

9. The Parliament of Western Australia. (ii) *Particulars of Elections* (p. 94).

## PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, 1924.

Particulars.	Legislative Assembly. March, 1924.			Legislative Council. May, 1924.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
No. of electors enrolled ..	101,717	88,152	189,869	43,897	14,904	58,801
Electors who voted ..	55,591	43,800	99,391	16,552	4,659	21,211
Percentage of electors who voted to electors on roll in contested districts ..	66.00	59.00	62.32	47.06	39.25	45.12

## CHAPTER VI. OVERSEA TRADE.

### § 4. Oversea Trade.

1. Total Oversea Trade, p. 223.—The following particulars have been compiled from preliminary returns relating to the Oversea Trade of Australia during the year 1923-24 :—

Period.	Recorded Value.			Value per Inhabitant.			Per-centage of Exports on Imports.
	Imports.	Exports.	Total.	Imports.	Exports.	Total.	
1923-24	£1,000. 140,570	£1,000. 119,567	£1,000. 260,137	£ s. d. 24 8 11	£ s. d. 20 15 11	£ s. d. 45 4 10	% 85.1

## CHAPTER VII. TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION.

### A. SHIPPING.

#### § 10. Miscellaneous.

6. Commonwealth Navigation and Shipping Legislation, p. 279.—By section 51 (1) of the Commonwealth Constitution, the Parliament of the Commonwealth is empowered to make laws in respect of trade and commerce with other countries and among the States. By section 98 the power in this particular respect is further defined as extending to navigation and shipping. The most important enactment in regard to shipping and navigation is the Navigation Act 1912-1920, being the Act of 1912 (No. 4 of 1913), as amended by the Acts of 1919 (No. 32 of 1919) and 1920 (No. 1 of 1921).

The first essay in the way of legislation in this direction was made in March, 1904, when a Bill for a Navigation and Shipping Act was introduced in the Senate by the Attorney-General of the first Deakin Administration. This Bill was withdrawn at an early stage for further consideration and re-drafting. The Deakin Ministry resigned in April, 1904, and the succeeding Watson Government, in view of the far-reaching and important character of the matters comprehended in the measure, decided to refer the Bill for consideration and report to a Royal Commission. The Commission commenced taking evidence in July, 1904, and in March, 1905, presented an interim report and a Draft Bill. The main principles of the new draft, in so far as they affected overseas shipping

were then, at the invitation of the Imperial Government, considered at an Imperial Shipping Conference held in London in the early part of 1907, at which representatives of Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand were present. The Conference considered, *inter alia*, the following recommendation of the Royal Commission :—“ That the coastal trade of the Commonwealth be reserved for ships on the Australian Register, or ships conforming to Australian conditions, and licensed to trade on the Australian coast ” ; and recommended :—“ That the vessels to which the conditions imposed by the law of Australia or New Zealand are applicable should be (i) vessels registered in the colony, while trading therein, and (ii) vessels wherever registered, while trading on the coast of the colony. Further modifications were made in the draft (by the Royal Commission) to conform to the resolutions of the Conference, and the resultant Bill was re-introduced in the Senate in September, 1907, by the second Deakin administration. Owing to pressure of other business, however, it lapsed. The Bill was again introduced in the Senate in September, 1908, by the same Government, but again lapsed ; proceedings were resumed in 1909, but the Bill lapsed in the Committee stage. It was brought in again in 1910 by the second Fisher Administration, revived in 1911, lapsed again, and finally became, under the last-mentioned Government, the Navigation Act of 1912.

In 1919 another Bill was introduced by the Australian National War Government to give the power to proclaim different portions of the Act to commence at different times. This Act (No. 32 of 1919) also extended the operation of the Act to the Territories under the authority of the Commonwealth, and those governed under a Mandate. Another amending Act was passed by the same Government in 1920, enabling the Commonwealth to fulfil its obligations under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, and to grant permits to British ships to trade on the coast in special circumstances.

The British Merchant Shipping Act 1894 requires that any legislation by the Parliament of a British possession, repealing wholly or in part any provisions of that Act, shall not take effect until the approval of the King has been proclaimed in that Possession. All the Navigation Bills, therefore, had been drawn to commence on dates to be fixed by proclamation after the King's approval thereto had been proclaimed in the Commonwealth.

