

Such a review of what has been done in our own time, and almost within our own memory, is well fitted to remove all despondency respecting the future course of legislation. That such great and extensive reforms have been effected within so short a period by the mere force of peaceful inquiry and discussion unanswerably proves that the governing classes of the empire are perfectly accessible to evidence and argument. In the constitution under which we live, to carry any measure essential to the general welfare—whatever special interests may be arrayed against it—it is only necessary to appeal, by well established facts and sound reasoning, to the intelligence and equity of our statesmen. The members of this Society do not, as such, seek to intrude into the province of the politician. Our business is to discover and demonstrate, by the application of scientific principles, the legislative action appropriate to each phase of society and each group of economic conditions. At what precise time, and in what particular form, our conclusions can be adopted in practice, is a question of political expediency, which those who are acquainted with the varying exigencies of public life can determine better than we. But it is encouraging to know that in endeavouring, by our researches and discussions, to overthrow error and to establish truth, we are labouring at no unpractical—no hopeless—task ; that any wise suggestion developed here may one day become a beneficent reality, a living agency for good ; and that thus, without sitting in the councils of the State, or mingling in the strife of parties, we may, each of us, do something towards the improvement of the institutions of our country.

IV.—*On the Necessity of a State Provision for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb, the Blind, and the Imbecile.* By Jonathan Pim, Esq. V.P.

[Read, Wednesday, January 20th, 1864.]

Your attention has already been called to the “necessity of a state provision for the education of the Deaf and Dumb of Ireland.” My object on the present occasion is to call your attention again to this subject, and to the parallel case of the Blind ; and also to bring particularly under your notice the claims of another portion of our population, which is even more heavily afflicted.

By the Report of the Census of Ireland for the year 1861, we find that there were

4,930	inhabitants who were	deaf and dumb,
723	”	dumb but not deaf,
6,879	”	blind,
7,065	”	lunatic,
7,033	”	idiotic,
<hr/>		
26,630		

For the instruction of the Deaf and Dumb there are in Ireland seven institutions, which are stated in the Census Report to have accommodation for 586 pupils. On the 7th of April, 1861, 399 deaf mutes were being educated in these institutions, and the total number of persons stated to have been educated in them, from the time of their establishment, had amounted to 1,586. We also find that the number of educated deaf mutes then living in Ireland was only 1,229, while the uneducated amounted to 3,830,* and of these "as many as 930 persons, 538 males and 392 females," are stated to have been "aged from five to fourteen, both inclusive, and therefore of the school-age, or that period at which, according to the most eminent authorities, this afflicted class of the community are most susceptible of education.†

It is evident that the present institutions, even if the amount of accommodation was fully made use of, would fall very short of the wants of this class of sufferers, and I feel assured that you will fully unite with the suggestion of the Census Commissioners, that it is advisable "either to engraft upon the National System of Education Institutions for the instruction of this afflicted class; or to grant aid from the State to those Schools already in existence; or to render it compulsory upon Boards of Guardians to send for instruction to suitable Institutions such Deaf and Dumb, or Blind persons, under the age of eighteen, as may be in their Unions, and who now come under the provisions of the Poor Law Act."‡

The condition of the Blind is more difficult to investigate, because many of those who become blind have previously received literary instruction, and are therefore returned in the Census as "educated," while they may still be in want of that special instruction which their loss of sight renders necessary. Even without taking these into account, we find that out of the 6,879 blind persons in Ireland 3,932 were uneducated; and of these there were 753—328 males and 425 females—between the ages of five and twenty-five, of

* The discrepancy in these numbers compared with those given above as *Deaf and Dumb, and Dumb but not Deaf*, arises from the table respecting education taking account of those only who were capable of receiving instruction.

The whole number are classed thus :—

Deaf and Dumb from birth	...	...	4,010
Do. by disease or accident	...	...	598
Do. unascertained causes	...	...	186
Dumb without other defect	...	...	265
			<hr/>
Total capable of receiving instruction	...	...	5,059
			<hr/>
Deaf and Dumb, Paralytic or Idiotic	...	136	
Dumb but not Deaf, with Paralysis	...	56	
Do. Idiocy	...	270	
Do. Paralysis and Idiocy	...	92	
Incapable of instruction	...	...	594
			<hr/>
Total of Deaf and Dumb, and Dumb but not Deaf	...	...	5,653

† Census Report, Part III., vol. i. p. 26.

‡ Census Report, Part III., vol. i. p. 30.

whom 149—43 males and 106 females—were in the Union Workhouses.

To meet the wants of this class of sufferers there are in Ireland nine institutions, having, in the aggregate, accommodation for 440 persons, but in which there were only 357 inmates on the 7th April, 1861; of these, 191 were paupers, supported at the expense of the Poor Law Unions in which they had lived. Five of these institutions, affording accommodation for 268 inmates, must be considered as asylums rather than educational establishments—the admission being for life; so that the provision for instruction, whether literary or industrial, is evidently very inadequate.

