·83
New South Wales	73·71	50·34	23·09	13·10	68·29	56·74
Queensland	53·74	33·59	15·92	8·26	62·51	51·68
South Australia	43·62	36·85	10·59	5·76	84·44	54·39
Western Australia	262·87	203·47	32·58	13·54	77·40	41·57
Tasmania	79·75	63·04	9·39	4·74	79·04	50·50
New Zealand	55·25	40·58	10·27	6·24	73·46	60·88
Total	61·30	42·75	13·36	7·49	69·3	56·08

448. Judging from the number of offences for which apprehensions were made or summonses issued during the two years named, as compared with the population, the three colonies to which criminals were formerly transported, viz., New South Wales, Tasmania, and Western

* Not including civil cases.

Proportion of crime in each colony

Order of colonies in respect to apprehensions, &c.

Australia, are, as will readily be supposed, those in which crime is more rife than in the remainder, which have always been free from the convict taint. According to this standard, South Australia would appear to be the colony in which the population is the least criminal of any in the group, and next to South Australia, Victoria. The following is the order of the various colonies in this respect, the colony with the lowest proportion of persons apprehended or summoned on criminal charges being placed first, and that with the highest last:—

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO NUMBERS APPREHENDED OR
SUMMONED IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. South Australia. | 5. New South Wales. |
| 2. Victoria. | 6. Tasmania. |
| 3. Queensland. | 7. Western Australia. |
| 4. New Zealand. | |

Order of colonies in respect to summary convictions.

449. As regards the persons summarily convicted, in proportion to population, Queensland is at the top of the list, being very slightly above Victoria, which stands next. If, however, allowance be made for the large amount of undetected crime in the former colony, it would undoubtedly be much below both Victoria and South Australia. The three convict colonies are again at the bottom of the list. The following is the order in which the colonies stand in this particular, the colony with the lowest proportion of summary convictions being placed first, and the rest in succession:—

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO NUMBERS SUMMARILY
CONVICTED IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Queensland. | 5. New South Wales. |
| 2. Victoria. | 6. Tasmania. |
| 3. South Australia. | 7. Western Australia. |
| 4. New Zealand. | |

Order of colonies in respect to commitments for trial.

450. Victoria shows in proportion to population a much smaller number of persons committed for trial than any other colony. Western Australia and New South Wales are still at the bottom of the list, but Tasmania occupies a position inferior only to that of Victoria.

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO NUMBERS COMMITTED
FOR TRIAL IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Victoria. | 5. Queensland. |
| 2. Tasmania. | 6. New South Wales. |
| 3. New Zealand. | 7. Western Australia. |
| 4. South Australia. | |

451. In respect to convictions in superior courts, the order varies slightly from the foregoing, Victoria, however, being still at the top of the list. It will be observed that New Zealand and South Australia change places, as also do New South Wales and Western Australia, the former being absolutely in the lowest position.

Order of colonies in respect to convictions in superior courts.

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO CONVICTIONS IN SUPERIOR COURTS IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Victoria. | \| | 5. Queensland. |
| 2. Tasmania. | \| | 6. Western Australia. |
| 3. South Australia. | \| | 7. New South Wales. |
| 4. New Zealand. | \| |  |

452. Punishment for minor offences does not, it would appear, follow their commission with such certainty in Victoria as in most of the other colonies, since the number of summary convictions obtained in proportion to the apprehensions is lower in this colony than in any of the others except Queensland. The following is the order of the colonies in respect to convictions of this kind. The colony in which the rate of summary convictions to apprehensions is greatest being placed first, and that in which it is least last:—

Order of colonies in respect to summary convictions obtained.

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO PROPORTION OF SUMMARY CONVICTIONS TO ARRESTS.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1. South Australia. | \| | 5. New South Wales. |
| 2. Tasmania. | \| | 6. Victoria. |
| 3. Western Australia. | \| | 7. Queensland. |
| 4. New Zealand. | \| |  |

453. In regard to convictions for offences of sufficient gravity to be tried in superior courts, Victoria occupies a high position, being only second to New Zealand. This will be seen by the subjoined list, in which the colonies are placed in order, the one in which the convictions bear the highest proportion to commitments being first:—

Order of colonies in respect to convictions obtained in superior courts.

