the latter, everyone intending to be a lawyer would become both solicitor and barrister—the only thing he would have to do to become a barrister would be to pass some additional examination or possibly attend additional lectures. Partnerships between lawyers would be more common than they are now between solicitors, as it would be impossible, except in the simplest cases, for one man to conduct all the proceedings in a suit for a client. As regards the former, the change might have a very serious effect. A solicitor might prefer to remain as he was unless he was ambitious to shine as an advocate; a barrister, on the other hand, except, perhaps, one in the first rank of his profession, would either have to qualify as a solicitor, or be liable to be passed in the race by his younger brethren who had been admitted to both professions. Even if he qualified as a solicitor, it would be of little use to him without a connection, and his only course would be to seek a partnership with a solicitor. Again, the advantage to the barrister of having a legal right to recover his fees would be counterbalanced by the liability of being sued for negligence by dissatisfied clients, while the solicitor would no longer be able to protect himself by having taken the opinion of counsel. Lastly, the effect of the change on judicial decisions, and in time on the judiciary itself, is not to be lost sight of: the better a case is argued on both sides, the easier it is for the judge to arrive at a right decision. We know how much weight is attached to a decision in a case which is argued on one side only. If the advocate of the future is to do all the work of solicitor besides, how can he have time to read up the latest decisions, and assist the judge in coming to a proper conclusion? In time, too, the judiciary would be recruited by these solicitor-barristers, and it would be possible, especially in this country, where promotion goes oftener by politics than by merit, for the seat of justice to be occupied by men who were lawyers only in name.

The client who looks only for cheap law may not dip so far into the future, but it is the business of statesmen to look ahead, and the legislature, if it is ever asked to sanction this change, will not lose sight of the fact, that the due and proper administration of justice is a matter of the highest public concern, and that though cheap law may be a good thing, bad law is worse.

V.—*President's Address.* By William Findlater, Esq., D.L.

[Read Tuesday, 24th May, 1892.]

I DEEPLY feel the honour which was conferred upon me in electing me President of this society on the occasion of the demise of our late lamented President, Mr. Justice O'Hagan, who was an eminent lawyer and scholar, a writer of great literary ability, and a man of a most kindly and genial nature. My only fear in accepting the position was caused by my intense consciousness of my inability to satisfactorily and creditably discharge the duties of an office which

had been filled, from time to time, by so many eminent men. I was afraid that the prestige of the society might be injured by my shortcomings, and that the pressure of private and business affairs, which was very urgent at the time of my election, might deprive me of that leisure which was requisite to enable me to prepare my Presidential address. However, the kindness of Dr. Ingram, and other friends, in stating to me that I should have ample time for the purpose, and might deliver my address at any period before the close of my Presidency, overcame my objections, and emboldened me to incur the responsibility of accepting the highly honourable position I now occupy. Unfortunately I have not enjoyed even as much leisure for the performance of my duties since I was elected as I anticipated, but, nevertheless, I have endeavoured, as far as lay in my power, to discharge it to the best of my ability. To your considerate kindness I look for forbearance and kindly criticism when you remember if I fail to do well, I certainly mean well, and have from a very early period of the society's history been a member who took a deep interest in its welfare and progress.

I joined the society over twenty years ago, at the instance of the late lamented Dr. Hancock and have ever since been connected with it. During the period of my membership I have had the opportunity of listening to many valuable papers and able presidential addresses. It has also been my good fortune to see that the suggestions contained in many of these papers have not been thrown away, but produced valuable practical results in beneficial legislation. This shows what an important office our society discharges in enlightening the public mind by the ventilation and discussion of social and economic problems of the deepest importance to the well-being of society. It occurred to me that it might possibly be pleasing both to the members of this society and that portion of the outside public which takes an interest in our proceedings, if in my address I endeavoured to make some general observations upon that method or science which our society has been formed to cultivate and support. It must not be supposed for a moment that I hope to communicate anything novel to the members of this society, most of whom are far more familiar with every branch of the subject than I am. Nevertheless it may be of use even to them to refresh their memories as to matters which they may have forgotten, and possibly it may be the means of inducing the outsiders to whom I have referred to take a larger interest in the objects of our society, and lead to their joining our ranks, thereby enabling us to increase our influence and efforts in the cause of social reform. I, therefore, propose to make some observations upon statistics.

