

## IDIOTS AND IMBECILES.

621. We now approach a class which comes under our terms of reference as requiring from special circumstances exceptional methods of education, and which are practically excluded from the operation of the Education Acts—as much and perhaps even more than the classes we have previously been considering.

622. Our inquiries regarding the imbeciles and idiots have been directed towards ascertaining how many of them are capable of education and are able to benefit by training, and if so, whether it can best be carried out in some special institution distinct from an ordinary lunatic asylum.

*Total Number.*19,456.  
Diggens.

623. Their number is open to some doubt. It is very difficult to obtain any accurate statistics of idiots and imbeciles, and this the Census Commissioners for England and Wales have themselves very greatly deplored. An inquiry was made in the year 1871 in the neighbourhood of Lancaster by the clerk to the union, who superintended the enumeration there: he was a member of the central committee of the Royal Albert Asylum, and being much interested in the asylum he gave special instructions to the enumerators. On going over their papers at the close of the enumeration he found that at least 25 per cent. of the cases in the neighbourhood of which he knew personally had not been put down at all. The Census Commissioners state that, having grave doubts with regard to the accuracy of the returns made to them at the last census, they inquired at one large institution as to the number of idiots and imbeciles admitted into that institution in the year of the census, and they found that not one-half of the patients admitted into that institution had been enumerated. The Census Commissioners take it that between the ages of 15 and 20 there is less probability of concealment than in the earlier ages, and that is very likely to be true, because, with regard to children under five years of age, it is not at all likely that parents would confess that their children were imbecile, and therefore they will not return them as such. And between the ages of 5 and 15 the parents will not readily admit that their children are even weak-minded. There is the utmost difficulty in convincing the parents, on their application for the admission of their children into an institution, that they are not very superior to other children, while the contrary is the case. In the census in 1881 the number given is 32,717. Of these, 8,782 were between 5 and 20 years, 9,233 were under 20 years of age, and the Commissioners just double the latter number to get an approximate estimate; they give 18,456, or only 10 less than the duplication. In the case of those of 20 years of age or upwards the census returns gives 23,484, and the Commissioners adopt those figures.

19,456.  
Diggens.

624. Mr. Diggens assumes that the actual census will give the per-centage of persons under 20 years of age as about 28 per cent. of the whole number, and the Commissioners' estimate is 44 per cent. of the whole number of idiots and imbeciles. If any importance can be attached to the Census Commissioners' Report we are almost bound to take their larger number.

See their  
Report, p. 6.

625. The Special Committee of the Charity Organization Society on the education and care of idiots, imbeciles, and harmless lunatics, which sat in 1876 and 1877 (previously to the last census) estimated the total number of these classes to be about 25 per cent. in excess of the census figures, which would bring it up to 49,041. Assuming that two-thirds of these, or 32,694, would be chargeable to the poor rate, and that of the remainder, probably one-fifth, or 3,269, belong to the classes just above paupers but needing to be benefited by public administration, the above-named Committee considered that the total number of cases to be provided for was 32,694 + 3,269, or 35,963.

*State of the Law.*18,982.  
Perceval.

626. When the census of 1881 was taken, imbeciles and idiots were classed under the head of lunatics. The Lunacy Acts define a lunatic as "a lunatic, an idiot, or a person of unsound mind."

18,983.  
Perceval.

627. By the "Idiots Act, 1886," some alteration was made in the law, but it only amounts to this that the Act alters the rules for the detention of such persons; it simplifies their admission into asylums, and in the opinion of the late Secretary to the

Commissioners in Lunacy, it practically does little more. There is this definition in section 17 of that Act, "In this Act if not inconsistent with the context, 'idiots' or 'imbeciles' do not include 'lunatics,' and 'lunatic' does not mean or include idiot or imbecile."

628. The Secretary of the Royal Albert Asylum, however, considers that the Idiots Act of 1886 has had a very beneficial effect in facilitating the sending of children to the Royal Albert Asylum. The parents, especially those who have feeble-minded children, strongly object to have their children stigmatised as idiots under the Lunacy Acts.

19,459.  
Diggens.