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO PROPORTION OF CONVICTIONS IN SUPERIOR COURTS TO COMMITMENTS FOR TRIAL.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1. New Zealand. | \| | 5. Queensland. |
| 2. Victoria. | \| | 6. Tasmania. |
| 3. New South Wales. | \| | 7. Western Australia. |
| 4. South Australia. | \| |  |

454. It is to be regretted that the information as to the offences for which persons are arrested or summoned is very incomplete in several of the colonies. In New South Wales and Queensland, the only specific offence mentioned in the returns is drunkenness, the balance

Incomplete returns in some colonies.

being grouped as offences against the person, offences against property, or as other offences. This, except that drunkenness is not separated from "other offences," is likewise the grouping adopted in Western Australia, as also in Victoria in respect to the summons cases where the offender is never in custody of the police, the exact offence being only entered when an arrest takes place.

455. The following table shows the offences for which apprehensions were made or summonses issued in the various colonies during 1876 and 1877, so far as the information can be gathered from their respective *Statistical Registers*. It will be observed that, notwithstanding the smaller population, arrests for offences against the person, for offences against property, and for drunkenness, were in both years much more numerous in New South Wales than in Victoria:—

APPREHENSIONS AND SUMMONSES FOR VARIOUS OFFENCES IN THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES, 1876 AND 1877.

Colony.	Year.	Number of Arrests or Summonses for—							
		Murder, Attempts at Murder, and Manslaughter.	Rape, and other Offences against Females.	Other Offences against the Person.	Robbery with Violence, Burglary, &c.	Horse, Sheep, and Cattle Stealing.	Other Offences against Property.	Drunkenness.	Other Offences.
Victoria ...	1876	34	86	4,083	136	170	3,964	11,624	22,200
	1877	50	48	4,316	135	195	4,167	12,447	24,466
New South Wales	1876	7,578			5,898			16,171	15,458
	1877	8,539			6,130			16,696	16,374
Queensland ...	1876	1,226			1,238			3,679	4,037
	1877	1,550			1,201			3,019	4,159
South Australia	1876	5	19	735	30	27	544	2,837	5,178
	1877	11	31	810	24	31	636	2,922	5,849
Western Australia	1876	515			537			6,457	
	1877	470			493			5,892	
Tasmania ...	1876	13	11	876	61	18	903	1,807	5,518
	1877	25	16	636	58	26	854	1,345	4,659
New Zealand ...	1876	31	51	1,743	54	43	1,776	7,153	11,290
	1877	18	41	1,899	66	61	1,855	7,429	10,564

456. Subjoined is a statement of the proportion of the various offences grouped under four heads to the population of each colony in 1876 and 1877.

Arrests, &c., for various offences in Australasian colonies.

Ratio of each group of offences to population of each colony.

PROPORTION OF VARIOUS OFFENCES TO POPULATION IN EACH AUSTRALASIAN COLONY, 1876 AND 1877.

Colony.	Year.	Arrests or Summonses per 1,000 of the Population for—			
		Offences against the Person.	Offences against Property.	Drunkenness.	Other Offences.
Victoria ...	1876	5·06	5·14	13·99	26·73
	1877	5·19	5·29	14·65	28·79
New South Wales ...	1876	12·26	9·54	26·16	25·00
	1877	13·21	9·50	25·84	25·35
Queensland ...	1876	6·66	6·72	19·97	21·92
	1877	7·94	6·16	15·47	21·32
South Australia... ..	1876	3·48	2·76	13·01	23·75
	1877	3·68	2·98	12·63	25·29
Western Australia ...	1876	19·06	19·88	239·01	
	1877	17·04	17·87	213·63	
Tasmania ...	1876	8·60	9·39	17·28	52·77
	1877	6·37	8·82	12·65	43·83
New Zealand ...	1876	4·70	4·84	18·46	29·14
	1877	4·79	4·85	18·19	25·87

457. It will be observed that, according to population, arrests or summonses for offences against the person were in both years much more numerous in Western Australia and New South Wales than in any other colony, in the former of which they were in the last year more than three times and in the latter nearly twice as numerous as in Victoria. In South Australia and in New Zealand, however, the proportion of arrests for these offences was in both years smaller than it was in Victoria. The following is the order of the colonies in this respect during 1877, the colony in which the proportion was smallest being placed first and that in which it was largest last:—

Order of colonies as to offences against the person.