Origin and History.

The word "statistic," as you all know, is derived from the Latin *status*, which in the middle ages meant a state in the political sense. The first administrative act of the first regular government or state would be to number its warriors, and next to find out with as much correctness as possible the amount of taxation that could be

levied upon the rest of the nation. It is noteworthy that the Jews took censuses of their whole population, or of a part of it, while at even an earlier period of their history we learn from the Bible that Abraham had 318 born in his own household trained to arms. The children of Israel sojourned in Egypt 430 years, and left it 600,000 men on foot. The losses in battle suffered or inflicted are often stated with precision in figures. All this shows that the application of figures to the condition and prospects of society dated from a very early time. Confer what name we like upon this early use of figures as applied to the social life of man in remote ages, it is plain that long before the dawn of any of the physical sciences in which arithmetic now plays so large and important a part, much that now enters into the composition of statistics, sociology, social science, or demography, was in existence. The Romans, as is well known, took pains to obtain correct information as to the resources of the state, and were in the habit of taking censuses with the greatest regularity. In fact, the census was a regular Roman institution, one of the chief duties of the censors being to record the number of Roman citizens, every five years, for the purpose of assessment. A census of Gaul is alluded to by Tacitus; some historical writers, indeed, quote them; for instance, Livy states that the number of "citizens" at the census taken B.C. 457 was 117,319, at that of B.C. 193, 143,704, and at B.C. 188, 258,318. He also notes that the Campanians were on this last occasion registered at Rome, and various others were included for the first time. In B.C. 173 the number given was 269,015, it being explained that the smallness of the figures was caused by the Latin allies having been entered in their own states.

Tacitus states that at the census taken in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, who died A.D. 54, the number of citizens was ascertained to be 5,984,072, but it is probable this number included all the citizens in the empire. Gibbon referring to this census suggests that this number of citizens probably corresponded to a population of *twenty millions, counting women and children.*

As to the efficiency of those inquiries, however, singularly, little information is extant, the records having all perished. When men who lived in those early times passed from general, and often loose statements of numbers, to the more particular enumeration of the census, they achieved the highest statistical development of which they were capable.

Although materials for statistics, therefore, undoubtedly existed at a very early period, yet there was no regular use of the information for purposes of social investigation.

It is thought that the first book in which facts only known to government officers was published, was one written by Francisco Sansovino, printed at Venice in 1583. This book, however, contained very few figures.

Up to the beginning of the seventeenth century works on state administration and finance were occasionally published, the writers displaying a tendency to employ figures more liberally than Sansovino. This was especially the case in England, when the bills of mortality commenced to provoke attention.

From 1660 onward, various writers in Germany and elsewhere produced works which gave a powerful impulse to the pursuit of studies now included in statistics. The celebrated Achenwall, who is sometimes called "The Father of Statistics," is supposed to be the first who made use of the word, which he applied to his collection of "Noteworthy Matters Regarding the State." A Prussian clergyman named Sussmilch was the first to bring statistics, in the modern sense of the word, into existence, by the publication of a work in which he attempted to use a class of facts formerly looked upon as coming within the domain of "political arithmetic." Under this name some extremely interesting problems of vital statistics had been already examined and studied in England and elsewhere. Sussmilch appears to have perceived the value of studying the laws of "large numbers," a name afterwards given to this study by Quetelet, the celebrated Belgian statesman and astronomer.

The earliest published example of this study which arose in the middle of the seventeenth century, was the publication of a book by Captain John Grant, of London, called "National and Political Annotations on Bills of Mortality." It was printed in 1666.

The most distinguished follower of this line of inquiry was Sir William Petty, a name well known in the history of this country. He wrote five essays on "Political Arithmetic," and was, therefore, I believe, the first to describe the use of figures in the investigation of social phenomena by that name.

Other writers, amongst whom may be mentioned Halley, the astronomer, devoted themselves to similar inquiries, and during a large portion of the eighteenth century arithmetical investigations into problems, in the present day known as "statistical," very much increased. Attempts were also made by Arthur Young and others, who endeavoured to study figures as the foundation of fiscal and political conclusions.

