

## SOCIAL CONDITION.

THE high rates of wages which have generally prevailed in the Australasian colonies and the cheapness of food have permitted the enjoyment of a great degree of comfort, if not of luxury, by a class which elsewhere knows little of the one and nothing of the other ; and even in these times of trade depression and reduced wages it may safely be said that the position of the wage-earner in Australia is equal to that occupied by him in any other part of the world. Although a high standard of living is not conducive to thrift, saving has gone on with marked rapidity, notwithstanding the industrial disturbances resulting from the great strikes and the bank crisis of 1893. Some idea of the rate and extent of this accumulation of wealth may be obtained from the tables showing the growth of deposits with banks. The banking returns, however, afford in themselves but an incomplete view of the picture ; it should also be regarded from the standpoint of the expenditure of the people. Both of these subjects are dealt with in their proper places in this volume, and these evidences of the social condition of the people need not, therefore, be further considered here.

### NEWSPAPERS AND LETTERS.

Few things show more plainly the social superiority of a civilized people than a heavy correspondence and a large distribution of newspapers. In these respects all the colonies of Australasia have for many years been remarkable. In proportion to population it is doubtful whether any country in the world can boast of a larger number or a better class of newspapers than they publish. Great advances were made in this respect between 1871 and 1891, but the rate of progress, both in number and in excellence of production, has been even more rapid since the year last named. There are no means of correctly estimating the number of newspapers actually printed and distributed in the colonies, because the Post-office carries but a small proportion of the circulation. For purposes of comparison with other countries, however, it may be stated that during the year 1899 no less than 106,165,400 newspapers passed through the Post-offices of the various colonies, giving the large proportion of 24 per head of population. In the same year the number of letters and post-cards carried was 238,253,200, being 54 for every person in Australasia. An examination

of the statistics of other countries shows that these colonies stand third among the countries of the world in the transmission of correspondence, being only exceeded by the United Kingdom and the United States of America per head of population.

There are 964 newspapers published in Australasia ; 287 in New South Wales, of which 82 are published in Sydney and suburbs ; 332 in Victoria, of which 130 are published in Melbourne ; 111 in Queensland ; 45 in South Australia ; 22 in Western Australia ; 15 in Tasmania ; and 152 in New Zealand.

#### PARKS, MUSEUMS, AND ART GALLERIES.

All the Australasian capitals are liberally supplied with parks and recreation-grounds. In Sydney and suburbs there are parks, squares, and public gardens comprising an area of 3,131 acres, including 530 acres which form the Centennial Park. Then there is the picturesque National Park, of 36,320 acres, situated about 16 miles from the centre of the metropolis ; and, in addition to this, an area of 35,300 acres, in the valley of the Hawkesbury, has been reserved for public recreation under the name of Ku-ring-gai Chase. Thus Sydney has two extensive and picturesque domains for the enjoyment of the people at almost equal distances north and south from the city, and both accessible by railway. Melbourne has about 5,400 acres of recreation-grounds, of which about 1,750 acres are within the city boundaries, 2,850 acres in the suburban municipalities, and 800 acres outside those municipalities. Adelaide is surrounded by a broad belt of park lands, and also contains a number of squares within the city boundaries, covering altogether an area of 2,300 acres. Brisbane, Hobart, Perth, and the chief cities of New Zealand are also well provided for in this respect. In all the colonies large areas of land have been dedicated as public parks. There are fine Botanic Gardens in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Hobart, which are included in the areas above referred to. Each of these gardens has a special attraction of its own. They are all well kept, and reflect great credit upon the communities to which they belong.

The various capitals of the colonies, and also some of the prominent inland towns, are provided with museums for the purposes of instruction as well as recreation ; and in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Hobart there are art galleries containing excellent collections of paintings and statuary. All these institutions are open to the public free of charge.

#### PUBLIC CHARITIES.

One of the most satisfactory features of the social condition of the Australian communities is the wide distribution of wealth, and the consequently small proportion of people who are brought within the reach of want. In the United Kingdom, the richest country of Europe,

only nine out of every hundred of the population possess property of the value of £100, while in Australasia the number is not less than sixteen, and the violent contrast between the rich and the poor which blots the civilization of the old world is not observable in these young states. It is, unfortunately, only too plain that a certain amount of poverty does exist in the colonies; but there is a complete absence of an hereditary pauper class, and no one is born into the hopeless conditions which characterize the lives of so many millions in Europe, and from which there is absolutely no possibility of escape. No poor-rate is levied in Australasia, the assistance granted by the State being usually tendered to able-bodied men who find themselves out of employment in times of depression, and taking the form of payment, in money or in rations, for work done by them.

The chief efforts of the authorities, as regards charity, are directed towards the rescue of the young from criminal companionship and temptation to crime, the support of the aged and infirm, the cure of the imbecile or insane, and the subsidising of private institutions for the cure of the sick and injured and the amelioration of want. Even where the State grants aid for philanthropic purposes the management of the institutions supervising the expenditure is in private hands, and in addition to State-aided institutions there are numerous charities wholly maintained by private subscriptions, whose efforts for the relief of those whom penury, sickness, or misfortune has afflicted are beyond all praise.

The rescue of the young from crime is attempted in two ways—first, by means of Orphanages and Industrial Schools, where children who have been abandoned by their natural guardians, or who are likely, from the poverty or incapacity of their parents, to be so neglected as to render them liable to lapse into crime, are taken care of, educated, and afterwards apprenticed to some useful calling; and second, by sequestering in Reformatories children who have already committed crime, or whose parents or guardians find themselves unable to control them; but the accommodation in the latter class is very limited, and might well be extended.

Although a century has elapsed since settlement commenced in Australasia, its resources are by no means developed, and very many men are at work far away from the home comforts of everyday life, and from home attendance in case of sickness or injury. Owing to the peculiar nature of the occupations in which a great part of the adult male population is employed, accidents are very common, the annual death-rate being about 8 per 10,000 living, and form the majority of the cases treated, especially in the districts outside the metropolitan area. Hospitals are therefore absolutely essential under the conditions of life in the rural districts of the colonies, and they are accordingly found in every important country town. Below will be found the number of hospitals in each colony, with the number of indoor patients treated during the year mentioned, and the total expenditure for the same year. Unfortunately, the South Australian and Western

Australian returns are defective, as will be seen by the note appended to the table :—

State.	Year.	Hospitals.	Indoor patients treated.	Expenditure.
		No.	No.	£
New South Wales...	1899	110	29,770	158,046
Victoria .....	1898-9	51	25,539	168,276
Queensland .....	1898	57	19,990	100,505
South Australia ...	1899	8	*3,493	*18,201
Western Australia..	1898-9	23	†2,655	†15,667
Tasmania .....	1898	11	3,220	19,993
Commonwealth .....	.....	260	84,667	480,688
New Zealand .....	1898	42	11,558	105,752
Australasia.....	.....	302	96,225	586,440

\* Adelaide Hospital only.

† Perth and Fremantle Hospitals.

