

Since 1935 the figures rose to 39·6 in 1939, and then fell to 31·3 in 1941. (These statistics were then discontinued during the war.)

The foregoing figures are all for convictions for drunkenness and related offences. We have been able to obtain the figures for the persecutions (not convictions) for drunkenness alone from the year 1935 to the end of 1945, and they are as follows: 1935, 2,995; 1936, 3,980; 1937, 4,360; 1938, 5,202; 1939, 5,683; 1940 5,243; 1941, 4,695; 1942, 2,842; 1943, 2,135; 1944, 1,996; 1945, 1,762.

426. The statistics of convictions for being drunk in charge of a motor-vehicle are available from 1924 (R. 33). In that year there were convictions against 175 men and 2 women. They then rose, and in 1930 there were convictions against 434 men and 1 woman. The convictions then fell till in 1934 there were 248 against men and 5 against women. They then increased, till in 1938 there were convictions against 682 men and 3 women. The convictions have since fallen as follows:—

1939	..	..	..	..	666 men and 4 women;
1940	..	..	..	..	528 men and 5 women; and
1941	..	..	..	..	412 men and 7 women.

427. The deaths from alcoholism in New Zealand are also down. They have decreased from 15 per 10,000 in 1927 to 8 per 10,000 in 1942 (R. 965).

428. The New Zealand statistics for convictions for drunkenness and related offences may be compared with those of the Australian States. The figures are given per 10,000 of population:—

Convictions for Drunkenness and Related Offences per 10,000 of Population (R. 20)

Place.			Closing Hour.	1935.	1936.	1937.	1938.	1939.
New Zealand	..	..	6 p.m.	21·6	28·8	31·6	35·9	39·6
New South Wales	..	..	6 p.m.	105·2	113·6	102·6	100·0	117·9
Victoria	..	..	6 p.m.	50·1	55·5	55·5	59·6	60·7
Queensland	..	..	8 p.m.	86·0	105·8	102·3	111·1	109·2
South Australia	..	..	6 p.m.	46·8	44·7	42·8	44·8	43·6
Western Australia	..	..	9 & 11 p.m.	60·0	63·3	58·9	53·9	57·2
Tasmania	..	..	6 p.m.	17·9	16·6	15·6	14·2	17·2
Australian Capital territory			6 p.m.	58·6	64·5	(10 p.m.) 89·3	119·6	95·1

It will be noted that closing at 10 p.m. came into force in Tasmania in 1937. It is still in force, but from 1942 until early in 1946, restricted times of trading during the day were observed as follows: open from 12 noon to 2 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Since the foregoing table was supplied we have been informed by the Deputy Commonwealth Statistician in Tasmania that the convictions per 10,000 of the population from 1940 to 1945 inclusive were—

(1) For drunkenness alone as follows: 1940, 5·02; 1941, 3·47; 1942, 4·00; 1943, 3·72; 1944, 2·28; 1945, 1·85; and

(2) For drunkenness and disorderly conduct as follows: 1940, 8·91; 1941, 6·97; 1942, 6·41; 1943, 10·87; 1944, 9·58; 1945, 6·86.

These figures appear impressively low, though we have not had the advantage of any critical comment upon them.

429. The general effect of the evidence of police officers is that alcoholic liquor is not a contributing factor in most cases of deliberate or serious crime, but that it may be so when the passions are aroused. The evidence of the Under-Secretary of Justice is, however, that in one-third of the cases recommended for release by the Prisons Board,