The celebrated statistician, Maurice Block, a German, domiciled in Paris, and holding a post there in the Statistical Bureau, who has published so many valuable works on the statistics of France and Europe, remarks in his writings, in commenting upon the efforts of Sussmilch to form a general theory of society founded upon arithmetical premises, what would now be called "using quantitative aggregate observation as a basis of social inquiry," says:—

> "Had he been a professor, his influence would have been greater in maintaining that movement of population is subject to law; that there is a regularity in the recurrence of such phenomena which allows of their being foreseen; he cast on the public mind a leaven which has evidently contributed to the progress of science."

There was great resistance to the use of figures to help in moral and political inquiries for many years after the publication of Sussmilch's book, especially by men who advocated the descriptive system, but there can be no doubt that his success was the origin of the mathematical school of statistics, the disciples of which carried their love for figures so far as to allow no place for description. The descriptive school, it may be mentioned, regarded figures as only accessories to, and illustrations of the text.

The great Belgian statistician, Quetelet, before alluded to, produced numerous works which really created an important, if not the most important epoch, in the history of statistics, and led to the foundation of the London Statistical Society in 1835. Probably his most important contribution to the progress of statistical inquiries, were his letters to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, which appeared in 1846. They treated of the "Theory of Probabilities" as applied to the physical and social sciences. Quetelet's influence in the development of statistics is clearly shown by the fact that it put an end to the battle between the arithmetical and descriptive schools.

Our own Statistical Society was formed in 1847, by the late Dr. William Neilson Hancock, and the first meeting was held upon the 21st of December in that year. All the old members of this society must remember the great ability and untiring industry of Dr. Hancock in connection with this society. If a paper was wanted, and there was no one to supply it, he was certain to fill the gap by preparing and reading one of his own. He was a deep thinker, and an indefatigable literary workman, as his numerous valuable contributions on economic subjects, shedding fresh light upon them, and suggesting new ideas, amply prove. His memory will ever remain green in our recollections as the founder of this society, and one who for many years contributed so largely by his unselfish personal labours to its prosperity and progress.

Having thus briefly sketched the progress of statistical inquiry up to the periods of the formation of the London Society and our own, I shall now proceed to make some general, and what you probably will deem discursive observations, upon the subject of my address.

Are Statistics a Science?

A lively controversy has gone on, from time to time, as to whether statistics are a science, or merely a method, and there is considerable difference of opinion upon the subject.

Sir Rawson W. Rawson and Dr. Guy, well-known statisticians, are probably two of the most able advocates in the United Kingdom of its being a science. The first-named developes his views upon the subject at much length in his address as President of the London Statistical Society, at the opening of the Jubilee Meeting, referring to papers contained in several numbers of the society's journal, and particularly to one by Dr. Guy, which appeared in 1865. In this paper the doctor cites the respective definitions of Sir J. Herschell and Professor Sedgwick as to what a science is. The former describes it as "the knowledge of many, orderly and methodically digested, and arranged so as to be attainable by one." The latter as "the result of the consideration of subjects, whether of a pure or mixed nature, capable of being reduced to measurement and calculation." Dr. Guy also urges that it agrees with the ordinary definition of a science, viz.:—"A collection of the general principles and leading truths relating to any subject, arranged in systematic order." The doctor came to the conclusion that it was a science.

In 1881 Sir Rawson says the subject was again brought before the society when Mr. Wynyard Hooper discussed the method of "statis-

tical analysis," in which he reviewed and compared the opinions of Dr. George Mayer, Engel, Haushofer, Block, and Dr. Gabaglio, all well-known authorities, and came to the conclusion that there is no "science of statistics" in the sense in which it is used by the continental writers, and only admitted that there is "a *method* of statistical analysis" which is applicable to various physical sciences, and is *absolutely essential* to sociology.

Sir Rawson then refers to another valuable contribution, to a knowledge of the subject which Mr. Hooper made by providing in the journal for 1883 an abridged translation of Mayer's work on the "Theory and Practice of Statistics," and says that the literature of the subject was completed by a translation in the journal of the same date of a work by Dr. V. John, of the University of Berne, entitled "The Term Statistik," an etymologico-historical sketch, "which traces the history and meaning of the word from its earliest use, as far back as 1672, and concludes with the statement that "statistics" have become

> "*An actual science of observation in the service of social science;* it is a science with a definite aim, an orderly classification of subjects, a numerical method with its strict rules of synthesis and analysis, by which it is endeavoured to illustrate by facts the conditions and prospects of society."