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO ARRESTS OR SUMMONSES FOR OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON, 1877.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. South Australia. | 5. Queensland. |
| 2. New Zealand. | 6. New South Wales. |
| 3. Victoria. | 7. Western Australia. |
| 4. Tasmania. | |

458. The same order prevailed in regard to arrests for offences against property, except that the positions of Tasmania and Queensland were reversed. In Western Australia, arrests for these offences were more

Order of colonies as to offences against property

than three times, and in New South Wales nearly twice, as numerous in proportion to population as they were in Victoria. The proportion in Tasmania, however, was much higher, and consequently nearer to that of New South Wales than it was in respect to offences against the person.

Order of colonies as to drunkenness.

459. In the matter of drunkenness, New South Wales far outstrips all the other colonies of the group in which the offence is distinguished, the arrests for drunkenness there being proportionately twice as numerous as they are in South Australia, and nearly twice as numerous as in Victoria. In 1877, South Australia and Tasmania were the colonies in which apprehensions for drunkenness were relatively the fewest, but the proportions in those colonies differed only slightly from that in Victoria. In the following list the colony in which the smallest number of inebriates were brought before magistrates is placed first and that in which the number was largest last :—

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO APPREHENSIONS FOR DRUNKENNESS IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION, 1877.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1. South Australia. | \| | 4. Queensland. |
| 2. Tasmania. | \| | 5. New Zealand. |
| 3. Victoria. | \| | 6. New South Wales. |

Order of colonies as to "other offences."

460. "Other offences," which embrace breaches of corporation bye-laws, wines and spirits statutes, &c., are rather violations of good order than actual crimes, and are consequently generally dealt with by summons. In 1877 they were relatively to population most numerous in Tasmania, and were slightly more numerous in Victoria than in South Australia, New South Wales, and New Zealand, where the proportions were nearly equal. In Western Australia drunkenness is included with these, and therefore the figures are not comparable with those of the other colonies. Omitting Western Australia therefore, the following is the order of the colonies in respect to irregularities of this description:—

ORDER OF COLONIES IN REFERENCE TO ARRESTS OR SUMMONSES FOR "OTHER OFFENCES," 1877.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|
| 1. Queensland. | \| | 4. New Zealand. |
| 2. South Australia. | \| | 5. Victoria. |
| 3. New South Wales. | \| | 6. Tasmania. |

Convicts landed in Australasia, 1787 to 1868.

461. A statement of the total number of prisoners from the United Kingdom who were landed in Australasia until transportation was finally abandoned in 1868 was kindly handed to me by an old colonist* living in Melbourne, who had taken considerable pains to procure the information from the Governments of the colonies to which

* Mr. Gideon Lang.

the convicts were sent and other official sources. The following is the statement referred to. It was published for the first time in the *Victorian Year-Book* 1877-8, but as the particulars are interesting, I make no apology for republishing them :—

**TOTAL NUMBER OF CONVICTS LANDED IN AUSTRALASIA,
1787 TO 1868.**

Colony.	Period.	Number of Convicts Landed.		
		Males.	Females.	Total.
New South Wales ...	1787 to 1839	51,082	8,706	59,788
Van Diemen's Land ...	1803 to 1853	56,042	11,613	67,655
Western Australia ...	1853 to 1868	9,718	...	9,718
Total ...	...	116,842	20,319	137,161

462. The statistics at hand relating to the United Kingdom give the commitments for trial and convictions in the superior courts, but do not afford any information respecting the cases dealt with in Courts of Petty Sessions. The following table shows the number of commitments and convictions and their respective proportions to the population of each division of the United Kingdom, also the proportion of commitments to convictions, during 1876 and 1877 :—

Crime in United Kingdom.

CRIME IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1876 AND 1877.

Country.	Population.	Commitments for Trial.	Convictions.	Proportion of—			
				Commitments to Population.	Convictions to Population.	Convictions to Commitments.	
England and Wales	1876	24,244,010	16,078	12,195	per 10,000.	per 10,000.	per cent.
	1877	24,547,309	15,890	11,942	6·63	5·03	75·85
Scotland	1876	3,527,811	2,703	2,039	6·47	4·86	75·15
	1877	3,560,715	2,677	2,010	7·66	5·78	75·43
Ireland	1876	5,321,618	4,146	2,344	7·52	5·64	75·08
	1877	5,338,906	3,871	2,303	7·79	4·40	56·54
Total	1876	33,093,439	22,927	16,578	7·25	4·31	59·49
	1877	33,446,930	22,138	16,255	6·93	5·00	72·31
					6·71	4·86	72·44

463. Taking the mean of the two years given in the table, it will be found that in proportion to population the commitments for trial in the United Kingdom are considerably less than in any of the Australasian colonies, and the same holds good for all the divisions of the

Crime in United Kingdom and Australasia compared.