The Act was passed in 1912 and reserved for the Royal assent which was proclaimed in Australia in October, 1913. Owing to the outbreak of war in August, 1914, however, the commencement of the Act was, at the request of the British Government, postponed.

At the conclusion of the war the proclamation of the Act could no longer be delayed. In order to make the change as gradual as possible, groups of sections have (under the power granted by the 1919 Act) been brought into operation from time to time. The first group—the Coasting Trade provisions—commenced on 1st July, 1921. Others commenced on the first days of October, 1921, March, 1922, February, 1923, March, 1923, and October, 1923, until the only important sections not yet in operation are those relating to the inspection and testing of anchors, chain cables and gear, and to pilotage.

Soon after the coasting trade provisions commenced, the owners of a number of intra-State ships took steps to have tested the validity of the application to their ships of the manning and accommodation provisions of the Act. The judgment of the High Court was to the effect that those provisions did not apply to vessels engaged *solely* in the domestic trade of a State. In consequence of this judgment, the Government decided not to enforce the provisions of the Act then in force on any intra-State ships.

Notwithstanding the fact that a considerable amount of shipping was thereby left to the control of the various State Governments, for all ships trading beyond one State there is uniform procedure in regard to (i) the engagement and discharge of seamen ; (ii) the inspection of accommodation provided for crews ; (iii) scales of medicines ; (iv) the survey of hulls, machinery and gear ; (v) the carriage and stowage of cargo ; (vi) loadlines ; (vii) the adjustment of compasses ; (viii) the examination of masters, mates, and engineers for certificates of competency ; etc.

Wireless installations have been provided on many additional ships, and a system of boat drills for crews has been drawn up, under which all Australian seamen afloat will become competent to handle oars and boats and take up their allotted positions. A system of “ sectional ” surveys has been introduced, by means of which a ship may have portions of the annual survey carried out at different ports, thereby minimizing interference with the regular time-table.

In the principal Mercantile Marine Offices, where seamen are engaged and discharged, branches of the Commonwealth Savings Bank have been established, and have been well patronized by seamen.

The Act is in many respects flexible, provision being made for granting relief from some of its most stringent provisions. As pointed out previously, a recommendation of the Royal Commission of 1904 was that the coastal trade of the Commonwealth should be reserved to Australian ships, or ships conforming to Australian conditions. This provision is contained in section 238 of the Act, but by section 286 the Minister has power to grant permits to British ships which do not conform to those conditions, in circumstances when he is satisfied that the licensed service provided is inadequate. Such power has been made use of in the case of the Thursday Island trade, and that of the North-west coast, since July, 1921. Ten vessels have held permits to trade between Thursday Island and other Commonwealth ports, and three (later increased to four) to trade between Fremantle and the North-west ports. Two have obtained permits to trade in Papua and New Guinea. In addition to these, a large number of permits have been granted, from time to time, for single voyages, chiefly to carry meat from North Queensland ports southward.

Another direction in which the provisions of the Act may be varied is in regard to the manning scales, which are contained in schedules appended to the Act. These scales may be varied by regulation, and Committees of Advice may be appointed to deal with individual cases. The scales in regard to many ships have, under these provisions, been increased or reduced, according to the recommendations received by the Department.

The Act is administered by the Navigation Branch of the Department of Trade and Customs, there being a Director of Navigation and a staff of technical and clerical officers attached to the head office, with a Deputy Director of Navigation, and technical and clerical staffs in each State. The Department requests, when necessary, the advice of a body called the "Marine Council," consisting of six members, representing ship-owners, underwriters, deck and engineer officers, and seamen, with the Director of Navigation, *ex officio*, as chairman. Any question regarding administration, or the making of regulations, etc., may be referred to the Council for advice, but it is obligatory on the Minister to seek the Council's advice upon all proposed regulations with respect to the scales of officers, crew, and provisions.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FINANCE.

#### A. COMMONWEALTH FINANCE.

#### § 2. Consolidated Revenue Fund.

##### Division II.—Revenue.

1. Total, pp. 365-6.—Revenue for year 1923-24 amounted to £66,017,203.
2. Revenue per Head, p. 366.—The revenue per head of population for 1923-24 was £11 9s. 8d.

##### Division III.—Expenditure.

2. Total Expenditure, p. 372. For the year 1923-24 the total expenditure was £68,345,774, and the expenditure per head of population £11 17s. 9d.