After stating his difficulty in face of the definitions of a science, and of the description of the quality and functions of statistics before given, in understanding how their claim to be accepted as a science should be challenged, Sir Rawson proceeds to call attention to the fact that Professor Ingram, so long a member of our society, in his Presidential address to the section of economic science and statistics at the meeting of the British Association in Dublin, expressed the opinion "that it was impossible to vindicate for statistics the character of a science," and endeavours to combat Dr. Ingram's views. For this purpose he points out the objection made by the Professor, and rightly made, to the separation of economic science from statistics in the title of the section of the British Association, and to his contention that the two should be united under the term of *social science.* Sir Rawson then asks are not these terms comprehended in the older term, "statistik," employed by Achenwall so far back as 1749, the scope of which he defines as embracing the whole realm of social science, namely, "the description of what a state is, the description of what it has been, and the discussion of what it ought to be."

Sir Rawson ingeniously puts forward, in support of his views, statements to show that the meaning of the word "statistik" had greatly changed since Achenwall's time, and even since that of Quetelet, contending that strictly social statistics were omitted in their definitions because *they had no knowledge of them.* He says :—

> "It is only of late years that the life of the people has entered into the domain of history, which formerly, if not exclusively, consisted of the acts, policies, characteristics, and personal delineation of their rulers and administrators, and the national events to which they have given rise."

No one, I should think, can dispute the accuracy of the statement embodied in this quotation.

After advocating the title of statistics to the designation of a science as well as astronomy, geology, or botany, he gives his own definition of them as :—

> "The science which treats of the structure of human society, *i.e.*, of society in all its constituents, however minute, and in all its relations, however complex, embracing alike the highest phenomena of education, crime, and commerce, and the so-called 'statistics' of pin-making and London dust-bins."

Time would fail me, and your patience would be probably exhausted, if I followed Sir Rawson further in his very able advocacy of the right and title of statistics to hold the rank of a science. Suffice it to say that I, myself, have been strongly impressed by his arguments, and I have no doubt they will have considerable influence upon your minds. It seems impossible to separate the study of sociology, or demography, as it is now called, from the "quantitative observation of aggregates." We cannot practise the one without the other, and, as it may be very reasonably contended, that the term "statistik" comprehends both, I fail to see why the investigation of, and the careful conclusions derived from, these combined arithmetical and social problems, is not justly entitled to the honour of being designated a science. Certainly, in the present day, as much deep thought is spent upon their solution as is ever expended upon the study of any other branch of science by its cultivators and votaries. It has been admitted to be a science in Belgium, France, Germany, and Italy. Why then should we refuse to recognise it as such? It pursues the methods by which alone the natural laws can be deduced which govern most of the conditions of man, and of many of those of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. There is not a branch of human knowledge to which it is not closely allied, and for the correct understanding of which, the scientific marshalling of figures, and observation of aggregate facts, is not more or less necessary.

Uniformity of Statistics.

Most of my hearers are, I am sure, fully acquainted with the great differences that distinguish the methods of compiling the more important statistical data common to most civilised countries.

It would be most desirable that the persons who are responsible for the collection of those data should agree upon the precise facts that require to be tabulated, and the methods of tabulation.

Mr. Jeans, in a paper read before the London Statistical Society, published a very interesting table of the contents of the annual statistical abstracts issued by the principal European countries, from which it appears, having regard to the scope and character of the information given, that there is a considerable amount of uniformity already established. All contain information as to territory, population, imperial finance, banking, education, military affairs, imports and exports, agriculture, railway, postal affairs, industry, commerce, and crime.

Each, however, has its special peculiarities, and most of them differ in respect of the character of the facts tabulated and the mode of tabulation.

Certain leading facts are almost necessarily ascertained and recorded. The discrepancies arise in the minor details. For instance, in the census returns the numbers of the population, the proportion of males and females, are invariably given; but after this, returns commence to vary, until when we reach the statistics of occupations, it is found that no two census returns are alike.

In dealing with railway returns, the extent of railway opened for traffic is recorded as the *principal* fact, together with the total capital cost; but after this, there is not sufficient uniformity to allow of a comparison being made on any single point of the many involved in railway administration.

Even the United States, which has given so much, and such effectual attention, to the collection and publication of industrial statistics, the census reports teeming with facts of immense value, fails in this respect. They lack an uniform plan, and are deficient both in consistency and consecutiveness.