All the colonies possess institutions for the care of the insane, which are under Government control. The treatment meted out to the inmates is that dictated by the greatest humanity, and the hospitals are fitted with all the conveniences and appliances which modern science points out as most calculated to mitigate or remove the affliction from which these unfortunate people suffer. The following table shows the number of insane patients under treatment in the asylums of New South Wales, Victoria, and New Zealand during 1899, and of the other colonies during 1898, the total expenditure on hospitals for the insane during the year, and the average expenditure per inmate under treatment. The question of insanity is treated farther on in this chapter :—

State.	Insane Patients under treatment.	Total Expenditure.	Average Expenditure per Inmate under treatment.
	No.	£	£ s. d.
New South Wales .....	5,033	119,435	23 14 7
Victoria .....	5,383	112,746	20 18 11
Queensland .....	1,800	42,390	23 11 0
South Australia .....	1,140	22,410	19 13 2
Western Australia.....	280	8,112	28 19 5
Tasmania .....	444	12,083	27 4 3
Commonwealth .....	14,080	317,176	22 10 6
New Zealand .....	2,990	53,764	17 19 8
Australasia .....	17,070	370,940	21 14 7

The amounts expended on Destitute Asylums and Benevolent Societies cannot be separated from other items of expenditure in some of the colonies. As far as they can be ascertained they are given in the following table, together with the number of adult inmates of the various asylums at the end of the year mentioned :—

State.	Year.	Inmates.	Expenditure.
		No.	£
New South Wales .....	1899	5,082	150,273
Victoria .....	1898-9	3,550	67,943
Queensland .....	1898	1,212	34,439
South Australia .....	1898	643	5,710
Western Australia .....	1898	533	8,407
Tasmania .....	1898	594	7,788
Commonwealth .....	.....	11,614	274,560
New Zealand .....	1898	1,180	33,755
Australasia .....	.....	12,794	308,315

In addition to the above, a liberal amount of out-door relief is given in all the Australasian colonies, and destitute children are taken care of, either by being supported in the Government institutions or by being boarded out to persons deemed able to take care of them properly. As far as can be judged from the imperfect returns, adding together the amount received from the Government and the amount of private subscriptions, the expenditure in the whole of the Australasian colonies in connection with all forms of relief and in aid of hospitals and other charitable institutions is certainly not less than £1,250,000 per annum. This sum, though not excessive in proportion to the population, may yet appear large in view of the general wealth of the colonies, which should preclude the necessity of so many seeking assistance; and there is the risk that the charitable institutions may encourage the growth of the pauper element, for while free quarters and free food are so accessible those who are disinclined to work are tempted to live at the public expense. It should be stated, however, that of the total number of persons who seek hospital relief, less than one-half are natives of the colonies, the remainder being mostly natives of the United Kingdom, with a few who were born in a European country or in China. This, however, cannot be taken as evidence of the superiority of the Australian born. The inmates of the institutions referred to are in almost all cases aged persons, and probably not more than half the number of aged persons are Australian born.

## CRIME.

In all the colonies proceedings against a person accused of an offence may be initiated either by the arrest of the culprit or by summoning him to appear before a magistrate. Serious offences, of course, are rarely dealt with by process of summons; but, on the other hand, it is not uncommon for a person to be apprehended on a very trivial charge, and this circumstance should not be forgotten in dealing with arrests by the police, which are unusually numerous in some of the colonies. Unfortunately, it is not easy to say how far the police of one colony are disposed to treat offenders with such consideration as to proceed against them by summons, and how far those of another colony are content to adopt similar action; for in most of the provinces the records do not draw a distinction between the two classes of cases; and in the table given on page 366, showing the number of persons charged before magistrates in each colony during the year 1898, offenders who were summoned to appear are included with those arrested, except in the case of Victoria, whose criminal statistics seem to deal only with arrests. It is likewise difficult to make a true comparison between the various colonies in the matter of the prevalence of crime, for there are a number of circumstances which must considerably affect the criminal returns and modify their meaning. The first of these, of course, is the question of the strength of the police force and its ability to cope with lawlessness, which must be decided chiefly by the proportion of undetected crime which takes place in the colonies. The policy adopted by the chief of police in regard to trivial breaches of the public peace and other minor offences against good order must also be taken into consideration; and then there are considerable differences between the criminal codes of the colonies, and in the number of local enactments, breaches of which form a large proportion of the minor offences taken before the Courts. Also, when the returns of the lower Courts are laid aside and the convictions in superior Courts taken up, the comparison is affected by the jurisdiction of the magistrates who committed the prisoners. In New South Wales, for example, the jurisdiction of the lower Courts is limited to imprisonment for six months, except in regard to cases brought under one or two Acts of Parliament, such as the Chinese Restriction Act, prosecutions under which are very few; while in Victoria a large number of persons are every year sentenced in Magistrates' Courts to imprisonment for terms ranging from six months to three years. It is apparent, therefore, that in any comparison drawn between the number of convictions in the superior Courts of New South Wales and of Victoria, the former colony must appear to great disadvantage.

An investigation into the differences between the law of New South Wales and of Victoria in respect to the jurisdiction of magistrates discloses some important results. Under the Victorian Crimes Act of 1890, 54 Victoriae No. 1,079, it is provided by section 67 that Justices

may try persons under sixteen years of age for the offence of simple larceny or for any offence punishable as simple larceny no matter what the value of the property in question may be, and persons over sixteen years of age where the property said to have been stolen is not of greater value than £2; and it is further provided by the same section that if upon the hearing of such a charge the Justices shall be of opinion that there are circumstances in the case which render it inexpedient to inflict any punishment, they shall have power to dismiss the charge without proceeding to a conviction. This provision, it is needless to say, is likely to materially reduce the number of convictions for larceny in Victoria. In New South Wales, on the other hand, the law does not give Justices any such power. In every case where the offence is proved they must convict the accused person, although in the case of offenders under the age of sixteen years they may discharge the convicted person on his making restitution, or in other cases deal with him under the First Offenders' Act and suspend the sentence; but in all such cases the conviction is placed on record and is accounted for in the criminal statistics of the colony. Section 69 of the same Victorian Act gives Justices power to deal with any case of simple larceny, or of larceny as a clerk or servant, or of stealing from the person, when the accused pleads guilty, the punishment being imprisonment for any term not exceeding twelve months; while in New South Wales the law does not give Justices the power to deal with such cases when the property alleged to have been stolen exceeds the value of £20. This section must therefore tend materially to reduce the number of cases committed for trial in Victoria for the offences mentioned, although in all such cases the Justices may commit the accused person if they think fit to do so. Furthermore, it is provided by section 370 of the Crimes Act of 1890 that suspected persons who have been convicted of capital or transportable felony elsewhere and are found in Victoria may be arrested and sentenced to imprisonment for three years in the case of a male, and for one year in the case of a female. Such a protective provision is in force in some of the other provinces as well as in Victoria, and its absence in New South Wales has made that colony the chosen refuge of many of the criminals of the other colonies; for there they may lay their plots in peace and enjoy immunity from arrest until the police discover some proof of their complicity in fresh crime or can charge them with being in possession of property which may reasonably be regarded as having been stolen. It is not, however, only in respect to serious offences that the law of Victoria differs from that of New South Wales, for under the Victorian Police Offences Act of 1890 drunkenness in itself is no crime, and must be allied with disorderly conduct before the person may be punished. These statements all go to show in what important respects the criminal statistics of the colonies must differ from each other, and how great care must be taken in making comparisons.