United Kingdom, except that the proportion in Victoria is lower than that in Scotland by a very small fraction. Convictions after commitment are to population relatively fewer in Victoria than in the United Kingdom or any of its divisions, and those in Tasmania are slightly fewer than those in Ireland, but in all the other colonies the proportion is higher than in the United Kingdom or any of its divisions.

Convictions
in United
Kingdom
and
Australasia
compared.

464. The proportion of convictions obtained after commitment is, according to the figures, greater in England and Scotland than in any of the Australasian colonies, but the proportion in Ireland is nearly equalled in Victoria and New South Wales, and is exceeded in New Zealand.

Supreme
Court
Criminal
Sessions.

465. The number of criminal cases tried in the Central Criminal Court, Melbourne, and in the Courts of Assize throughout the colony, in 1878, was 332, of which 262 were for felonies, and 70 for misdemeanors. The convictions for felonies numbered 181, and for misdemeanors 55. The number of places where courts were held was 11, the number of courts held was 32, and the total duration of courts was 102 days.

Supreme
Court civil
sittings.

466. Courts were held at the same number of places to try civil cases. The number of causes entered for trial during the year was 263, and for assessment of damages, 6. The number of causes tried was 166, of which 144 were tried by juries of four or six, and 22 by juries of twelve. All the latter, and all but 5 of the former, were defended. The damages laid in the declarations amounted in the aggregate to £171,938. Verdicts were returned in 157 instances ; and there were 4 nonsuits. Of the verdicts, 126, or about 80 per cent., were for the plaintiff. The aggregate amount awarded by the juries was £34,490, or 20 per cent. of the damages laid. In the ten years ended with 1877 the damages sued for in these or similar courts amounted to £1,852,534, and the sums awarded by juries to £394,007, or to about 21 per cent. of the damages sued for.

Courts of
General
Sessions.

467. Courts of General Sessions have jurisdiction in criminal cases within certain limitations, and have also appellate jurisdiction in civil cases from petty sessions. The places at which such courts were held in 1878 numbered 30, and the number of courts held, 82, extending over periods amounting in the aggregate to 108 days. The number of cases tried was 248, in 183 of which, or 74 per cent., convictions were obtained. The number of appeals heard was 98. In the ten years prior to 1878, 3,271 cases were tried in Courts of General Sessions, and 2,144

convictions were obtained; the latter thus were to the former in the proportion of 66 per cent.

468. County Courts have jurisdiction in civil cases up to £250. The number of places at which they were held in 1878 was 59, and the number of courts held was 197, extending over 396 days. The total number of causes tried was 9,278, the amount sued for was £234,628, and the amount recovered, £93,371, or 39 per cent. of the amount sued for. The costs awarded to the plaintiff amounted to £13,358, and the costs awarded to the defendant to £3,764. During the ten years prior to the year under review the aggregate amount sued for in County Courts was £2,522,605, and the aggregate amount awarded was £882,889, or 35 per cent. of the amount sued for. County Courts.

469. Courts of Mines have jurisdiction concerning all questions or disputes which may arise out of mining on Crown lands. The places at which they were held in 1878 numbered 20, and the courts held numbered 58, occupying 30 days. The total number of suits was 13, and the aggregate amount or value of demand, £1,768. The amount of costs awarded to the plaintiff was £61, and to the defendant, £23. These figures do not include all the mining disputes which took place during the year, as those of minor importance are adjudicated on by the wardens of the goldfields. In the ten years prior to 1878 the value sued for in Courts of Mines amounted in the aggregate to £834,664. The business has fallen off very considerably in the last three years. Courts of Mines.

470. Courts of Petty Sessions have jurisdiction in ordinary civil cases up to £20, and in master and servant cases up to £50. Such courts were held at 197 places during the year. The civil cases heard numbered 21,382, in which the total amount of debts or damages claimed was £91,264, and the total amount awarded was £59,399, or 65 per cent. of the amount claimed. In the ten years ended with 1877 the debts or damages claimed in these courts amounted in all to £1,400,626, and the sums awarded to £798,240, or to 57 per cent. of the amounts claimed. Courts of Petty Sessions, civil cases.