It has been well observed by a recent writer that:—

> "The great elaboration of the United States census is largely owing to this fact—that under the constitution the federal authorities have no power to obtain statistical information, and attempts to obtain it would be opposed through the jealousy of state rights; therefore the powers conferred on the executive by that provision of the constitution which necessitates a decennial census, are stretched so as to comprise enquiries into all manner of subjects not necessarily comprised in a census."

It is plain that the progress, or the reverse, of the industrial classes of a community, or any important portion of it, can only be justly and satisfactorily ascertained by comparison of exactly the same kind of facts for the same locality, and in the same circumstances, as between one period and another. If this parallelism is interfered with in any way, the value of the comparison is vitiated equivalently.

It has been pointed out that the chief matters required for the improvement and co-ordination of the statistical work undertaken by different government bureaux are:—(1) an agreement as to the major facts necessary to be collected for each special department of statistics; (2) uniformity in the processes by which these facts are got together; (3) co-ordination as to the methods whereby the materials thus collected are systematised and made use of; (4) the adoption, as far as possible, of the calendar year as the universal statistical period, so that when comparisons are made they should always relate to the same dates.

The International Statistical Congress worked for many years in the direction of removing the differences with regard to the subject matters of enquiry, and also in reference to the acccessory facts resulting from the subject, which often include matters of great importance.

Unfortunately the opinions expressed, and the views propounded by the representative members at their meetings in Paris, St. Petersburgh, London, Vienna, Rome, and Buda-Pesth, were not appreci-

ated by the governments which gave rise to the congresses themselves, and sent representatives to them.

When the statisticians returned to their own countries, they found the governments unwilling to give attention to, or to carry into effect the recommendations of the congress.

This may have resulted probably from their not being able to do so, or from the impossibility of carrying into effect all the details as desired; or, perhaps, because the public required educating as to the value of statistics.

Possibly the people deemed the enquiries inquisitorial, or grudged the expense of publication. They did not comprehend the value of statistics, and dreaded the publication of facts. They very likely did not understand that statistics had nothing to do with individual facts, or with disclosing individual cases, their object being to discover from general facts laws affecting great multitudes of men or phenomena.

I am glad to see from the daily press that the International Statistical Institute, the successor to the congress, is still in existence, and holding its meetings. There was one, I think, held last year, of which there was a brief notice in the *Times*. Let us hope that it will be ultimately successful in its efforts to attain that uniformity of statistical statement in all civilised countries, which is so essential to a correct estimation and comparison of the social, industrial, religious, and moral progress of each.

The *Census Bulletin* issued this year by the Department of the Interior of the United States probably excels its predecessors in the extraordinary variety of the information it contains. Whether all the subjects with which it is conversant can be adequately treated by statistical methods, is a problem on which the opinions of statisticians may possibly not agree. It would seem, however, that the objects and conclusions of the congress and its successors have, for so far, had little or no influence upon our American brethren. Probably this may be accounted for by the want of power in the federal authorities before referred to.

Proof by Statistics.

It is often sarcastically said "that you can prove anything by statistics." The taunt might readily be replied to by saying, "without statistics you can prove nothing." To the well-informed, however, this censorious allegation, if taken absolutely, is absurd; but, like many statements which are extensively credited, it has a grain of truth in it. It might possibly be agreed to without hesitation if it ran thus—"You can prove anything by tables with slovenly and ambiguous or incorrect headings."

One may often trace the false statistical facts, which get a hold of the public mind, to some extensively-circulated table, to which, from dullness or carelessness, an erroneous or inaccurate heading has been affixed.

In illustration of what I have said, I would call attention to a complaint which has been very recently made with regard to the English judicial statistics. It is to the effect, that from the manner in which they are framed, they compel uncertainty and inaccuracy,