As respects the lunatics in Ireland, I will merely state that there were, as appears by the census for 1861,

4,613	in asylums,
273	in prisons,
577	in workhouses, and
1,602	at large, or in the custody of their friends.

Total, 7,065

We need not stop to consider, whether it was good for themselves and safe for the community that these 1,602 lunatics should be “at large,” and in many cases without any proper care; but it requires no argument to convince us, that the union workhouses were very unsuitable places for the 577 who had found refuge within their walls, and who were retained there, I presume, for want of accommodation in the District Lunatic Asylums.

But while thus referring to the wants of these distressed classes of our countrymen, and to the inadequacy of the provision made for their relief and instruction, my principal object in this paper has been to lay before you the claims which the Idiotic have upon us.

Of this class the census informs us there were 7,033 persons in Ireland in 1861, of whom

403	were in asylums,
21	„ prisons,
934	„ workhouses, and
5,675	„ at large.

Total, 7,033

For their instruction no provision whatsoever has yet been made; and while much has been done in Great Britain and on the Continent, and in the United States of America, the subject seems to have received but little attention in Ireland. I find that the Census Commissioners, having pressed it on the notice of the Government in the report which accompanied the census for 1851, again recur to the subject in 1861, repeating the words used in their former report:—“We respectfully suggest to your Excellency the propriety of taking some steps towards the education and moral improvement of Idiots and Imbeciles, a subject which at present engages the attention of the philanthropic both in England and on the Continent, where several establishments for the purpose have been erected, and

are supported by the State; and in which the susceptibility of this class to a certain amount of education has been demonstrated.”*

Until recently it was generally supposed that nothing could be done for this unfortunate class of our fellow-creatures except to secure them a maintenance, and prevent them from doing harm either to themselves or to others. The only care taken of them by the State has been to place them along with other paupers in the workhouses, where nothing has been done for their improvement, where their mischievous propensities have been a constant source of annoyance, and where their lives have been rendered miserable by the ill-usage or the ridicule of their companions; or else to confine them, when very bad, in lunatic asylums, exposed to the deteriorating influence which the companionship of the insane and the maniac must always have on persons so peculiarly inclined to imitate what they see and hear.

Juster views now prevail, and the exertions of those benevolent men who have devoted themselves to the work have proved that the dormant spark of intelligence, however weak it may be, is, with comparatively few exceptions, still capable of development, if tended with proper care.

The importance of medical care and educational training for imbecile children was strongly advocated by Dr. Richard Poole, of Edinburgh (now of Aberdeen), so early as the year 1819. His remarks were first published in an article on Education in the *Encyclopædia Edinensis*, which subsequently appeared as a separate treatise in 1825. In the second chapter, which treats of the education of the Defective and the Imbecile, after referring to the “different effects produced on the state of both the intellectual and moral powers by peculiarities in diet and regimen,” he adds, “It is then surely obvious that there is ground for employing medical advice in cases of general imbecility presenting in early life; and there cannot be a doubt that cases of this kind, which are allowed by despair to become confirmed and deteriorated, might have been relieved by professional interference.” Again he says, “There is reason for imagining that the principle of substitution, by which one faculty or sense is made to answer, in some degree, for another, might serve as the basis of successful education; and that it is possible that the worst cases ever met with would so far yield to science and industry, as to vindicate and reward the patience and ingenuity bestowed on them.” . . . “The philosopher who should undertake to investigate the whole subject, and to suggest a suitable plan of remedy or alleviation, would perform an acceptable service to science, and merit the gratitude of mankind.”

These suggestions were for the most part unheeded, and nothing was done in Great Britain for several years. It was in France that the first educational experiment was made. M. Ferrus, the chief physician of the Asylum of the Bicêtre, organized a school in 1828 for the imbecile in the asylum, and the result of this first attempt was so satisfactory, that his successors have been induced to ex-

* Census Report, Part III., vol. i. p. 70.

tend the system of instruction, until that institution has become practically a school for the idiotic and imbecile children within its walls.

In Switzerland also this work was engaged in early. The establishment founded by Dr. Guggenbuhl, on the Abendberg, near Interlacken, is well known. Other continental States might also be mentioned if it were needful.