During the year 1898, as far as can be gathered, 150,496 persons were charged before magistrates in Australasia, 113,272 being summarily

convicted and 33,570 discharged, while 3,654 were committed. The returns of each of the seven colonies will be found below. It should be explained that in the case of New Zealand and Western Australia each charge is counted as a separate person—a proceeding which, of course, tells against those colonies; while in Victoria the returns only deal with arrested persons, no record being published of the summons cases dealt with in that colony:—

State.	Persons charged.	Summarily dealt with.		Committed.
		Discharged.	Convicted.	
New South Wales.....	55,442	9,271	44,876	1,295
Victoria .....	26,587	8,933	16,987	667
Queensland.....	20,437	3,357	16,633	447
South Australia.....	6,558	1,230	5,112	216
Western Australia ...	14,902	4,913	9,659	330
Tasmania .....	4,336	915	3,363	58
Commonwealth ...	128,262	28,619	96,630	3,013
New Zealand .....	22,234	4,951	16,642	641
Australasia.....	150,496	33,570	113,272	3,654

Taking the whole of Australasia, rather more than thirty-four persons out of every thousand were charged before magistrates during the year 1898—a figure which compares favourably with the rates for previous years. Only three colonies—Western Australia, Queensland, and New South Wales—exceed the average amount of disorder and crime as disclosed by the police court returns. The very large proportion of adult males to the population of the first-named colony, and its present industrial conditions, place it, of course, in quite an exceptional position; while in Queensland and New South Wales there are greater floating populations, from the ranks of which a large percentage of offenders is drawn, than in the other colonies which have better records. The province with the least disorder and crime is South Australia, where the persons answering to charges in the lower Courts only form 18·06 per thousand of the population. Next come Victoria with 22·88 per thousand; Tasmania, with 24·86; and New Zealand, with 30·20; while, as before stated, Western Australia, Queensland, and New South Wales have the highest proportions, namely, 90·30, 43·86, and 41·92 per thousand respectively. In the case of Western Australia, the returns leave little doubt that there has been a large influx of criminals from the eastern colonies, because the rate is more than twice that of Queensland, the next colony. The rate is, however, unduly increased by including the charges brought against the aborigines, and also from the fact that, as stated before, each offence is counted as a separate person; but

in the absence of any exact statistical information, there is no option but to use the figures presented. In New South Wales and Victoria, about every ninety persons charged are accused of 100 offences, and assuming the same ratio to hold in Western Australia, it is estimated that if these two mentioned factors were excluded, the rate in Western Australia would be a little under 78 per 1,000. The New Zealand rate is also affected by the last-mentioned circumstance. The following table shows the proportion of persons charged before magistrates in each colony during the year; also the percentages of the persons discharged, convicted, and committed of the whole number charged:—

State.	Persons charged per 1,000 of population.	Percentages of total persons charged.			
		Discharged.	Convicted.	Summarily dealt with.	Committed.
New South Wales .....	41·92	16·72	80·94	97·66	2·34
Victoria .....	22·88	33·60	63·89	97·49	2·51
Queensland .....	43·86	16·42	81·39	97·81	2·19
South Australia.....	18·06	18·76	77·95	96·71	3·29
Western Australia .....	90·30	32·97	64·82	97·79	2·21
Tasmania .....	24·86	21·10	77·56	98·66	1·34
Commonwealth .....	35·11	22·31	75·34	97·65	2·35
New Zealand .....	30·20	22·27	74·85	97·12	2·88
Australasia.....	34·29	22·30	75·27	97·57	2·43

It will be seen from the above table that out of every hundred persons charged before magistrates in Australasia in 1898, 97·57 were summarily dealt with, 22·30 being discharged and 75·27 convicted, while only 2·43 were committed to higher courts. The colony with the highest percentage of cases summarily disposed of and the smallest proportion of committals was Tasmania; while Victoria, although the magistrates there have a much wider jurisdiction than in New South Wales and some of the other colonies, had the lowest proportion of cases summarily dealt with, with the exception of South Australia. This was without doubt due to the fact that, as already pointed out, summons cases, which usually cover minor offences, are not included in the criminal statistics of the colony. As a matter of fact, the Victorian returns should show a very high percentage of cases summarily disposed of; for an inspection of the statistics discloses the fact that, owing to this wider jurisdiction, the magistracy of the colony, in 1898, sentenced 14 persons to two years' imprisonment, 234 to periods between one year and two years, and 341 to terms of six months and under one year. Many of these persons, had they been tried in New South Wales, would have been convicted in higher courts. Another important point to be noted is that Victoria has the largest proportion of discharges, and if the

theory be dismissed as untenable that the police in that colony are more prone to charge persons on insufficient grounds than in the other colonies, it must be concluded that the magistrates of Victoria deal more leniently with accused persons than is the case elsewhere; indeed, it has already been shown that the Crimes Act of 1890 provides for the discharge without conviction of persons found guilty of certain offences. The lowest proportion of discharges is to be found in Queensland and New South Wales, which also have the highest percentage of summary convictions; and the figures testify to the stringency with which the criminal laws are administered in those colonies.

Of the 150,496 persons brought before magistrates during the year 1898, only 27,885 were charged with offences which can fairly be classed as criminal, the overwhelming majority being accused of drunkenness and other offences against good order, of lunacy and vagrancy, and of breaches of Acts of Parliament, which have a tendency to multiply to a great extent. For present purposes the accused persons may be divided as in the table given below, offences against the person and against property being regarded as serious crime. Of course, amongst the other offenders are to be found a few charged with grave misdemeanours, but against these may be put trifling assaults, which are included with crimes against the person:—

State.	All Offenders.	Serious Offenders.			Minor Offenders.
		Against the Person.	Against Property.	Total.	
New South Wales .....	55,442	4,320	6,041	10,361	45,081
Victoria .....	26,587	1,157	2,774	3,931	22,656
Queensland .....	20,437	2,098	2,133	4,231	16,206
South Australia .....	6,558	391	696	1,087	5,471
Western Australia .....	14,902	1,071	1,955	3,026	11,876
Tasmania .....	4,336	349	711	1,060	3,276
Commonwealth.....	128,262	9,386	14,310	23,696	104,566
New Zealand .....	22,234	1,395	2,794	4,189	18,045
Australasia.....	150,496	10,781	17,104	27,885	122,611

This examination into the nature of the offences explains in some measure the comparatively unfavourable position of New South Wales as shown by the previous tables; for of the 55,442 accused persons in that colony, the minor offenders numbered 45,081, or 81·3 per cent. No doubt the large number of trivial cases in New South Wales is accounted for by the greater strictness of police administration. Victoria actually shows 85·2 per cent. of minor offenders, but in consequence of a difference in the tabulation of the returns its position is not nearly so favourable as it appears to be on the surface.