629. Previously to that Act certificates had to be signed under the Lunacy Acts. There were two medical certificates required and a statement from the parent, which in some cases was absurd; it required the date of the last attack, whether the patient was dangerous, and whether he had suicidal tendencies, in the same manner and in the same forms as are now required for dangerous lunatics. That shocked the parents when they wanted to make application for the admission of their children. The effect of the Idiots Act has been to facilitate the admission of children into institutions, and especially the admission of the higher grade of imbeciles, those whose friends would strongly oppose the idea of their being deemed to be idiots or lunatics. Parents of that class formerly came to the Royal Albert Asylum, and, after an inspection of the institution, would have sent their children there but for the fact of having to sign the forms of admission.

19,460.  
Diggens.

630. The authorities of the Earlswood Asylum bear similar testimony as to the beneficial effect of the Idiots Act:—

"This legislation has emancipated the imbecile asylums and the inmates from the totally unsuitable provisions and restrictions of the Lunacy Acts. A feeble-minded child can now be admitted into an institution to receive the benefits of its educational and industrial training upon a simple medical certificate that it is "imbecile" and "capable of receiving benefit from admission into an asylum."

Report of  
the Earls-  
wood  
Asylum.

631. The 25th and 26th Victoria, chapter 43, which is "An Act to provide for the education and maintenance of pauper children in certain schools and institutions," empowers the guardians to send any pauper child to any school certified by the Local Government Board and supported wholly or partially by voluntary subscriptions, and the word school is defined by section 10 "to extend to any institution established for the instruction of blind, deaf, dumb, lame, deformed, or idiotic persons." This is extended by a subsequent Act, the 31st and 32nd Victoria, chapter 122, which is entitled "An Act to make further amendments in the laws for the relief of the poor in England and Wales," the 13th section of which provides that the guardians may, with the consent of the Local Government Board, send idiotic paupers to an asylum or establishment for the reception of idiots maintained at the charge of the county rate or by public subscription, and they may with the like consent send any idiotic, imbecile, or insane pauper who may be lawfully detained in a workhouse to the workhouse of any other union and pay the cost of the maintenance of such person in such asylum, establishment, or workhouse. The asylums or establishments or workhouses to which such persons may be sent are not necessarily to be certified by the Local Government Board.

18,986.  
Perceval.

632. The asylums or establishments for the reception and education of idiots, whether certified by the Local Government Board or not, but registered or licensed under the Lunacy Acts for the reception of idiots and imbeciles, are inspected by the Lunacy Commissioners, and they visit all workhouses where persons of unsound mind are detained.

18,987.  
Perceval.

633. But that inspection by the Lunacy Commissioners does not extend to a supervision of the education given in those institutions. Nor is it their duty to superintend the education of imbeciles and idiots. That duty has not been thrown by law upon any particular body.

18,988-90.  
Perceval.

634. There is no Government inspection of the education of educable imbeciles, nor general superintendence of the training and education of these classes.

18,991.  
Perceval.

635. Mr. Perceval was unable to state the proportion of the class who might be considered chargeable to the poor rates. He added that it might possibly be got from the Local Government Board, but it could not be obtained from the office of the Commissioners in Lunacy, as they have only returns of those who are in county asylums, lunatic hospitals, or licensed houses, and this is a very small proportion of

18,981.  
Perceval.19,461.  
Diggens.

18,997, Perceval. the whole. There is a great difficulty in separating the real pauper class from the class immediately above it, as in the other classes with which we have already dealt. There are now five public establishments open which receive idiot paupers: viz., the Royal Albert Asylum, at Lancaster, the Western Counties Idiot Asylum, at Starcross, near Exeter, asylums at Colchester and Northampton, and the Darenth Asylum. The last is in a unique position, because it is the only institution in England and Wales supported wholly out of the rates, to which idiot pauper children can by law be sent.

19,001, Perceval. 636. There is at present considerable doubt whether there is legal power to establish such institutions elsewhere. A special Act was apparently required to be passed in the case of the Darenth institution.

19,002, Perceval. 637. That principle has not been extended to the rest of England, though at the Warwick County Lunatic Asylum a separate building was provided for idiots in 1870, under the provisions of the Lunatic Asylums Act of 1853 (16 & 17 Vict. c. 97); not by the guardians, nor by any district board like the Metropolitan Asylums Board, but by the visitors. Very little is being done, however, in regard to those idiots at Warwick at present. A similar experiment has been initiated at Northampton. The visitors of the county asylum there have lately built a block for idiots and imbeciles as a portion of their asylum under the provisions of the same Act.