The first association in England for the education of the Imbecile was formed in October, 1847, principally through the exertions of the late Rev. Dr. Andrew Reed, of Hackney. The first asylum established by this association was in an old mansion house at Highgate, which was fitted up for the reception of 75 pupils. Subsequently, in 1850, the house and grounds of Essex Hall, near Colchester, were placed at the disposal of the association, on very favourable terms, by Sir Morton Peto, M.P. Both these establishments were soon filled, and the board of managers determined to erect an asylum on a larger scale, and with the various adjuncts which they considered necessary for the efficient carrying out of their plans. In pursuance of this resolution, the first stone of the asylum at Earlswood, Surrey, was laid in July, 1853, by the late Prince Consort, who continued during his life to take a warm interest in its success. Upwards of £60,000 has been expended in the erection and furnishing of this building, which was opened as an asylum, under the same auspices, in June, 1855. It now contains 335 imbecile pupils—232 male and 103 female—which, with the officers of the institution, and the different teachers and servants, about 90 in number, make the whole number of inmates amount to 425. The establishment at Highgate has been given up, but Essex Hall has been continued as an independent asylum for the imbeciles of the eastern counties, and contained 80 pupils when the last annual report was published.

This subject engaged attention in America somewhat earlier than in England; and almost from the first it received the countenance and support of the State. The Massachusetts school for Idiotic and Feeble-minded Youth was formed in 1847: the act of incorporation dates from the 4th of April, 1850; and a resolution of the State Legislature, passed on the 30th of April, 1851, grants 5000 dollars annually "to be devoted to teaching and training indigent idiotic children, belonging to the Commonwealth;" which sum was increased to 9000 dollars in March, 1861. In addition to these annual payments, 25,000 dollars were granted by the State of Massachusetts, in 1855, towards the purchase of ground, and the erection of new school buildings. The States of New York and Pennsylvania soon followed the example of Massachusetts—the former in 1851, and the latter in 1853. In both these States the schools have been incorporated, and receive annual grants, and extensive buildings have been erected, to the cost of which the State has largely contributed. The estimated cost of the noble institution which was founded in 1857, at Media, a small town about twelve miles from Philadelphia, exceeds 80,000 dollars, and the buildings are expected, when completed, to accommodate 150 pupils. Grants have also been made by the legislatures

of Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware, Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio: some of these States having established schools of their own, while others have made grants for the support of their imbecile children at the institutions founded in other states.

Although some of the first suggestions originated in Scotland, it is only recently that any attempt has been made to carry them into practical effect in that country. The first institution for the training of the imbecile was erected in 1852, by Sir John and Lady Jane Ogilvy, on their estate at Baldovan, near Dundee. It is still in operation, and has accommodation for about 30 children, being supported partly by the contributions of the benevolent, and partly by the profits derived from the payments received for the children of the wealthier classes. An institution for the same object was opened in Edinburgh in 1855, under the care of Dr. David Brodie, which was maintained for some years, until Dr. Brodie's services were transferred to the Scottish Institution for the Education of Imbecile Children, founded in 1861, at Larbert, Stirlingshire, and of which a part only has yet been completed. The architect's estimate for the whole building was £10,000, and it is calculated to afford accommodation for 200 pupils.

The result of the care bestowed in these asylums varies according to the variety of mental condition. For the very lowest grade of idiocy nothing can be done beyond providing a comfortable home, and supplying their physical wants; but by far the greater number of those who are classed as imbecile or idiotic have faculties which are capable of development, especially if their instruction be commenced at an early age; and, in several cases, the results have been such as to render them useful members of society, able to contribute largely to their own maintenance. I quote the following from a letter, written by Dr. Conolly of London, and printed by the Society for the Education of Imbecile Children in Scotland:—
 "The patient and well-directed efforts made in asylums already existing for the imbecile and idiotic children, have proved that the senses may be educated, the muscular movements and power improved, and the mental faculties in every case more or less cultivated. The faculty of speech may be, we may almost say, *bestowed* on many who appear at first to be unable to employ articulate language; all their habits may be amended; industrial power may be imparted to them; all their moral feelings awakened, and even devotional aspirations given to those in whom the attributes of soul were so obscured as to seem to be wanting." This language is strong, but it is fully borne out by the facts; and the numerous instances of improvement which might be referred to in proof are both curious and interesting.

It is not necessary to advert at length to the mode of treatment pursued in these asylums, or rather schools for teaching the imbecile. It is founded on the principle that there is *mind*, but that the bodily organs through which the mind works are deranged, and that, therefore, the first care should be devoted to the improvement of the general health, and the development of the physical powers. For this purpose careful medical treatment is required, with more highly nourishing food in some cases, and a well-regulated diet in all;

while the physical powers are developed by a well-arranged system of gymnastics, commencing with the simplest movements. Many of the pupils, at their admission into the asylum, can neither speak nor stand, nor even grasp anything with their hands, neither can they see or hear properly. It is necessary to educate all their senses; the touch, the eye, the ear, the taste, the smell, must be trained slowly and gradually, so as to distinguish properly the various objects submitted to them. At the same time the habits of the poor idiot must be improved, and order, cleanliness, and obedience must be enforced. All this is achieved in the great majority of cases, and in some the results obtained are indeed astonishing. Boys who could hardly stand are trained to the performance of gymnastic exercises; those who could not speak learn not only to speak but to sing; those who had no use of their hands acquire facility and skill as handicraft workmen; many learn to write, and some to draw with taste and correctness. Music has peculiar charms for them; and, in a few cases, imbecile pupils have learned to play with facility.