In New South Wales, and, it is to be presumed, in most of the other colonies, a person accused of two or more offences is entered as charged with the most serious in the eyes of the law; while in Victoria he is entered as charged with the first offence committed, any others, however serious, arising out of his capture, being left out of consideration. For example, if a person is arrested for drunkenness, and he assaults his captors while on the way to the station, he is entered in the returns of New South Wales, as they are here presented, as charged with an offence against the person, and thereby helps to swell the amount of serious crime; but in Victoria he is entered as charged with drunkenness and disorderly conduct, and the charge of assault, on which he may be convicted and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, is not disclosed. This fact must therefore be taken into account in comparing the proportions of the various classes of offenders per thousand of population, which are appended:—

State.	Per thousand of population.				
	All Offenders.	Serious Offenders.			Minor Offenders.
		Against the Person.	Against Property.	Total.	
New South Wales .....	41·92	3·26	4·57	7·83	34·09
Victoria .....	22·88	0·99	2·39	3·38	19·50
Queensland .....	43·86	4·50	4·58	9·08	34·78
South Australia .....	18·06	1·08	1·91	2·99	15·07
Western Australia .....	90·30	6·49	11·85	18·34	71·96
Tasmania .....	24·86	2·00	4·08	6·08	18·78
Commonwealth .....	35·11	2·57	3·91	6·48	28·63
New Zealand .....	30·20	1·90	3·79	5·69	24·51
Australasia .....	34·29	2·45	3·90	6·35	27·94

It will be seen that, relatively to population, the colony with the largest number of serious offenders was Western Australia, which had a proportion of 18·34 per thousand. Queensland followed with a proportion of 9·08, while New South Wales and Tasmania occupied third and fourth positions with 7·83 and 6·08 per thousand respectively. The rate of New Zealand was 5·69 per thousand, while that of Victoria is set down at 3·38, and South Australia closes the list with 2·99. It would be interesting to compare the crime of the principal colonies on the basis of the number of males of such ages as contribute to the ranks of offenders; but this cannot accurately be done at the present time, in consequence of the changes which have taken place in the age composition of the people since the last census. In explanation of the position of Western Australia, it is well known to the police of Victoria

and New South Wales—and, indeed, the fact is proved by the records of the prisoners received into Fremantle gaol—that a large number of criminals have left those colonies for the west during the last few years.

About one-third of the minor offenders of Australasia are charged with drunkenness. From the table given below it will be seen that in all the colonies 51,360 cases of drunkenness were heard during the year 1898, convictions being recorded in 43,853 cases, or 85·38 per cent. of the total number. The colony with the highest number of cases relatively to population was Western Australia, the rate of which was 18·79 per thousand persons, followed by Queensland with 15·28, New South Wales with 14·67, and Victoria with 11·82, while Tasmania was last with a rate of only 3·49 per thousand. The figures for Victoria, however, only refer to apprehensions, information respecting persons summoned to answer a charge of drunkenness not being available, while, as already pointed out, drunkenness in itself is not a crime in that colony, but must be aggravated by disorderly conduct. In the case of Western Australia, it must be remembered that the proportion of adult male population is very high. From the figures showing the number of convictions, it will be seen that the magistrates of that colony and of Victoria take a somewhat lenient view of this offence, and only record convictions in about 59 and 53 per cent. of the cases respectively, while in the other colonies the percentage ranges from 93·6 to 99·6 :—

State.	Charges of Drunkenness.	Convictions.		Per 1,000 persons.	
		Total.	Percentage of Charges.	Charges.	Convictions.
New South Wales .....	19,397	19,263	99·31	14·67	14·57
Victoria .....	13,728	8,037	58·54	11·82	6·92
Queensland .....	7,121	7,091	99·58	15·28	15·22
South Australia.....	1,847	1,805	97·73	5·09	4·97
Western Australia .....	3,100	1,630	52·58	18·79	9·88
Tasmania .....	608	569	93·59	3·49	3·26
Commonwealth.....	45,801	38,395	83·83	12·54	10·51
New Zealand.....	5,559	5,458	98·18	7·55	7·41
Australasia .....	51,360	43,853	85·38	11·70	9·99

A return showing only the number of cases of drunkenness is not, however, a safe index of the abuse of alcoholic liquors, for a great deal depends on the state of the law and the manner in which it is administered, and it is evident that the maintenance of the law intended to preserve public decency will always be less strict in sparsely-settled country districts than in larger centres of population where the police are comparatively more numerous, if not in proportion to the population, at least in proportion to the area they have under their supervision; and further, will

vary according to the diverse nature of the duties performed by the police. The quantity of intoxicants consumed per head is perhaps a safer index of the habits of communities living under like conditions; but comparisons so based should not be pushed to extremes, for, as has often been pointed out, the larger part of the alcohol which enters into consumption is that consumed by the population who are not drunkards. The average quantity of intoxicants used in each colony during 1898 is given below, wines and beer being reduced to their equivalent of proof spirit. The consumption of the various kinds of intoxicants will be found in the chapter on "Food Supply and Cost of Living":—

State.	Proof Gallons of Alcohol per head of population.
New South Wales .....	2.22
Victoria .....	3.00
Queensland.....	2.65
South Australia.....	2.20
Western Australia .....	4.96
Tasmania .....	1.44
New Zealand.....	1.80
<b>Australasia.....</b>	<b>2.47</b>

These figures show the importance which must be attached to police administration when studying the question of drunkenness.

The strength of the police force in each of the colonies at the end of 1898 is given below :—

State.	Police.			Inhabitants to each Police Officer.	Area to each Constable in Country Districts.
	Metropolitan.	Country.	Total.		
	No.	No.	No.	No.	Sq. miles.
New South Wales .....	792	1,165	1,957	682	267
Victoria .....	665	750	1,415	820	117
Queensland.....	163	641	804	587	1,043
South Australia.....	170	182	352	1,037	4,964*
Western Australia .....	101	320	421	399	2,957
Tasmania .....	43	231	274	647	113
<b>Commonwealth.....</b>	<b>1,934</b>	<b>3,289</b>	<b>5,223</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>904</b>
<b>New Zealand.....</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>Australasia.....</b>	<b>1,992</b>	<b>3,781</b>	<b>5,773</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>814</b>

\* Including Northern Territory.

A comparison of the cost of the police forces of the various colonies will be found below. The greater number of mounted troopers in those colonies where very large and thinly-populated districts have to be

controlled, tends to make the average cost somewhat higher than in the other provinces :—

State.	Total Cost of Police Force.	Average Cost per Constable.	Average Cost per Inhabitant.
	£	£ s. d.	s. d.
New South Wales.....	332,824	170 1 4	5 0
Victoria .....	260,880	184 7 4	4 6
Queensland.....	175,095	217 15 7	7 6
South Australia.....	73,568	209 0 0	4 1
Western Australia .....	107,515	255 7 7	13 0
Tasmania.....	35,511	129 12 0	4 1
Commonwealth .....	985,393	188 13 3	5 5
New Zealand .....	108,627	197 10 1	2 11
Australasia.....	1,094,020	189 10 2	5 0

The record of cases heard before a Court of Magistrates cannot be regarded as altogether a trustworthy indication of the social progress of Australasia, because, as has been pointed out, it includes many kinds of offences which cannot fairly be classed as criminal, and the number of these has a tendency to increase with the increase of local enactments. The committals for trial, taken in conjunction with the convictions for crime in the Superior Courts may be regarded as much more conclusive on the question of the progress of society or the reverse. In some respects even this evidence is misleading, for, as already shown, in the less populous provinces there are no Courts intermediary between the Magistrates' and the Supreme Courts, so that many offences which in New South Wales, for example, are tried by a jury, are in some of the other provinces dealt with by magistrates; and even in Victoria, where there are Courts of General Sessions, magistrates have a much wider jurisdiction than in New South Wales. But for the purpose of showing the decrease of serious crime in Australasia as a whole, the proportion of committals and of convictions in Superior Courts may fairly be taken; and this information is given below. It will be seen that during the thirty-seven years, from 1861 to 1898, the rate of committals per thousand of population has dropped from 2·2 to 0·8, and of convictions from 1·3 to 0·5 :—

Year.	Per 1,000 of Population.	
	Committals.	Convictions in Superior Courts.
1861 .....	2·2	1·3
1871 .....	1·4	0·8
1881 .....	1·2	0·7
1891 .....	1·1	0·6
1898 .....	0·8	0·5

In noting these facts and comparing the results with those obtained in Great Britain during the same period, it must not be forgotten that some of the provinces of Australasia have been compelled gradually to reform a portion of their original population, and that in the case of colonies such as Victoria and Queensland, not originally peopled in any degree by convicts, the attractions of the gold-fields have drawn within their borders a population by no means free from criminal instincts and antecedents. Viewed in this light, the steady progress made cannot but be regarded as exceedingly satisfactory, and the expectation may not unreasonably be entertained that the same improvement will be continued until the ratio of crime to population will compare favourably with that of any part of the world.

