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Tasmania	...	5.3
England and Wales	...	6.9
Scotland	...	4.0
Ireland	...	1.7

Evidently the colonies think suicide the best way of avoiding "consequences."

But one of the best tests of a country's growth in morality is the rate of illegitimacy. Hayter (p. 308) gives:—

Illegitimate births to every 100 children born, 1881-88.

Scotland	...	8.5
England	...	4.9
New South Wales	...	4.4
Victoria	...	4.3
Tasmania	...	4.1
Queensland	...	3.8
New Zealand	...	2.5
Ireland	...	2.5

Here the colonies show up well; but while in the United Kingdom the rate keeps about the same from year to year, unfortunately in each colony except Tasmania it has steadily increased from 1872 to 1889, thus:—

New South Wales	...	4.03 to 5.33
Victoria	...	2.99 " 4.98
Queensland	...	2.92 " 4.68
Tasmania	...	4.40 " 4.00
New Zealand	...	1.42 " 3.32
South Australia	...	2.26 " 2.47

So that we are forging ahead. Mr Whetter avoids these facts; and why did he shun Ireland in his paper? This country tops the lot in its "memory for consequences," but its education is entirely opposite to that advocated by Mr Whetter. All through it will be noticed that Tasmania, irrespective of its being a convict settlement, has an excellent record. Strange to say, this is the only colony that practically maintains denominationalism.

Till Australasia reverses these tables, it is fruitless to argue about the moral effects of secular education. I yield to no one in my admiration for what it has accomplished; but surely the addition of moral culture would strengthen it. How can that be called a national system of education that excludes the most national element of all in the production of character and conduct. Mr Whetter's explanation of the scientific law of cause and effect is another worn out view of the Christian precept "As ye sow ye shall ye reap." But are we sowing the seeds of righteousness—that which exalts a nation? Will learning the three B's or a scientific education do it? No, emphatically! They merely stimulate the intellect, and have no connection with questions of purity, reverence, resignation, holiness, sympathy, self-sacrifice, humility, patience, etc., which cannot be taught properly without the introduction of religion. Children have (1) a physical, (2) an intellectual, and (3) a spiritual nature. We provide for the first two, but ignore the most important as if it had no existence. Children cannot rise higher than their teaching any more than a stream can rise higher than its source. How can we expect them to resist the secret and other temptations that beset them when we let their conscience rust? We might as well expect an atrophied limb to suddenly jump into healthy, vigorous action.

I have no patience with those who say that the State has no right to teach religion. So long as religion is the basis of morals and the State expects the rising generation to be moral and upright it must give religious teaching. But Mr Whetter says you can make children moral by giving their brain, nerves, and muscles, a loose memory for pain and pleasure! Of all theories this is the most impracticable. Lots of things give pleasure that are decidedly immoral, and *vice versa*. Look at the self-denial and pain and suffering that a mother undergoes for the sake of her wayward boy, and the sufferings of those who give their lives for others. Indeed, we often see the most exquisite pain allied to the sublimest moral achievements. Moreover, pleasure to one person is displeasure to another. One likes alcoholic liquors in moderation, and never seems to suffer, while another would as soon think of taking poison. Mr Whetter says nothing about this. Will he furnish a catechism of what produces pain and what pleasure? What is his standard of appeal? I'm afraid it is in the land of chaos.

Nothing but a rigid application of deep religious convictions to every-day life will force morality higher and higher. The contrary is true in proportion as religion is thrown overboard. To prevent instruction from becoming a weapon in the hands of crime we should

give a larger share to moral and æsthetic than to intellectual and scientific education. The utilitarian school decreases the moral spirit in children by robbing them of the power of doing good for its own sake. Hence the utility of Christian teaching in the present state of the human mind. Teachers like Mr Whetter should welcome it as an aid in cultivating the "plastic nerve matter" of the child-like mind, and thus produce a more refined and cultivated memory for consequences than can be done under the present régime.—I am, etc.,  
JOSEPH BRAITHWAITE.

Dunedin, August 22.

## WAS JACOB GROSS A FOOL!

"I CAN'T make one of a party of thirteen," he exclaimed; "some of us will be sure to die within a week."

Thus spoke barber Jacob Gross, of Batavia, on the 12th of November last. The occasion was a dinner party. When the guests were all seated Gross noticed that there were thirteen at table.

The others tried to laugh him out of his superstition, but he insisted that he would not eat as one of the company of thirteen. A fourteenth guest was therefore added to the number.

"Now we're safe," said Gross, and the festivities proceeded.

Gross boarded at a hotel in Batavia. Ten days later the hotel was burned to the ground. The next morning the body of a man was found in the ruins. It was the body of barber Gross.

Now, this is a curious thing to happen, certainly; but is it more than that? Do you believe there is anything in the common notion that thirteen is an unlucky number? or that Friday is an unlucky day of the week? As much business is done on the 13th of the month as on any other date, and on Friday as on any other week day. You wouldn't refuse to take thirteen eggs for a dozen if your grocer insisted on it, neither do you have more bad luck on Fridays than on any other day of the seven. No, no, it's all humbug and nonsense. Barber Gross's superstition had nothing under the sun to do with his death. Besides, he dined as one of *fourteen* persons, not thirteen. Don't be silly.

Understand this: Nature indulges in no senseless tricks. She kills men without hesitation for violating the laws of life, but not for assembling in groups of thirteen at dinner. Here we have a man who says he was afraid to eat. Why, in Mercy's name, was he afraid to eat? Had he, too, some idle and foolish stuff in his head about bad luck? Not a bit. He'd been glad enough to have eaten in a thirteen party on Friday if the dinner would only have stayed on his stomach and digested after he got it down. But it wouldn't, and his fear grew out of that.

He says, "I had a fulness and tightness at the chest after meals, and such a dizziness would seize me that I could scarcely see. This was in the spring of 1887. I felt tired, dull, and heavy, with a sinking sensation at the stomach. My appetite was variable, and I didn't know what to eat. In fact nothing seemed to suit me. There was a feeling of weight and pain over the eyes and at the back of my head. I became very weak, and it was with difficulty that I kept on with my work. In this way I continued for twelve months, during which time I saw a doctor, and took various medicines; but none of them did me any good, and I grew worse. In June, 1888, I read in the *Darlington Times* about a person who had been handled just as I was, and had been cured by a medicine called Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. On the strength of this I got a bottle from my brother, William Teasdale, grocer, Copley lane, and began taking it. In a short time all pain left me, and I was able to eat and digest my food, and have since been well and strong. I still take the Syrup occasionally, and if I feel any signs of my old complaint, a dose or two sets me right. I am a collier, and have worked at the Woodland Colliery for over ten years. If you think the publication of this letter might be of use to others, you are at liberty to make use of it.—Yours truly,

(Signed)

JOSEPH TEASDALE.

Copley, Butterknowle, Durban, November 5, 1891.

Now that Mr Teasdale is cured of his ailment, indigestion and dyspepsia, he would probably not refuse an invitation to dine with twelve other nice people any day. And in such case we stand ready to guarantee that none of the party will die within a week, especially if they all take a dose of Seigel's Syrup immediately on rising from the table.

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