and make it exceedingly difficult to get at the fact whether crime has increased or decreased. One would certainly expect that an inspection of them would readily solve this question. But such is not the case. For instance, Tables 3, 4, and 5 are headed in capital letters "Indictable Offences," but in smaller type it appears that the offences enumerated in the tables are *limited to those which were tried on indictment.* Tables 6, 7, and 8 are headed also in large type, "Offences determined summarily," but there is nothing to explain that *among them are a great many which are indictable.* Again, the sixty-nine offences tried on indictment are, in Table 5, grouped under six classes, while those which are determined summarily are not grouped at all, and as they are set out alphabetically, under eighty-two heads, it is a work of great labour to pick out those which also occur among the table of offences tried on indictment, or would fall into the groups into which the latter are divided, so as to enable us to add the two together, this being the only way in which the essential facts can be got at. The compilers of these tables ought to collect them all into one table, in the six classes into which the offences tried on indictment are grouped, showing how many were tried on indictment and how many summarily. These classes are:—(1) Offences against the person, including assaults; (2) offences against property, with violence; (3) offences against property, without violence; (4) malicious offences against property; (5) forgery and offences against the currency; (6) offences not included in the above classes. It is clear if the compilers complied with this suggestion, the facts would be obvious and unquestionable, which, as I have pointed out, at present they are not, and cannot be made so without much labour.

Mankind as a rule adopt their conclusions from a few instances which have particularly attracted their attention, but as these may have been exceptional in their nature, the judgments arrived at are only too likely to be erroneous.

The broad basis on which the statistician collects his facts ensures the greatest approximate accuracy in his conclusions, and enables them to be relied upon with an absolute confidence, which cannot be accorded to those derived from mere guesses founded upon the personal experience of individuals.

I do not think however, the carefully digested statistical tables in connection with the census and other subjects of statistical investigation, which are compiled in and issued from the office of our esteemed Registrar-General, can be charged with any defects of this nature; they will bear favourable comparison in careful and lucid arrangement and in accuracy with the returns of a similar character issued in England or in foreign countries.

We, in this society, who so often have the advantage of listening to Dr. Grimshaw, and his able assistant Mr. Matheson's clear and intelligible expositions of statistical facts and calculations, and the results to be deduced therefrom, can well understand how the returns from the office of the Registrar-General are looked upon with favour and respect, and acted upon with that confidence which their admitted accuracy and clearness merits.

Although the first census of Ireland taken in 1812 was a failure, yet with regard to that of 1821 a committee of the English Statistical Society in 1840 stated:

> "It appears to have been by far the most perfect in its machinery and methods of any that has yet been executed in these islands."

This is high testimony, and amply justifies the observations I have just made as to our Registrar-General's returns.

I fear I have trespassed too long upon your patience in my very discursive statements, but I feel that I cannnot conclude a paper of this kind without making a few observations upon the value of statistics, whether you may agree with me in looking upon them as a Science or not.

Value of Statistics.

Everyone must admit that they form a very important element in influencing general political thought, and furnishing materials for the statesman and politician to work upon in the solution of social and economical difficulties. They enable the effect of special legislation to be ascertained; and they form a guide to the capitalist in the investment of his money, and enable the merchant to calculate the probabilities of successful trading in our colonies or in foreign lands. We are enabled by studying them to compare the progress or retrogression of our own country with those of other states, and even to make the same comparison between the different countries, towns, cities, and smaller aggregations of humanity, in the United Kingdom.

We discover from them the increase or diminution of crime and criminals, and derive the like information with regard to pauperism, wealth, labour, wages, education, and I might almost say respecting other innumerable potent factors in the progress or retrogression of the human race.

It may be interesting at this stage to mention that in 1753 a bill was introduced in the House of Commons

> "For taking and registering an annual account of the total number of the people, and of the total number of marriages, births, and deaths, and also of the total number of the poor obtaining alms from every parish and extra parochial place in Great Britain."

The bill although supported by the ministry was energetically opposed. The member for York city saying:—

> "I did not believe that there was any set of men, or indeed any individual of the human species, so presumptuous and so abandoned as to make the proposal we have just heard. . . . I hold this project to be totally subversive of the last remains of English liberty. . . . The new bill will direct the imposition of new taxes, and, indeed, the addition of a very few words will make it the most effectual engine of rapacity and oppression that was ever used against an injured people. . . . Moreover, an annual register of our people will acquaint our enemies abroad with our weakness."

The member for Newcastle-on-Tyne declared that he knew by letters that the people

> "Looked upon the proposal as ominous, and feared lest some public misfortune, or an epidemical distemper, should follow the numbering."

The bill after passing through the Commons with large majorities was thrown out in the Lords.