19,005, Perceval. 638. But it has been doubted whether the Act of 1853 will permit two committees of separate counties, or of a county and a borough, to unite for the purpose of providing an asylum which shall not be a general asylum for all persons of unsound mind, but merely for one category of them—viz., idiots.

19,006, Perceval. 639. It is most desirable that boards of guardians should have the power to send idiots to such separate institutions.\* There are a number of idiots in the lunatic wards of lunatic asylums who are most unfortunately placed there, and accommodation is much wanted for idiots, whether educable or non-educable.

18,456, Mitchell. 640. Sir Arthur Mitchell's evidence is much to the same effect:—  
"It certainly deserves consideration whether teaching and training would not be more efficient in institutions which did not act as nursing hospitals for helpless, degraded, and wholly ineducable idiots, and which did not act solely as specially organised and specially equipped schools for the education and training of educable imbeciles. My opinion is that such a separation as is here indicated would increase the efficiency of the teaching and training in institutions acting as schools."

19,007, Perceval. 641. This question has not been altogether over-looked by the Lunacy Commissioners, for in the Government Bill for the Amendment of the Lunacy Acts, which has been introduced in three successive sessions, a clause was inserted expressly enabling unions to be made between counties, or counties and boroughs, to provide idiot asylums.

642. We do not see any objection to the extension of institutions for that purpose under the committee of visitors of county asylums under the county councils rather than under a central board in London.

\* NOTE.—The Institutions for the reception of imbeciles are the following:—

*Hospitals Registered under The Idiots Act, 1886.*

Essex	Eastern Counties Asylum for Idiots, Colchester.	E. Williams, Supt.; C. Caldecott, M.B., Resident Medical Officer.
Lancaster	Royal Albert Asylum for Idiots, Lancaster.	G. E. Shuttleworth, M.R.C.S.
Surrey	Asylum for Idiots, Earlswood, Redhill	R. Jones, M.D.

*Houses Registered under The Idiots Act, 1886.*

Devon	The Western Counties Idiot Asylum, Starcross.	W. Locke.
Somerset	Downside Lodge, Chilcompton, Bath	Miss J. C. Page.
Warwick	Midland Counties Idiot Asylum, Knowle, Birmingham.	J. H. Kimbell, F.R.C.S., and Miss Stock.
Hampton Wick	Normansfield	J. L. H. Down, M.D., and Mrs. Down.

643. The Commissioners in Lunacy, in visiting lunatic asylums and workhouses, find children confined in those institutions, and make comments upon them in their reports; and they sometimes recommend that those children be sent to idiot establishments. Inquiries are made by the magistrates and guardians for a suitable establishment, but at present the idiot asylums outside the Metropolitan district being so few, the recommendations often fall to the ground from considerations of distance.

644. The Commissioners in Lunacy have also no means of knowing the number of children who ought to be in an institution for idiots or imbeciles, but who are now either not in any institution, or in a workhouse where they receive no instruction.

645. In the opinion of the Secretary, the late Mr. Perceval, the care and treatment of the children ought certainly to be under the Commissioners in Lunacy, but he thought the duty of inspection of any educational system could not be undertaken with the then existing staff.

*Character of the Class of Imbeciles.*

646. Though the three classes of blind, deaf and dumb, and idiots differ entirely among each other, both as regards their character and educability, yet there are among the idiot class many deaf and dumb, and partially or completely blind.

647. Mr. Graham Bell has shown in his elaborate pedigrees that as a certain percentage of idiots are blind and deaf and dumb, and there is some intimate correlation between the three classes, there not unfrequently is an idiot in the families where there are deaf and dumb or blind offspring.

648. Mr. Graham Bell also states that the number of idiots among the deaf and dumb shows that the feeble-minded must be very much more common among the deaf and dumb than among the hearing.

649. At the Lancaster Royal Albert Asylum, Dr. Shuttleworth says, "if, under the term 'dumb' all are included who cannot make articulate sounds, or only make a few articulate sounds, there are about 25 per cent. who are dumb in that sense of the term."

