

CRIMINAL COURT.

November Session.

The November session of the Criminal Court was continued yesterday before Mr. Justice Northmore.

Two Years' Imprisonment.

John Lawrence Coates (23), who was on the previous day found guilty of having robbed Fritz Schilling at Fremantle, was brought up for sentence. His counsel (Mr. Arthur Haynes) appealed for leniency for him, because of his war service (3½ years with the mine sweepers), his good behaviour since 1915, and the fact that he was contributing towards the support of his father's large family. The prisoner, he said, had been in trouble as a boy, but during the last 7½ years he had led an exemplary life.

His Honour said he had found that the prisoner, apparently as a boy, had a very bad record, as he had from 1908 to 1915 had no fewer than nine convictions against him for various offences. It was true, however, that, so far as the records showed, there was nothing against him since 1915, and that he had a good discharge from the A.I.F. There did not seem to be much in the claim that he had contributed towards the support of his father's large family, seeing that the evidence showed that in his drinking tours of Fremantle he had been in the habit of taking from 40 to 50 drinks a day. The prisoner would have to go to gaol for two years, with hard labour.

In the course of evidence last week the prisoner said he remembered clearly the whole of his movements on the night of

prisoner said he remembered clearly the whole of his movements on the night of the alleged robbery, notwithstanding the fact that he had taken on that night over 40 drinks of intoxicating liquor, and his father declared that when he was his son's present age 50 or 60 drinks of an evening would not have affected him.

The G.P.O. Case.

The second trial of William Richard Seery, a former Post Office employee, on a charge of having stolen a gold wristlet watch, alleged to have been handed to him by Mrs. Street, at the G.P.O., Perth, on April 27, 1917, for transmission to Adelaide, was concluded. In summing up to the jury, his Honour said that the Crown case was that Mrs. Street handed to the prisoner at the G.P.O., Perth, on April, 1917, a watch for transmission to Adelaide. The watch never reached its destination, and about five years later it was found in the possession of the prisoner's wife, who had got it from the prisoner. The defence was that the prisoner never received the watch from Mrs. Street, that he bought it at an auction mart in Barrack-street, Perth, in May or June, 1918, and that after keeping it for about four years in a box at his house, he gave it to his wife as a birthday present. Mrs. Street, after a lapse of five years, identified the prisoner as the man to whom she had handed the watch at the G.P.O., and if her identification were wrong, then it was an extraordinary coincidence that she had picked out the husband of the very woman upon whom the watch had been found. It would also be an extraordinary coincidence if a man working in the mail room into which Mrs. Street had handed the watch should afterwards buy

the mail room into which Mrs. Street had handed the watch should afterwards buy at an auction sale outside the same watch which had been stolen from that mail room.

Two hours after the jury retired the foreman returned to Court and announced that there was no prospect of its coming to an agreement. His Honour thereupon discharged the jury, and remanded the prisoner on bail to the December session.

Mr. M. G. Lavan appeared for the defence.