Below will be found the number of convictions in the Superior Courts of each colony, at decennial periods from 1861 to 1891, as well as for the year 1898 :—

State.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1898.
New South Wales .....	437	628	1,066	964	758
Victoria .....	846	511	332	729	402
Queensland.....	24	91	92	232	248
South Australia .....	62	91	213	90	157
Western Australia .....	35	65	61	44	154
Tasmania .....	127	74	51	63	33
Commonwealth.....	1,531	1,460	1,815	2,122	1,752
New Zealand.....	100	162	270	276	351
Australasia.....	1,631	1,622	2,085	2,398	2,103

The following table gives a classification of the offences for which the accused persons were convicted during 1898 ; also the rate of convictions and of committals per 1,000 of population. It will be seen that the rate of convictions in the Superior Courts of Victoria is 0.35 per thousand ; but if the persons who received sentences of over six months' imprisonment at the hands of magistrates were taken into account, the proportion would be as high as that of New South Wales. The colony of Tasmania has an even smaller proportion of convictions in Superior

Courts than Victoria, and the rate for South Australia is but slightly higher; but in those two provinces, as already pointed out, no intermediate Courts exist:—

State.	Convictions in Superior Courts.					Committals per 1,000 of Population.
	Classification of Offences.			All Convictions.	Per 1,000 of Population.	
	Against the Person.	Against Property.	Other.			
New South Wales .....	214	447	97	758	0·57	0·98
Victoria .....	115	262	25	402	0·35	0·57
Queensland .....	58	169	21	248	0·53	0·96
South Australia .....	16	129	12	157	0·43	0·59
Western Australia.....	35	91	28	154	0·93	2·00
Tasmania .....	14	14	5	33	0·19	0·33
Commonwealth.....	452	1,112	188	1,752	0·48	0·82
New Zealand .....	53	284	14	351	0·48	0·87
Australasia .....	505	1,396	202	2,103	0·48	0·83

There is no doubt that New South Wales would appear to much greater advantage in a comparison of crime statistics if there existed in that colony any law preventing the entrance of criminals, such as is rigidly enforced in most of the other provinces. In the absence of such a protective measure, the mother colony has become a happy hunting-ground for the desperadoes of Australasia. That there is ground for this assertion is shown by the fact that whereas in New South Wales offenders born in the colony only formed 34 per cent. of the total apprehensions in 1898, in Victoria 46 per cent. of arrested persons were of local birth; while at the census of 1891 the element of the population of local birth was larger in the former than in the latter colony.

The punishment of death is very seldom resorted to except in cases of murder, though formerly such was not the case. Thus the number of executions steadily declined from 151 during the decade 1841-50 to 66 during the ten years 1881-90. In South Australia the extreme penalty has been most sparingly inflicted, there having been only 11 executions in the twenty-eight years which closed with 1898. The following table shows the number of executions in each province during each decade of the 50 years ended 1890, also those which took place in 1891-95 and 1896-98. Queensland was incorporated with New South Wales until the end of 1859, though Victoria became a separate colony

in 1851. It will be noticed that the returns are defective so far as Western Australia is concerned:—

State.	1841-50.	1851-60.	1861-70.	1871-80.	1881-90.	1891-95.	1896-98.	
New South Wales	68	38	34	27	23	15	5	
Queensland .....			14	18	15	16	...	
Victoria .....			47	41	19	13	12	3
South Australia ...			7	12	6	2	2	1
Western Australia			.....	.....	.....	.....	6	2
Tasmania .....	83	32	15	3	5	1	...	
New Zealand .....	.....	.....	.....	12	8	1	4	
Total .....	151	124	116	85	66	53	15	

The returns relating to the prisons of the colonies are in some cases very incomplete. The prisoners in confinement at any specified time may be divided into those who have been tried and sentenced, those who are awaiting their trial, and debtors. The returns of five of the colonies allow of this distinction being made. The number and classification of prisoners in confinement on the 31st December, 1898, were as follow:—

State.	Tried and Sentenced.	Awaiting Trial.	Debtors.	Total.
New South Wales.....	1,934	147	1	2,082
Victoria .....	1,136	75	.....	1,211
Queensland .....	506	39	.....	545
South Australia .....	287*	8	.....	295
Western Australia ...	560	6	2	568
New Zealand.....	533	62	.....	595
Total .....	4,956	337	3	5,296

\* Including debtors.

The returns of Tasmania do not enable the distinction made in the above table to be drawn, but there were 96 prisoners in Tasmanian gaols at the end of 1898; so that the total number of persons in confinement in the gaols of Australasia, at the close of 1898, may be stated as 5,400, equal to 1.24 in every thousand of the population.

#### SUICIDES.

The total number of persons who committed suicide in Australasia during 1898 was 527—433 males and 94 females—corresponding to a rate of 1.20 per 10,000 living, and the table below shows the number of deaths and the rates in each colony, in five-year periods since 1870.

It is believed that the actual number of suicides is even larger than is shown in the tables, especially during recent years; for there is a growing disposition on the part of coroners' juries to attribute to accident what is really the result of an impulse of self-destruction.

## Total number of deaths.

State.	1871-75.	1876-80.	1881-85.	1886-90.	1891-95.	1896-98.
New South Wales.....	212	297	368	578	713	534
Victoria .....	446	505	463	638	630	363
Queensland .....	72	141	179	292	349	228
South Australia .....	79	93	146	134	156	122
Western Australia .....	3*	7	23	22	73	90
Tasmania .....	28	37	27	43	63	35
New Zealand.....	89*	195	261	267	339	201
Australasia .....	.....	1,275	1,467	1,974	2,323	1,573

## Death rate per 10,000 living.

New South Wales .....	.78	.90	.87	1.12	1.19	1.37
Victoria .....	1.17	1.23	1.02	1.21	1.08	1.04
Queensland .....	1.00	1.38	1.33	1.62	1.68	1.67
South Australia .....	.81	.77	.99	.87	.93	1.14
Western Australia .....	.29°	.50	1.46	1.05	2.19	2.07
Tasmania .....	.54	.68	.44	.63	.82	.69
New Zealand.....	.72*	.91	.99	.89	1.03	.93
Australasia .....	.....	1.02	.98	1.12	1.16	1.22

\* Four years—1872-75.

The experience of Australasia agrees with that of other countries, namely, that the tendency to self-destruction is increasing. From the table above it is seen that the rate has been slowly but surely increasing since 1870. Tasmania has always had the lowest rate, while in New Zealand the rate is now about equal to that in England, where it is 0.92 per 10,000 living. Up to 1893, the three first named colonies in the table exhibited the highest rates, Queensland coming first; but since that year Western Australia has shown the largest proportional number of victims by suicide, due, no doubt, to the relatively large number of males in the colony, since males are three or four times as prone to take their own lives as females.