471. The net results of the civil cases tried in 1878 may be gathered from the following table, which shows the total amount of debts and damages sued for in the various courts, and the aggregate value of the awards, also the percentage of the latter to the former, in 1878 and the previous decenniad. It will be noticed that the whole amount at stake was nearly half a million sterling, and that more than a third was recovered; also that the proportions recovered in 1878 were generally above the average. Debts sued for and awarded.

DEBTS AND DAMAGES CLAIMED AND AWARDED.

Name of Court.	Amount of Debts and Damages, 1878.		Proportion of Debts and Damages recovered.	
	Claimed.	Awarded.	1878.	Average of Previous 10 Years.
	£	£	Per cent.	Per cent.
Supreme Court	171,938	34,490	20	21
County Court	234,628	93,371	39	35
Courts of Petty Sessions ...	91,264	59,399	65	57
Total	497,830	187,260	38	35

Courts of Petty Sessions, indictable offences.

472. The cases of indictable offences heard at Petty Sessions during 1878 numbered 1,607, which resulted in 658 commitments for trial. Commitments were thus obtained in 41 per cent. of the cases. The offences summarily dealt with numbered 43,135, in 29,429 of which, or 68 per cent., the offender was convicted.

Writs.

473. Writs were issued in 1878 in six places. The number of writs issued was 1,977, of which 34 were Queen's writs against both person and property, 57 were subjects' writs against the person alone, and 1,886 were subjects' writs against property alone; the latter were much more numerous than in any other year since 1870.

Gaols and penal establishments.

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

Gaols and prisoners.

475. The total and average number of males and females detained in each of these descriptions of prison during 1878, and the numbers transferred from one institution to another in the same year, will be found in the following table:—

GAOLS AND PENAL ESTABLISHMENTS, 1878.

Description of Prison.	Number of Institutions.	Prisoners detained during the Year.						Prisoners transferred from one institution to another during the Year.		
		Total Number.			Average at One Time.					
		M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
Gaols	9	6,771	2,861	9,632	612	275	887	2,331	502	2,833
Police gaols	14	635	84	719	24	3	27	173	32	205
Penal establishments	4	1,538	...	1,538	582	...	582	283	...	283
Total	27	8,944	2,945	11,889	1,218	278	1,496	2,787	534	3,321

* Imprisonment for debt in Victoria, except in cases of fraud, was abolished by Act 29 Vict. No. 284.

476. Estimating the mean population of the colony during 1878 as 869,040, consisting of 472,309 males and 396,731 females, and comparing these figures with those in the table showing the average number of prisoners, it follows that 1 person to every 581 persons living was constantly in prison during the year ; or, distinguishing the sexes, that, during the same period, 1 male to every 388 males living, and 1 female to every 1,427 females living, were constantly in detention. These figures, and those for the two previous years, are given in the following table. It will be observed that each year shows improvement upon the one which preceded it :—

PROPORTION OF PRISONERS TO POPULATION, 1876 TO 1878.

Year.	Of the Total Population one Person was constantly in Prison to every—		
	Males.	Females.	Both Sexes.
1876	345	1,161	508
1877	373	1,206	544
1878	388	1,427	581

477. The “total number of prisoners” detained during the whole or any portion of 1878, exclusive of those transferred from one institution to another; was less by 237, and the “average number of prisoners constantly detained” during the same year was less by 65, than the corresponding numbers in 1877.

478. According to figures supplied by the Inspector-General of Penal Establishments and Gaols, the number of individual prisoners detained during some portion of 1878 in the institutions under his control probably amounted to 7,483, viz., 5,662 males and 1,811 females. If the number of individuals in police gaols, estimated to have amounted to 620—viz., 565 males and 55 females—be added to these, the sum, amounting to 8,093—viz., 6,227 males and 1,866 females—will represent, approximately, the number of distinct prisoners detained in all the gaols and penal establishments in the colony during the whole or some part of the year.

479. Comparing these figures with those showing the estimated mean population, it appears that 1 person to every 107 persons in the colony, or 1 male to every 76 males, and 1 female to every 213 females, passed some portion of the year in prison. In this estimate no account is taken

of persons lodged temporarily in watchhouses, &c., pending examination before magistrates, the prisoners here referred to being only those detained in regular gaols or penal establishments.