The following statement of the results obtained is taken from a lecture by the Rev. Edwin Sidney, Rector of Cornard Parva, Suffolk, delivered at the Literary and Scientific Institution, Croydon, on the 22nd December, 1862. Mr. Sydney has taken a very great interest in the establishment at Earlswood, and his lecture was published at the joint request of his audience and the Board of Management of the asylum. He says: "Out of thirty-one pupils discharged since last year, their terms being completed, only two went away unimproved; seventeen had received great benefit; and twelve—seven boys and five girls—had so much profited as to be able to work for their livelihood; some of them have, indeed, obtained regular employment, the girls in domestic service, and the boys as carpenters, tailors, and mat makers." Again, referring to the specimens of the work of the pupils which were exhibited in the lecture room, he says: "You see here many examples of neat handicraft, all performed by the once apparently lost and degraded children, the butts of the thoughtless youth around them, or avoided, or neglected, or maltreated by those who now see the duty of cherishing them. On inspecting these examples of progress in the different employments, you will not be surprised to be told that the wardrobes of the house are furnished by the industry of the pupils. Male attire, female garments, sheets and mats, to say nothing of fancy needlework, some of which are before you, are all made in the house. * * * Fifteen of the pupils are employed in the carpenter's shop, twelve are shoemakers, fifteen are tailors, and five make mats. Nine pupils work on the farm, and the same number in the garden; and manifest the greatest diligence and zeal. Fourteen boys assist the attendants, and help to carry on the house-work, in which they take singular pride and pleasure; cleaning shoes, knives and forks, and plates, or scrubbing heartily. Seventy-three are in the industrial training school, and many making progress. Twenty girls perform the duties of household servants; and thirteen are really

adepts at needlework.* * * * "I may say, generally, that although all the pupils are not improved to the extent of the better cases adverted to, yet all are improved in personal appearance, health, habits, and comfort. A majority are found to have increased in vigour, decency, self-control, preception, speech, knowledge of objects, and proper demeanour. Many have become able to manifest powers of every description, more or less; as to observe, to behave well, to think on various things fairly, to maintain good habits, to engage in the pursuits and occupations of which you see results in the things shown this evening; and above all, in the sense of duty and the exercises of religion, with a lively consciousness of right and wrong. A person who was with me on a visit to the asylum, for instance, heard the mason I have mentioned as working so cleverly at the new buildings, rebuke a boy who was desirous to conceal a fault he had committed, by saying, 'Deceiving the master when you are doing wrong is adding sin to sin.' Who would have looked for such an observation from one who, at his coming under the care of the officers of the asylum, appeared hopeless in all respects, and had been the game of the young and thoughtless?"

Among the most remarkable facts which the care bestowed on the imbecile has brought into view, is the special aptitude which some of them evince for particular pursuits. The case of one young man mentioned by the Rev. Mr. Sidney, and who is, I believe, still in the asylum at Earlswood, may be referred to as particularly illustrating this position. He possesses "special powers as a copyist of the finest engravings, and skill as a modeller and cabinetmaker," which "have been developed from what appeared to be a condition of hopeless imbecility." Mr. Sidney relates that, having shown one of this young man's drawings to the late Prince Consort, the Prince, after examining it attentively, asked with evident surprise, "Is it possible that the person who drew this could ever have been an idiot?" The reply was, "That there was no doubt of it, since it had taken some months to make him distinguish the difference between a dog's head and his tail; and, besides, he never could learn to write, nor read, nor speak properly."

The sufferings of the imbecile when kept at home by their parents are sometimes very great, and the ill-treatment they frequently receive when allowed to go at large is painful to witness. In general, their lot in such circumstances is a very unhappy one. In the poor-houses or in lunatic asylums, these poor creatures are, no doubt, fed and clothed, but they are not taught or employed; and the difference as respects their happiness is very great, though not greater than anyone who reflects on the subject must expect. But, when instructed and employed, the exercise of their newly acquired powers becomes a source of great positive enjoyment; they become much attached to those who treat them kindly, and their

* Mr. Sidney's statement is fully borne out by the Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, dated June 16th, 1862:—"They state that, 'besides the work done for the Institution, more than £150 had been realized by the sale of maps and other articles.'"

freedom from care preserves them from many of the anxieties to which persons of clearer intellect are liable. The report, issued in 1851 by the Governors of the English asylum for idiots, says: "The poor idiot, if wisely and kindly treated, is mostly disposed to be happy. 'Providence tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.' Every advance we make in the care and education of this class has a sensible effect on their contentment and satisfaction. Care sits lightly on them: they are very open to kindness, and glad to return it; and even under privation they are often saved from distressing consciousness. Apart from the cases of positive physical disease and suffering, there is not a family, far or near, more contented, more cheerful, or more happy! And this is so evident, and at the same time so surprising to visitors, that they commonly retire, asking themselves, 'Can this be an idiot family?'"