The most favoured means of committing suicide, in all the colonies, are poisoning, drowning, shooting, which is more common now than formerly, and hanging amongst males, and poisoning and drowning amongst females.

ILLEGITIMACY.

Illegitimate births are rather numerous in the colonies, the total number in the whole of Australasia during 1899 being 6,878, equal to 5·76 per cent. of the total births. The following table shows the number of illegitimate births which have occurred in each colony in quinquennial periods since 1870, and the proportion per cent. of total births :—

TOTAL NUMBER of Illegitimate Births.

State.	1871-75	1876-80	1881-85	1886-90	1891-95	1896-99
New South Wales .....	4,369	5,401	6,949	9,394	11,875	10,017
Victoria .....	4,222	5,646	6,491	8,425	9,858	6,806
Queensland .....	846	1,447	1,990	3,117	3,516	3,265
South Australia .....	...	...	1,222	1,331	1,577	1,378
Western Australia .....	...	...	...	...	402‡	870
Tasmania .....	...	...	762†	911	1,136	1,058
New Zealand.....	523°	2,027	2,831	3,011	3,443	3,290
Australasia .....	...	...	20,245	26,189	31,807	26,684

PROPORTION per cent. of Total Births.

New South Wales .....	4·09	4·22	4·36	4·90	6·01	6·84
Victoria .....	3·10	4·27	4·63	4·89	5·45	5·46
Queensland .....	2·89	3·85	4·06	4·44	4·83	5·81
South Australia .....	...	...	2·16	2·50	2·98	3·64
Western Australia .....	...	...	...	...	4·75‡	5·13
Tasmania .....	...	...	4·35†	3·84	4·58	5·71
New Zealand.....	1·36°	2·30	2·93	3·20	3·77	4·38
Australasia .....	...	...	3·90	4·35	5·06	5·61

\* Three years—1873-75. † Four years—1882-85. ‡ Four years—1892-95.

It is seen that New South Wales has always been in the unenviable position of exhibiting the highest proportion of illegitimate births, although up to 1890 it was closely followed by Victoria. Since 1890, however, the rate in New South Wales has increased very rapidly, as also in Queensland, which now stands second. In all the colonies illegitimacy is on the increase; and whereas less than twenty years ago each province had a lower rate than prevailed in England, they all, with the exception of South Australia, have now a higher rate.

The following table shows the proportion of illegitimate births in the United Kingdom, and in the chief countries of Europe, based on the experience of the latest five years available, the figures referring, in most cases, to the period 1894-8. In a majority of the European countries illegitimacy appears to be on the increase.

Country.	Illegitimate Births per cent.	Country.	Illegitimate Births per cent.
England and Wales...	4·21	Hungary .....	8·72
Scotland .....	7·10	France .....	8·84
Ireland .....	2·68	Belgium .....	7·64
Germany .....	9·24	Netherlands.....	2·81
Prussia .....	7·83	Sweden.....	10·65
Bavaria .....	14·00	Norway .....	7·26
Saxony .....	12·81	Italy .....	6·82
Austria .....	14·64		

#### DIVORCE.

The question of divorce is one of much interest to Australasia, as some of the colonies, especially New South Wales and Victoria, now offer great facilities for the dissolution of the marriage bond. The general opinion was that such facilities were calculated to increase divorce to an extent that would prove hurtful to public morals; and so far as the experience of New South Wales was concerned, for the first few years after the passing of the Act multiplying the grounds on which divorce could be granted, the fear did not seem to be altogether groundless; for in 1893 the number of decrees *nisi* granted rose to 305, from 102 in 1892, and in 1898 was still as high as 244. When, however, it is remembered that advantage would be taken of the change in law to dissolve marriages the bonds of which would have been broken long before under other circumstances, it is evident that there was little ground for the fear that this somewhat alarming increase would continue, and it was, therefore, not surprising to find a decline in 1898. In Victoria, where a very similar law came into operation in 1890, the number of divorces increased considerably, immediately after the passing of the Act, although not to the alarming extent experienced in New South Wales.

In New South Wales, under the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1873, the chief grounds on which divorce was granted were adultery after marriage on the part of the wife, and adultery with cruelty on the part of the husband. A measure, however, was passed through both Houses of the Legislature in 1892, and came into force in August of that year, which in the main assimilated the law to that of Victoria. Under this Act and

an Amending Act passed in 1893 petitions for divorce can be granted for the following causes, in addition to those already mentioned:—*Husband v. Wife.*—Desertion for not less than three years; habitual drunkenness for a similar period; refusing to obey an order for restitution of conjugal rights; being imprisoned under sentence for three years or upwards; attempt to murder or inflict grievous bodily harm, or repeated assault on the husband within a year preceding the date of the filing of the petition. *Wife v. Husband.*—Adultery, provided that at the time of the institution of the suit the husband is domiciled in New South Wales; desertion for not less than three years; habitual drunkenness for a similar period; refusing to obey an order for restitution of conjugal rights; being imprisoned for three years or upwards, or having within five years undergone various sentences amounting in all to not less than three years; attempt to murder or assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm, or repeated assault within one year previously. Relief can only be sought on these grounds should the petitioner have been domiciled in the colony for three years or upwards at the time of instituting the suit, and not have resorted to the colony for the purpose of having the marriage dissolved. In Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, divorces are granted principally for adultery on the part of the wife, and adultery coupled with desertion for over two years on the part of the husband.

In the subjoined table will be found the actual number of divorces and judicial separations granted during each of the years 1893–98. It will be seen that, taking the colonies as a whole, divorce has decreased since 1893, although there was an increase in 1897:—

State.	1893.		1894.		1895.		1896.		1897.		1898.	
	Divorces.	Judicial Separation.										
New South Wales	306	9	313	14	301	11	234	8	246	13	247	17
Victoria	85	7	81	2	85	..	100	12	117	..	87	..
Queensland	5	2	6	..	4	..	3	2	10	1	7	..
South Australia	8	1	5	1	5	..	6	1	3	..	7	1
Western Australia	1	..	1	..	2	..	1	..	4	..	3	..
Tasmania	6	..	5	..	4	1	3	..	5	..	4	..
New Zealand	25	1	20	4	18	5	36	2	33	1	32	2
Australasia	436	20	431	21	419	17	350	15	418	15	387	20
Totals	456		452		436		404		433		407	
Divorces and separations per 10,000 marriages	184·3		182·3		169·9		144·2		150·6		137·7	

The following table shows the number of decrees of dissolution of marriage and judicial separation granted in each colony, in quinquennial

periods since 1871, as far as it is possible to procure the information. Divorce was legalised in New South Wales in 1873, and the figures of that colony for 1871-75 only cover the two years 1874 and 1875.

State.	1871-75.		1876-80.		1881-85.		1886-90.		1891-95.		1896-98.	
	Divorces.	Judicial Separation.										
New South Wales .....	21	...	87	...	116	6	212	12	1087	55	727	38
Victoria .....	33	6	41	2	74	8	124	9	441	10	310	2
Queensland .....	4	1	14	...	5	2	26	3	26	3	20	3
South Australia .....	22	3	35	2	31	10	23	2	30	2	16	2
Western Australia .....	...	...	1	1	5	...	8	...	9	...	8	...
Tasmania .....	9	...	9	...	9	...	15	2	21	2	12	...
New Zealand .....	*	*	*	*	*	*	110	5	101	14	101	5
Australasia .....	89	10	187	5	240	26	518	33	1715	86	1194	50

\* Information not available.