Grounds of imprisonment.

480. The following is a classification of the prisoners in confinement at the end of 1878, according to the grounds in respect to which they were detained. It will be noticed that more than half had been convicted of felony :—

GROUNDS FOR DETENTION OF PRISONERS, 1878.

Grounds for Detention.	Gaols.		Police Gaols.		Penal Establishments.	Total.		
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	M.	F.	Total.
Felony, tried	234	82	1	...	468	703	82	785
„ untried	22	4	...	...	...	22	4	26
Misdemeanors, tried	141	52	7	...	147	295	52	347
„ untried	6	...	...	...	...	6	...	6
Other offences, tried	145	149	4	...	15	164	149	313
„ untried	18	7	...	...	...	18	7	25
Total	566	294	12	...	630	1,208	294	1,502

Sickness in prisons.

481. The cases of sickness in the year, which numbered 1,558, were in the proportion of 1 to every 5 individual prisoners; but if the calculation be made upon the average number of prisoners detained, the proportion will be about one case of sickness to each prisoner.

Deaths in prisons.

482. Thirty-five deaths in prison occurred in 1877, and 28 in 1878. These deaths were in the proportion of 1 to every 263 in the former year, and 1 to every 289 in the latter year, of the estimated individual prisoners; and in the proportion of 1 to every 45 in the former year, and 1 to every 53 in the latter year, of the average number of prisoners detained.

Prisoners absconding.

483. Three prisoners absconded in 1877, viz., 1 from the Melbourne gaol, and 2 from the penal establishment at Pentridge. Ten prisoners absconded in 1878, viz., 1 from the Ararat, 1 from the Ballarat, and 4 from the Maryborough gaol, 3 from the penal establishment at Sandridge, and 1 from a police gaol.

Ages of prisoners.

484. An abstract of the estimated numbers of the population at various ages, of the average number of prisoners at the same ages, and the proportion of the latter to the former, will be found in the following table.

AGES OF PRISONERS, 1878.

Ages.	Estimated Mean Population.*	Average Number of Prisoners constantly detained.	Prisoners per 10,000 of the Population.
Under 20 years	448,808	182	4·05
20 to 30 "	121,761	434	35·64
30 to 40 "	99,772	345	34·57
40 to 50 "	102,956	294	28·56
50 to 60 "	61,957	147	23·72
60 years and upwards ...	33,786	94	27·82
Total	869,040	1,496	17·21

485. It appears from this table that, in 1878, the proportion of prisoners constantly detained to the population was greatest between the ages of 20 and 30, and gradually diminished up to 60 years. Of persons of both sexes over 20 years of age living in Victoria, 1 to every 320, of those between 20 and 40, 1 to every 284, and of those over 40, 1 to every 371, were constantly in prison throughout the year.

Proportion of prisoners at various ages.

486. The birthplaces and religions of the prisoners constantly detained during the year, deduced from the total numbers of each nationality and religion returned as passing through the institutions, also the estimated totals of the same nationality and religion in the mean population of the year, are compared in the following table:—

Birthplaces and religions of prisoners.

BIRTHPLACES AND RELIGIONS OF PRISONERS, 1878.

Native Country and Religion.	Estimated Mean Population.†	Average Number of Prisoners constantly detained.	Prisoners per 10,000 of the Population.
NATIVE COUNTRY.			
Australian colonies... ..	509,490	421	8·26
England and Wales	165,776	447	26·96
Scotland	54,427	116	21·31
Ireland	96,950	402	41·47
China	17,659	30	16·99
Other countries	24,738	80	32·33
Total	869,040	1,496	17·21
RELIGION.			
Protestants	628,194	865	13·77
Roman Catholics	207,201	588	28·38
Jews	4,332	6	13·85
Pagans	21,293	30	14·09
Others	8,020	7	8·73

487. It will be observed that, in view of their respective numbers in the population, natives of the Australian colonies contributed much

Relative numbers of each country and sect.