There is another point to which I would advert, and which is, I think, peculiarly interesting, I mean their susceptibility to religious impressions. I quote again from the Rev. Mr. Sidney's lecture. He says—"There is yet one peculiarity in great numbers of these melancholy specimens of the human species, which gilds the dark cloud in which they are enveloped. It is this, that there is nothing, of which most of those to whom a ray of light can be imparted, are so susceptible of as a feeling sense of religion. Indeed, I believe Earlwood owes much of its success to keeping this constantly in view, and to the touching and simple lessons of the Gospel, most anxiously imparted to those whose state in the gradations of their malady enables them to receive instruction, which they seem to remember with more interest than anything else." Mr. Sidney thus concludes his remarks on this subject: "I have more than once been present and assisted at the hour of prayers, and have been greatly delighted with the attention manifested by many, and the decorum of almost all who attend. The slightest undue attitude or gesture on the part of the younger children, is voluntarily repressed by the others who are further advanced, by a shake of the head or a movement of the hand. In being questioned on the simple truths of the gospel, their answers have often surprised me; and it is certain that under its influence lying idiots have become truthful, and pilferers honest; nor does the impression leave them when they quit the asylum. * * * * * More than one case I have myself seen in illness, from which there was no hope of recovery; and have witnessed a patience under pain most exemplary, and have heard the poor sufferers say their hope was in their Saviour, and that with a gentleness and a smiling expression of countenance that I think would have moved any heart, however cold."

The arguments brought forward are, I trust, amply sufficient to prove that it is a duty incumbent on society to educate and instruct the imbecile, so far as the limited range of their capabilities, and their restricted powers, may be capable of instruction and improvement. The important question next arises, how is this to be done? How is the expense of doing it to be provided for? I answer, unhesitatingly, that there ought to be a State provision for this purpose. Provision ought surely to be made by the State for the

instruction, not only of the deaf and dumb and the blind, but also of the imbecile and idiotic, so that, as far as it may prove practicable, they may be rendered capable of contributing to their own support; and when their incapacity is such that this is impossible, arrangements should be made for their maintenance in asylums, where they may be provided with such comforts as their distressed condition admits of, instead of leaving them among the other paupers in the union work-houses, or shutting them up with the insane in lunatic asylums.

There were at the time of the last census 7,033 imbecile and idiotic persons in Ireland, of whom 1,358 were being supported at the public expense in workhouses, lunatic asylums, and prisons. If these had been properly cared for when young, it is probable that many of them would have been enabled to earn sufficient for their support; but even under the most favourable circumstances there would, no doubt, still remain many who would be unsuited to strive with the world without some protection, and who had no relatives capable of affording it. For these, and for the education of the young, several asylums would be required as large as that at Earlswood, so that, if our duty to these unfortunates is to be fulfilled, a large outlay is requisite for the erection of the necessary buildings alone, without taking account of the annual expenses for their maintenance.

I may be permitted to refer to the Committee of the Society for the Education of Imbecile Youth in Scotland as advocating the same views on this subject. In their first report, published in 1862, they state that they "have at various times had under their consideration the desirableness of endeavouring to procure the recognition by the State of the claims of pauper imbecile children, as regards their training: that a deputation from their Society waited upon the Lord Advocate in the course of the previous winter; and that they are not without hopes that, in the forthcoming Lunacy Act, some measure such as they contemplate may be introduced." They further refer to the Report of the Board of Supervision for 1853, which, in reference to the Institution for Imbeciles near Dundee, contains the following statement of the opinions of the Board:—"We do not doubt that many pauper children, who, by treatment in such an institution might have been made capable of maintaining themselves, have, for want of such means of instruction, remained helpless burdens on their parishes throughout their lives."

It is well known that throughout the United States of America, and especially in the New England States, the duty of providing the means of instruction for all classes of the population has been long recognised; and has been more thoroughly carried into effect than probably in any other country. Special means have long since been provided by the New England States for the education of the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb; and the same principle is now recognised as applicable to the Imbecile and Idiotic. The preamble to the act of the legislature of Ohio, incorporating the Ohio State Asylum for the Education of Idiotic and Imbecile Youth, puts the arguments in the following forcible terms:—"Whereas the State has recognised

the education of its youth as a duty incumbent upon the State, and has provided for those who are not susceptible of improvement in common schools, modes of instruction adapted to their wants and capabilities; and whereas it appears, by the report of the Secretary of State, that there are a large number of idiotic youth resident within its borders, who are incapable of improvement in ordinary or private schools, who are a burden to their friends and to the community, objects of commiseration, degraded and helpless; and whereas experience has satisfactorily demonstrated that, under the system of instruction adopted in schools for Idiots in other States, and in Europe, these youths may be elevated, their habits corrected, their health and morals greatly improved, and they be enabled to obtain their own support: now, therefore, in the discharge of the duty of the State to educate its weak and helpless children, as well as the gifted and the strong, and to elevate a hitherto neglected class: Be it enacted," &c. &c.