Taking the figures given in the foregoing table, and comparing them with the number of marriages celebrated during the same periods, the rates of divorce for the individual colonies, per 10,000 marriages, will be found below. It will be seen that the rate for New South Wales is higher than that of any country of the world except the United States and Switzerland. :—

State.	1871-75.	1876-80.	1881-85.	1886-90.	1891-95.	1896-98.
New South Wales .....	+23·5	33·6	32·5	54·8	272·3	277·5
Victoria .....	16·0	16·9	24·4	31·1	119·6	135·9
Queensland .....	8·0	18·7	6·0	19·0	21·4	23·0
South Australia .....	33·5	34·6	33·1	24·3	29·9	25·2
Western Australia .....	...	20·5	44·8	53·5	38·6	18·1
Tasmania .....	27·4	22·0	18·0	35·4	50·8	38·5
New Zealand .....	*...	*...	*...	63·5	56·9	67·9

\* Information not available. † 1874 and 1875 only.

From the appended statement, which sets forth the latest divorce rates of the countries for which accurate statistics are obtainable, such rates being calculated on an experience of ten years wherever possible, it will be seen that there is a larger proportion of marriages dissolved in Australasia than in any other part of the British Empire, but that the rate for these colonies as a whole is largely exceeded by a number of foreign countries. Of countries where divorce laws are in force, no reliable

statistics are available for Denmark, Hungary, Russia, and Spain. In Italy and Portugal divorce is not recognised by law :—

Country.	Divorces per 10,000 Marriages.	Country.	Divorces per 10,000 Marriages.
Canadian Dominion ...	4	Cape Colony .....	98
United Kingdom .....	11	Netherlands .....	103
Norway .....	16	Germany .....	165
Austria Proper .....	43	France .....	180
Greece .....	50	Roumania .....	204
Belgium .....	81	Switzerland .....	432
Sweden .....	87	United States .....	612

In the United States of America no general system of registration of births, deaths, and marriages is in force. For the purpose of comparison, the marriage-rate of that country has been assumed to be 6·50 per 1,000 of mean population, and on that basis the 20,660 divorces granted annually during ten years would give an average of not less than 612 per 10,000 marriages.

In the Dominion of Canada divorce was, under the Union Act, assigned to the Federal Parliament; but those provinces which had established divorce courts before the accomplishment of federation were permitted to retain the jurisdiction which they already exercised. In the remaining provinces no divorce courts have been established since the constitution of the Dominion, and divorce can only be obtained by legislation, the matter being dealt with in each case as an ordinary private Act of Parliament, with this difference, however, that the Senate requires the production of such evidence in support of the application for relief as would be deemed sufficient in a court of law.

## INSANITY.

The number of insane persons in Australasia, under official cognizance in the various Government hospitals for the treatment of the insane, at the end of 1898 was 14,285, equal to 3·23 per 1,000 of the population, or corresponding to one insane person in every 309. This rate is about equal to that prevailing in England, where one person in every 313 is officially known to be insane.

An inspection of the table given below of the insane persons, both male and female, in each colony on 31st December, 1898, and the rate per 1,000 inhabitants of each sex, will disclose the fact that the rate of insanity varies greatly in the different provinces, and that the rate for males is everywhere higher than that for females, except in Western Australia, where 1·26 per 1,000 males, and 1·75 per 1,000 females are

insane, a result which appears to show that the female population of the western colony is under-estimated :—

State.	Number of Insane.			Per 1,000 of Population.		
	Males.	Females.	Total Persons.	Males.	Females.	Total Persons.
New South Wales .....	2,479	1,594	4,073	3·45	2·59	3·05
Victoria .....	2,300	2,094	4,394	3·96	3·61	3·79
Queensland .....	1,018	550	1,568	3·89	2·62	3·32
South Australia .....	538	419	957	2·82	2·40	2·62
Western Australia .....	141	98	239	1·26	1·75	1·42
Tasmania .....	313	261	574	3·28	3·19	3·24
Commonwealth.....	6,789	5,016	11,805	3·47	2·92	3·21
New Zealand.....	1,472	1,008	2,480	3·75	2·87	3·34
Australasia.....	8,261	6,024	14,285	3·52	2·91	3·23

Victoria has the highest general rate, with 3·79 per 1,000, New Zealand coming next with 3·34, closely followed by Queensland with 3·32, and Tasmania with 3·24, although Tasmania has the second highest female rate. New South Wales, with 3·05, is below the mean rate for Australasia; while South Australia, with 2·62, is well below; and Western Australia, with 1·42, is the lowest of all.

There is one remarkable difference between the Australasian colonies and Great Britain, namely, that in England the greater proportion of insanity is found amongst women, whereas in the colonies it is found amongst men.

In England the rate per 1,000 males in 1897 was 3·00, and per 1,000 females 3·38, but this difference is gradually being reduced. In Australasia the greatest disproportion was in Queensland, where the male and female rates were respectively 3·89 and 2·62 per 1,000. The smallest difference between the sexes is found in those colonies where the male population follow in greater proportion what may be termed the more settled pursuits. In Tasmania the excess of the male over the female rate was only 0·09 and in Victoria 0·35.

There seems to be little doubt that insanity is slowly but surely increasing in the colonies, as it is in the United Kingdom and other countries. In England the rate has risen from 2·92 per 1,000 of population in 1884 to 3·20 in 1897, and in Scotland a similar rise has taken place from 2·75 per 1,000 in 1884 to 3·36 in 1897. The greater part of this increase is no doubt rightly attributed to an improvement in the administration of the Commissioners in Lunacy, by which a more accurate knowledge of the number of cases existent in the country has been gained; but the steady growth of the rate in recent years, when statistical information has been brought to a high pitch of perfection,

plainly points to the fact that the advance of civilization, with the increasing strain to which the struggle for existence is subjecting body and mind, has one of its results in the growth of mental disease. In all the colonies of Australasia, with the sole exception of Tasmania, there is seen the same state of affairs as the insanity returns of Great Britain disclose, although the conditions of life press much more lightly on the individual here.

The experience of the various colonies is fairly represented in the following table, which shows the average number of insane in each colony per 1,000 of population, arranged in three five-years periods:—

State.	1884-88.	1889-93.	1894-98.
	Rate per 1,000 of Population.	Rate per 1,000 of Population.	Rate per 1,000 of Population.
New South Wales.....	2.77	2.76	2.97
Victoria .....	3.38	3.36	3.63
Queensland .....	2.42	2.89	3.22
South Australia .....	2.39	2.52	2.60
Western Australia .....	3.58	2.49	1.45
Tasmania.....	2.61	2.40	2.22
Commonwealth .....	2.91	2.94	3.09
New Zealand .. .....	2.72	2.93	3.25
Australasia .....	2.87	2.94	3.12

The only colonies where the rate is diminishing are Western Australia and Tasmania. In Western Australia the reason is probably that the hospital accommodation is limited, and that thereby many insane, especially males, escape notice.

It has been said that the trade depression lately experienced throughout Australasia, was the cause of an increase in insanity; and at first sight it looks as if this were so, because since 1892 there has been a steady increase in the proportion of the population detained in asylums. But looking at the rates of admissions this view does not seem to be altogether borne out. Probably one effect of depressed times is to send to the asylums a number of harmless but demented persons who, under other circumstances, would be supported by their relatives. In England and Wales it is found that the increase in insanity has taken place amongst those who are termed the "pauper" class—that is, those whose relatives are not in a position to support them after they lose their reason. On the other hand, the admissions in prosperous times are kept up by insanity either directly or indirectly induced by the indulgence which commonly follows high wages and large gains.