It was not for nearly half a century afterwards that the proposal was renewed in a fresh bill introduced into the House of Commons in November, 1800, when apparently a great change had taken place in public opinion. The fear that an enumeration of the people would injure us by showing our weakness to our enemies had given way to a new dread—viz., that the people were increasing so rapidly as to cause a dread of there not being sufficient food for them. Possibly the great dearth which existed at the time may have been a powerful factor in causing this change of opinion, combined with the universal attention commanded by Malthus' great work. Be this as it may, the Population Bill was brought on by Mr. Abbot, member for Helston, on 20th November, 1800, and passed through all its stages without opposition. The enumeration was made and has been repeated ever since, without omission, in the first year of each decade. All that I have stated clearly shows the difficulties which so powerful a body as the government of the country experienced in overcoming the prejudices and opposition of a numerous body of even the intelligent and educated members of the community, probably, largely based upon Biblical grounds in addition to the others I have alluded to.

There can be no doubt, as I have already suggested, that even now there is not that sympathy with statistical enquiry amongst the general public which it would be most desirable should exist.

There are some who regard the work of the statistician as inquisitorial in its character and would rather bear the penalties attached to non-compliance than furnish facts peculiar to themselves. They forget, as I have before mentioned, that the statistician deals not with particulars, but aggregates.

If I mistake not, however, our own Registrar-General has not had in this country the same difficulty in procuring answers to his statistical enquiries as has been experienced in the sister country, England; a very strong testimony to the general intelligence and good sense of the inhabitants of Ireland.

Perhaps after all the objection to furnish personal information ought not to surprise us, if we remember that every subject which has the slightest relation to the social or economic condition of man is seized hold of by the enthusiastic statistician.

I may sum up what can be said as to the utility of statistics in the eloquent words of Mr. Jeans, to whom I have before referred.—

> "It may be truly said that man is the creature of statistics from his cradle to his grave. In every one of the many aspects which he presents in the social kaleidoscope he is put under the dissection of figures, in his birth, his parentage, his physical characteristics, his educational attainments, his calling, his citizenship, his eating and drinking, his hours of labour and of recreation, his spending and saving, his condition as a benedict and bachelor, his health and sicknesss, his religion and his politics, his rising up and lying down, his going out and coming in, and, finally, in the cause and manner of his exit from this sublunary sphere.
>
> "This ever present microscopy of figures somewhat indisposes the average citizen from enjoying, as much as we could desire, the serious

> and useful work in which we are engaged. We may vainly try to imagine the blind probing after the truth, the continual liability to serious, economic, and administrative errors that must attend the progress or regress of a country where nothing is known statistically respecting either trade or commerce, shipping or railways, taxation or revenue, wealth, industry, vital and economic condition, or general social well-being. If we look on this picture and on that, we shall, I think, be ready to admit that the drawbacks and inconveniences attending 'not too many statistics, but just enough,' are as nothing in comparison with those that would result from anything short of this attainment."

I now come to the conclusion of my address for which I claim no originality, though the preparation of it has involved a good deal of reading. This I am far from regretting as it has been the means of giving me a knowledge,—it may be superficial—of the origin, methods, and uses of statistics which I did not before possess. This knowledge must be useful to me as a member of a society such as this is. It enables me to understand and appreciate more thoroughly the labours of those who have worked in the rich mine of statistical facts and have exhumed therefrom conclusions of inestimable value as a reliable guide to the politician, the philanthropist, and the statesman, in their efforts to improve, ameliorate, and alleviate the moral, social, and religious condition of mankind. What nobler object could any society or individual have in view? It stimulates and hallows the efforts of the sociological labourer, and induces him to display increased application and accuracy in his investigations, and more critical care in the deductions he arrives at when he thinks of the noble end he desires to attain. I trust this society will long continue to flourish, and that its numbers will increase and multiply, and prove to be the pioneers of as many important and beneficial social reforms in the future, as their predecessors have inaugurated in the past.

VI.—*Proceedings of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland.*

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION.

FIRST MEETING.

[Friday, 18th December, 1891.]

The Society met at the Leinster Lecture Hall, 35 Molesworth-street, the President in the chair.

The Rev. T. A. Finlay, F. R. U. I., read a paper entitled, "Co-operative Agricultural Societies in Germany."

SECOND MEETING.

[Tuesday, 12th January, 1892.]

The Society met at the Leinster Lecture Hall, 35 Molesworth-street, the President in the chair.