No words of mine could add force to this clear statement of the duty of the State towards its weak and helpless members—a duty which we are surely as well able to fulfil as those who live on the other side of the Atlantic; and which, though more slow to act, we shall, I trust, before long, fulfil as thoroughly and as efficiently.

In using the term a *State provision*, I mean a provision made by the authority of the State; but I have no intention of proposing that the expense of educating these afflicted persons, whether blind, or deaf and dumb, or imbecile, should be defrayed by grants from the Treasury. The maintenance of these classes of paupers is now a charge on the poor-law unions, and, if sent to educational establishments, the expense should still be chargeable to the poor-rates. Legislation is required to enable them to be educated, instead of being supported in idleness; and I trust, therefore, you will affirm the proposition that the Boards of Guardians throughout Ireland ought not only to be empowered, but that it should be compulsory upon them to send to suitable institutions for maintenance and education, all the pauper children and young persons within their limits who may be either Deaf and Dumb, or Blind, or Imbecile.

But ought we not to do somewhat more than provide for the instruction of paupers? Would it not be right to empower the Boards of Guardians, under such arrangements as might best prevent abuse, to pay for the maintenance and education of Deaf and Dumb, or Blind, or Imbecile persons, whose parents might be too poor to pay for them, although not absolutely paupers? When we consider the burden which such a child entails on a poor family, and the impossibility of their providing for him at home the care which he ought to receive, or of instructing him, we may be disposed to recognise it as at least expedient, if we are not willing to admit of any stronger claim, that the public funds should be made available to afford him that special training, without which he must become a burden to society; and probably, in the end, a permanent source of expense to the union, which, in many cases, would have been avoided if he had received instruction when young.

The proper care and instruction of these imbecile and idiotic chil-

dren will no doubt be expensive; but, whatever it may amount to, the cost of neglecting them is heavier still. We cannot put them to death in infancy, or expose them to perish. They must be supported in idleness, if they are not taught to work. Certainly there are many whom no amount of instruction would render capable of supporting themselves by their own exertions; but this is not the case with all. A considerable proportion may be enabled to earn their own living, if placed under proper superintendance, and employed at work suited to their peculiar powers; and even when they are incapable of such improvement as this, the eradication of bad and vicious habits will not only conduce to their own happiness, and to the comfort of all who have to do with them, but will greatly lessen the expense of maintaining them.*

Whatever institutions be founded for the education of these destitute classes,—whether for those who are deprived of one sense, or for those who suffer under the still heavier affliction of mental and physical weakness,—the instruction given must be based on religion. Unless it be a religious education, it is not worthy of the name. The whole man must be educated. His physical powers must be trained and strengthened by exercise, and his intellectual capacities called forth, as far as may be possible, by instruction; but, above all, the patient and unremitting exertions of the teacher must be devoted to the cultivation of a correct sense of morals, and the awakening within him of the religious affections. In short, he must be educated, not only as a child of earth, but as a destined heir of heaven. It is evident that such an education involves dogmatic teaching in the peculiar doctrines of that form of Christianity to which the pupils may belong, and requires, therefore, in Ireland, at least two classes of establishments to enable it to be carried out properly. The precedent set by the Reformatory Establishments for Youthful Criminals may well be followed in these cases also.

It has been already shown that several large and costly establishments will be required to furnish the means of instruction for all who need it; and it is a very difficult question how the funds are to be provided for their erection. If, like the reformatory establishments, the asylums or schools for these helpless classes are to be managed by boards of governors who are not subject to the control of the state, then, it is, I think, evident that they must depend for their foundation upon individual exertion and private benevolence. This is the course which has been adopted in Ireland as respects the institutions for the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb, and which has

* The writer of a valuable article on this subject in the *North British Review* for August, from which some of the remarks in the text have been taken, states that “three pupils left Earlswood last year who are now entirely self-supporting. One of these, who, when admitted, appeared sullen and good for nothing, and could not learn the simplest thing, now resides in lodgings at Notting Hill, and earns four shillings a day.” In another place, the same writer says, “There were until lately seven aged imbeciles of one family in an asylum near Edinburgh, who have cost a small Scotch parish £140 per annum for a long series of years. These were all of the teachable class, and, under appropriate management, could have been taught to earn their own living, with a larger addition to their happiness.”

been taken in England and Scotland in forming their institutions for the Imbecile. In each of the three countries it has proved inadequate ; and therefore, while the annual cost of maintenance should certainly be borne by the districts from which the children may be sent, it would probably be necessary, with respect to the outlay in founding these establishments, not only in Ireland but in England and Scotland also, to supplement the contributions of individuals, by public grants, bearing some definite proportion, either to the amount of the private contributions, or to the extent of the proposed establishment and the accommodation to be afforded by it.