* See table following paragraph 47 ante.
 † See tables following paragraphs 48 and 50 ante.

less, and natives of China slightly less, than their share to the number of inmates of prisons, but that natives of Scotland contributed slightly more, natives of England and Wales 57 per cent. more, and natives of Ireland 141 per cent. more, than their share to that number. Also that of the religious denominations shown, Protestants, Jews, and Pagans contributed less than their share, but Roman Catholics 65 per cent. more than their share, to the number of such inmates. It must be borne in mind, however, that these calculations are made on the assumption that the numbers estimated for the various religions and birthplaces in the population, which have for the most part been based on census proportions, are correct, which cannot at present be verified.

Gaol punishments.

488. The following cases of punishment for offences committed within the prison took place in 1878. It will be observed that hard labor was prescribed in 22 instances. The "other punishments" do not include whipping, as corporal punishment is not administered in Victoria for any breach of prison regulations:—

PUNISHMENTS FOR OFFENCES WITHIN PRISONS, 1878.

Nature of Punishment.	Gaols.			Penal Establishments.	Total.		
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	M.	F.	Total.
Hard labor ...	14	...	14	8	22	...	22
Solitary confinement ...	266	115	381	333	599	115	714
Other punishments ...	47	46	93	416	463	46	509
Total ...	327	161	488	757	1,084	161	1,245

Proportion of prisoners punished.

489. The punishments for offences within the prison, as detailed in the last table, were in the proportion of 1 to every 6 individual prisoners, 1 punishment of a male to every 5 individual male prisoners, 1 punishment of a female to every 11 individual female prisoners. The average number of prisoners exceeded the total number of punishments by 224; the average number of male prisoners exceeded the punishments of males by 110; the average number of female prisoners exceeded the number of punishments of females by 114.

Inmates of reformatories.

490. The number of inmates of reformatories during 1878 was 319, viz., 239 males and 80 females. Of these, 79 were admitted, and 143 left, during the year. Of the latter, 44 were discharged on remission, and 46 on expiration of sentence; and 53 were sent to employment.

Birthplaces and religions in reformatories.

491. At the end of 1878 the inmates of reformatories numbered 176, of whom all but 21 were known to be Australians by birth. Of the remainder, 3 were natives of England and Wales, 4 of Ireland, 11 of

other British possessions, and of 3 the birthplace was unknown. Of the whole number, 97, or about 55 per cent., were Protestants, and the remainder—viz., 79, or about 45 per cent.—were Roman Catholics.

492. Three of the inmates of reformatories at the end of 1878 were between 5 and 10 years of age, eight were aged 10, thirteen aged 11, fifteen aged 12, twenty-seven aged 13, fifty aged 14, forty aged 15, and twenty aged 16 and upwards. Ages in reformatories.

493. The inquests held in 1878 numbered 1,621, as against 1,657 in 1877. In 854 instances the death was found to have resulted from natural causes; in 19 cases, from intemperance; in 694 cases, from violence; in 43 cases, from doubtful causes; and in 11 cases, a verdict of “still-born” was returned. Of the deaths set down to violence, the verdict in 525 cases was to the effect that the death had resulted from accident; in 11 from homicide; in 85 from suicide; and in 73 that the cause of the violent death was doubtful. I pointed out on former occasions that the practice of holding inquests in cases of other than violent deaths was on the increase, which was shown by the increasingly large proportion which verdicts of “death from natural causes” bore to the total number of verdicts given. In 1873, this proportion was 45 per cent.; in 1874, 47 per cent.; in 1875, 52 per cent.; in 1876, 53 per cent.; in 1877, 54 per cent.; but in 1878 the proportion for the first time decreased, being 52 per cent., or equal only to that in 1875. Inquests in cases of death occurring under suspicious circumstances are held at the discretion of the coroner of the district within which the death takes place, subject to instructions issued by the Governor in Council under the 3rd section of the Coroners Statute 1865 (28 Vict. No. 253). Inquests.

494. Only 3 fire inquests were held during 1878, and 5 in 1877, as against 15 in 1876. Fire inquests are not held now as often as formerly, which is shown by the fact that in the three years ended with 1868 as many as 480 such inquiries were held, but no more than 243 in the succeeding ten years. This change has occurred, partly because fires have of late years been less numerous than formerly, but chiefly owing to the circumstance that, since the 19th August 1869, at which date the Amending Coroners Statute (33 Vict. No. 338) came into operation, fire inquests have not been held except upon the payment of a fee of £5 5s. by or on behalf of some one applying to have the inquiry made, or in pursuance of authority from the Minister of Justice, which is only given when circumstances appear sufficiently suspicious to warrant action being taken. Fireinquests