The following table shows the average annual number of admissions and readmissions into the asylums in each colony, and the rate per 1,000 of population, during each of the two quinquennial periods, 1889-93 and 1894-98 :-

State.	1880-03.		1894-98.	
	Average Number of Admissions per annum.	Rate per 1,000 of Population.	Average Number of Admissions per annum.	Rate per 1,000 of population.
New South Wales.....	622	0.55	718	0.56
Victoria .....	709	0.62	707	0.60
Queensland .....	265	0.67	259	0.58
South Australia.. ..	228	0.70	205	0.57
Western Australia .....	26	0.51	74	0.62
Tasmania .....	70	0.47	61	0.37
Commonwealth .....	1,920	0.60	2,024	0.57
New Zealand .....	413	0.65	576	0.81
Australasia .....	2,333	0.61	2,600	0.61

The table shows that on the whole the rate of admissions has remained constant throughout the decade, although it has risen slightly in New South Wales and more largely in Western Australia and New Zealand, and has decreased in all the other colonies.

The next table shows the total number of patients who were discharged from the asylums during the ten years 1889-98, either on account of recovery, permanent, or temporary, or on account of death, and the proportion borne by each to the total number who were under treatment during the period.

State.	Total under Treatment.	Discharged—recovered or relieved.		Died.	
		Number.	Per cent. of total under treatment.	Number.	Per cent. of total under treatment.
New South Wales.....	9,598	3,262	33.99	2,220	23.13
Victoria .....	10,711	3,192	29.80	3,048	28.46
Queensland.....	3,546	1,166	32.88	785	22.14
South Australia.....	2,924	1,260	43.09	683	23.36
Western Australia .....	664	279	42.02	126	18.98
Tasmania .....	1,003	280	27.92	271	27.02
Commonwealth .....	28,446	9,439	33.18	7,133	25.08
New Zealand .....	6,626	2,216	33.44	1,196	18.05
Australasia.....	55,072	11,655	33.23	8,329	23.75

It is seen that, of the total number under treatment, 33·23 per cent. were discharged either partially or wholly recovered, and that 23·75 per cent. died. South Australia shows the highest proportion of recoveries, and Tasmania the lowest, while New Zealand has the lowest death-rate, and Victoria the highest. Speaking generally, it is estimated that of the persons who are discharged from the asylums in Australasia, some 28 per cent. suffer a relapse and are readmitted; and it may be said that out of every 1,000 persons who are admitted for the first time, 420 will recover, and the sufferings of the remaining 580 will only be terminated by death.

Very little information is available as to the exciting or predisposing causes of insanity in the different colonies, New South Wales being the only one concerning which there is complete information. But that colony may be taken as typical of the whole, as the customs and conditions of living do not vary greatly in any of them, and the statement below enables a comparison to be made with the principal assigned causes of insanity in England and Wales. The causes are stated in proportion to the average annual number of admissions.

Cause.	Males.		Females.	
	New South Wales.	England and Wales.	New South Wales.	England and Wales.
	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.
Domestic trouble, Adverse circumstances, Mental anxiety .....	9·2	17·9	11·3	19·8
Intemperance in drink .....	12·4	20·9	4·2	8·5
Hereditary influence, ascertained; Congenital defect, ascertained .....	10·5	26·0	13·7	29·6
Pregnancy, Lactation, Parturition, and Puerperal state, Uterine and Ovarian disorders, Puberty, Change of life .....	.....	.....	14·0	15·7
Previous attacks .....	10·4	16·4	12·0	22·0
Unknown.....	25·8	18·4	18·4	15·8

Intemperance in drink is popularly supposed to be the most fruitful cause of insanity in the colonies, and although it does bear the highest proportion of known causes amongst males, it is not nearly so common a cause as in England. Amongst females, the chief causes of insanity in the colonies are pregnancy, &c. Hereditary influence and congenital defect, in England and Wales, bear the largest proportion of known causes, both amongst males and females, and it is believed they are responsible in New South Wales for many more than the number shown in the table, and that of the unknown causes the great majority should be ascribed to hereditary influences. The small proportion of cases set down to these two causes is simply due to the difficulty of obtaining knowledge of the family history of a large number of the people in Australasia.

## HABITATIONS.

The latest information available concerning the habitations of the people, is that obtained at the census of 1891, when inquiry was made on the householders' schedules respecting the dwellings of the population. The information sought was in respect to whether a building was occupied, unoccupied, or in course of construction; the material of which it was built, and the number of rooms which it contained. The tabulation was not made with the same degree of completeness in all the colonies; but as far as comparative figures can be given they are shown below:—

Class of Dwelling.	New South Wales.	Victoria	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.
Occupied .....	197,408	217,895	78,420	59,834	10,221	26,585	119,766
Unoccupied .....	16,166	15,846	2,224	3,818	236	1,588	9,558
Being built .....	1,255	1,603	44	235	73	189	425
Stores, offices, and public buildings ..	8,368	264	*	*	*	244	*
Inhabited huts and dwellings with canvas roofs .....	18,794	5,862	*	*	*	1,195	4,085
Total .....	241,991	241,560	80,697	68,887	10,530	29,801	133,834

\* Included under more general heading.

The materials of which the dwellings in each colony were constructed are shown in the following table, as far as the particulars are available:—

Material.	New South Wales.	Victoria	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.
Brick or stone .....	90,456	69,545	....	50,723	6,087	8,452	5,697
Wood, iron, or lath and plaster .....	130,363	154,843	....	11,519	2,388	19,231	116,801
Slabs, bark, mud, &c. ....	*	4,841	....	*	306	595	4,286
Canvas, linen, calico, &c. ....	18,794	5,858	....	889	1,552	1,214	4,085
Other materials .....	....	....	....	*	3	....	1,551
Unspecified materials .....	2,378	6,473	....	756	194	309	1,414
Total .....	241,991	241,560	80,697	68,887	10,530	29,801	133,834

\* Included in previous line.

The number of rooms is given below for all houses, whether occupied or unoccupied, except in the case of New South Wales and New Zealand, where the figures given refer only to occupied dwellings :—

Dwellings, with—	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.
One room .....	24,876	} 23,497	....	1,948	2,075	2,469	11,523
Two rooms .....	16,137		....	7,397	1,612	4,092	11,030
Three and four rooms .....	65,920	} 156,976	....	23,256	2,355	11,627	41,934
Five and six rooms .....	64,342		....	15,911	1,440	5,880	32,368
Seven to ten rooms .....	32,275	36,944	....	} 9,614	1,856	} 5,413	} 24,063
Eleven to fifteen rooms .....	7,371	7,061	....		318		
Sixteen to twenty rooms .....	1,912	1,673	....		92		
More than twenty rooms .....	1,160	1,226	....		47		
Number of rooms unspecified .....	1,947	9,183	....	761	235	320	1,523
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>215,040</b>	<b>241,560</b>	<b>80,697</b>	<b>63,887</b>	<b>10,530</b>	<b>29,801</b>	<b>123,851</b>

In Queensland the habitations were enumerated under the Quinquennial Census Act, which does not provide for a statement either of the materials of which houses are constructed or of the number of rooms which they contain. From the foregoing figures it will be seen that in Australasia there are nearly  $5\frac{1}{4}$  persons to every occupied house.