But whether the proposed educational establishments be founded wholly by private benevolence, or whether the contributions of individuals be supplemented with grants of public money, they should, like the reformatories, be conducted wholly under private management, some being Protestant, and others Roman Catholic ; and the Boards of Guardians should be bound to send all children to institutions where the religious teaching was in accordance with the faith professed by their parents.

DISCUSSION.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY thought the subject of the paper claimed the more attention from the existence of the fact that the returns obtained by the Royal Commission in 1858 showed an increase in the number of insane, and the late census showed this increase had gone on. In 1861 there were 14,098 lunatic and idiotic in Ireland, whilst in 1851 there had been but 9,980. The ratio to the population was, in 1851, of the insane, one in every 1,291, whilst in 1861 it was one in every 821 ; idiotic, one in every 1,336 (1851), instead of one in every 825 (1861). The ratio, too, of the deaf and dumb classes had increased : in 1851 it had been one in every 1,265, whilst in 1861 it proved to be one in every 1,025 of the population. Why was this so ? One cause was the emigration, by which the population had been, as it were, skimmed, and the cream taken away. Another cause was the insufficiency of asylums for such classes—the absence of the means of early treatment and early training. It was gratifying to know this had not escaped the attention of the Government Departments whose duties were conversant with these matters. With as much humanity as ability, the sufferings of the insane, by reason of the state of the law which consigned many of them in Ireland to prisons and to workhouses, had been frequently exposed and deplored by the officials who had the best means of estimating the extent of the evil. Long before the Report of the Royal Commission, Dr. Nugent (Inspector of Lunatic Asylums) had pointed out that in England there existed no similar enactment to the Act 1 Vic. cap. 27, by which dangerous lunatics could be committed to a prison, and had expressed regret and disapprobation that such a practice should prevail. The residence of lunatics in such a place was also disapproved of, and the opinion put forward that “it was obvious, for many reasons, that the most suitable place for every demented person, lunatic

or idiot, harmless or otherwise, is an institution specially devoted to the care of the insane, under the superintendence and management of experienced officers and attendants, who are practically acquainted with the treatment of mental disease in every form, and directed and controlled by that department of the public service to which the supervision of all matters relating to such establishments properly belongs." (8th Report, p. 10.) In many other respects that Report was peculiarly valuable, as pointing out defects in the existing system, and much of it anticipated the Report of the Royal Commission. Of that body the late Sir Thomas Redington and Dr. Corrigan were leading members, and the Report having referred to the Lords' Report in 1843, as to the unfitness of workhouses as places for the custody or treatment of lunatics, endorsed this opinion by stating "that there can be no more unsuitable place for the detention of insane persons than the ordinary lunatic wards of the union workhouses." (P. 18.) The bad effects which confinement in a gaol must have as regards the lunatic was but one of the reasons which led the Commissioners to recommend the repeal of the Act empowering Justices to commit such persons to prison, and the assimilation of the law in Ireland to that in England, by which justices were empowered to commit directly to asylums. But in some respects the law, even in England, though more humane than that in Ireland, was not considered satisfactory, and well-informed persons exposed the evils of workhouses as primary or permanent receptacles for the insane. There the accommodation should not be of an inviting character, whilst asylums ought to be comfortable residences. As had been said by a recent writer (Dr. Arlidge, *On the State of Lunacy*), the well-being of the insane should be balanced against economy. Mr. Pim's paper had shown not only the large number at large, and thus wholly unprovided for, but also the extent to which places so unfit as workhouses and gaols were used in Ireland for the detention of the insane. But the extent to which the system was now carried could be estimated more plainly from what appeared in the last (1863) Report of the Inspectors-General of Prisons (Mr. John Lentaigne and Mr. J. Corry Connellan), by which it was shown that there had been in 1862 no less than 648 committals of those miserable creatures to prisons—398 men and 250 women—in one year. It was not to be wondered at that the removal of all such from gaols should be urgently recommended by those high official authorities, when they saw these wretched objects "left without proper diet or curative appliances, and in charge of prisoners, and frequently subjected to the most extreme means of coercion." (40th Report, 1862, xliii.) The horrors of the system may be estimated from two instances. Mr. Lentaigne, reporting on the lunatics in Eruis Gaol (p. 224), relates:—"One J. C., who had been committed to bridewell as a dangerous lunatic, cut his throat. This prisoner, while under treatment in the hospital of the gaol, in the care of two prisoners, during their sleep committed suicide by strangling himself with bandages taken from the wound in his throat." Mr. Connellan reports a case where the law was strictly complied with, and a death was the result (p. 386):—"On the last

day of December, 1861, a woman labouring solely under puerperal mania was, although reduced to the extremity of weakness, taken from the hospital in which she was a patient, conveyed to the head police office, thence committed to Grangegorman Female Penitentiary as a dangerous lunatic; no application made at the Richmond Asylum, but the patient taken direct to prison, where, having arrived in a fearful state of mania and debility, she never rallied, but died on the morning of the second day after her committal in a dying state." This was a state of the law which must lead, by preventing the cure of the insane, to the continued increase of that class. With the view of obtaining proper asylums for those of whom something could be made, there should be sufficient provision for the hopelessly insane; and that the Government would have the support of the influential and well-informed classes in the country, if improvements in the existing system were proposed, was proved by the fact that, within a few weeks, the Cork board of guardians had memorialled the Lord Lieutenant with a view to having ample accommodation, but of an inexpensive character, provided for all cases classed as lunatics, and that at the Killarney Board, more recently, similar views had been expressed. The matter brought under notice was but a small portion of the wide subject of which Mr. Pim had treated, but it was the first legislative change which ought to be made, as being of the most pressing urgency; and if made, it would evidence the acknowledgment of views more correct and more humane than were now acted upon under the sanction of law.

DR. HANCOCK noticed the difference in the law in England and Ireland as to the clauses which Mr. Pim had been referring to. By a recent Act guardians in England were enabled to pay for children in any institution established for the instruction of the blind, deaf or dumb, *lame, deformed, or idiotic* persons, 25 & 26 Vic. c. 43, s. 10. Guardians in Ireland could support only the blind, deaf, or dumb, 6 & 7 Vic. c. 92, s. 14, but no provision was made for the lame, deformed, or idiotic. The Irish Act, dating so far back as 1843, before the first of the institutions referred to by Mr. Pim had been established in the United Kingdom for the instruction of the idiotic, was naturally enough restricted to the institutions then known. But it was an unfortunate circumstance that the excellent statute passed for the benefit of this and other classes of pauper children in 1862, contained in its concluding section the provision that it should not extend to Ireland. In Scotland, also, notwithstanding the exertions of the Committee of the Society for the Education of Imbecile Youth in Scotland, and their activity in bringing the subject under the notice of the Lord Advocate a few months before the Act of 1862 was passed, Scotland, too, was excepted from the provisions of the Act.

DR. LALOR said the paper of Mr. Pim was very valuable, and he deserved great credit for bringing the subject before the society.

THE CHAIRMAN (SIR THOMAS LARCOM) stated that Earlswood was understood to be an expensive institution. Six new lunatic asylums were now being built in Ireland, in addition to the six which were in course of erection at the time the Commissioners reported. With respect to the proposal to build auxiliaries to the present lunatic

asylums, one had already been built; and the Government were in correspondence with the best authorities of another country as to the erection of a second.

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

SEVENTEENTH SESSION.—OPENING MEETING.

[Wednesday, 18th November, 1863.]

The Society met at 35, Molesworth-street, Professor Ingram, LL.D., F.T.C.D., V.P., in the Chair,

Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Hon. Secretary, read the Report of the Council for the past Session.

Dr. Hancock, Hon. Secretary, read "An Obituary Notice of the late President of the Society, Archbishop Whately."

It was moved by the Solicitor-General, seconded by Robert McDonnell, Esq., M.D., and resolved unanimously:—

"That the notice of the late President now read be preserved by being printed in the Transactions of the Society."

Professor Ingram, LL.D., F.T.C.D., Vice-President, delivered the Inaugural Address of the Session.

Dr. Ingram having left the chair, and the Hon. Judge Longfield, President of the Society, having been called thereto,

The Right Hon. Thomas O'Hagan, M.P. Attorney-General for Ireland, in moving, "That the marked thanks of the society are due to Professor Ingram for the address with which this session has been inaugurated, and that he be requested to place the same in the hands of the secretaries for publication in the Journal of the Society," said that the remarkable and impressive address which had just been delivered had commended itself to the acceptance of the meeting by its pregnant thought and high ability. None of those who, like himself, had the pleasure and the profit of acquaintance with Dr. Ingram, and who knew his profound and varied learning, clear and comprehensive intellect, and genial and noble nature, could be in the least surprised at the ability displayed by the address, which, though containing some propositions open to controversy, and of which all would not approve, was admirable in the originality of its views, in the vigour of its reasoning, and, above all, in the hopeful and sympathetic spirit with which it regarded the condition of our country. The lesson to be learned from that admirable address was conveyed in the words—

"Durate et vosmet rebus servate secundis."

Though circumstances of discouragement and depression be around us, we have no room for despair; and, if we do our duty bating no jot of heart or hope, and manfully striving for a better future, we shall surely see it, when the day-star shall break upon the darkness, and the painful struggles of our transition state shall be followed by a time of permanent happiness and progress. He had sincere