650. There are among the imbeciles a great many whose sight is affected, especially among those who suffer from scrofulous affections; in other cases some other disease may have destroyed the sight. The defects of vision among idiots are frequent. Many of them are short-sighted, and opacity of the eyes is frequent. Dr. Shuttleworth thinks that in some way this deficiency of sight may arise from want of brain power or deficient development of the optic nerve.

651. There is no clear line separating idiots and imbeciles, it is merely a difference of degree not of kind. Idiocy means a greater deficiency of intellect, and imbecility means a lesser degree of such deficiency. Sir A. Mitchell states that:—

"Mental unsoundness or mental defect, which dates from intra-uterine life or from an early period of extra-uterine life—that is, from infancy or childhood—is called idiocy or imbecility. The causes of the condition differ greatly, both when its origin is in fetal life and when it dates from childhood. It is not of necessity a condition which is congenital, but it always begins in an immature or undeveloped organ. It does not represent the loss of something which had existed, but a hindrance to that something's coming into existence. This is broadly correct, though not absolutely so, because there is in some cases a certain amount of loss. This feature of the condition gives it certain characters, which are sufficiently distinctive to make a group, or a class, of those in whom it appears. \* \* \* According to the gravity of the condition, that is, the extent of the mental unsoundness or defect, the individuals showing it are called idiots or are called imbeciles. In other words idiocy is a deeper mental defect than imbecility. This view meets all requirements, whether for scientific purposes, or for purposes of medical treatment, or for practical purposes connected with care, management, and education."

652. Out of this class of children of weak mind either from birth or from an early age there are a certain number (and it is impossible to lay down definitely what number) who require special educational arrangements to develop such faculties as they have, and with this class we have to deal. We found that at the Royal Albert Asylum special attention had been paid to the requirements of this class, and Dr. Shuttleworth and Mr. Diggins gave most valuable evidence on the work of that institution.

653. The education of this class includes not only what we are accustomed to regard as subjects of ordinary school education, that is instruction in the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but also a good deal that in the case of weak-minded children is a necessary and essential preliminary to that sort of instruction.

"These children are not only dull in mind, but they labour under certain physical infirmities; they have dulness of their senses, and they have irregular movements of the body, and to sharpen the senses and to

overcome those irregularities of movement is of course preliminary to their settling down to any ordinary school routine; so that the education of imbeciles involves in the first place the training of their senses and of their muscles to a much greater extent than in the case of an ordinary school child. Then again the successful training of imbeciles involves more than simply literary school education, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, inasmuch as their successful training involves some skill in industrial work; therefore the school work passes on almost imperceptibly into industrial training. \* \* \* There are of course other matters, which would be matters of nursing perhaps rather than matters of education, such as the improvement of their habits."

*Congenital and Non-Congenital Cases.*

19,306,  
Shuttleworth.

654. In the experience of Dr. Shuttleworth the congenital preponderates very much over the non-congenital class, in the proportion of 65 per cent. of the congenital class to 35 per cent. of the non-congenital class.

"In the books at the Royal Albert Asylum, which now contain over 1,100 cases, exist accurate histories of nearly 1,000 of those cases; and with regard to the degree of improvement possible, their experience is that the congenital class are more susceptible to improvement than the non-congenital class, speaking generally; the reason of that probably being that the non-congenital class suffer from the effects of damage to the brain and brain disease, whereas the congenital class, of course, are deficient from want of development of the brain before birth, and by placing them in favourable conditions and subjecting them to proper educational processes, they may be improved in process of growth."

*Causes of Idiocy.*

655. The causes are various. According to Dr. Shuttleworth—

19,414,  
Shuttleworth.

"The most frequent cause of idiocy is, no doubt, ill-assorted marriages; marriages of persons of the same morbid tendencies. A tendency to consumption furnishes the largest number of cases according to our statistics."

19,308,  
Shuttleworth.

"Not more than 5.6 per cent. of cases are recorded at Lancaster, in which there have been marriages of consanguinity."

See Reports  
of visits  
(Starcross).

656. The view that consanguineous marriages have but little to do with producing idiocy is shared by the superintendent of the Starcross Asylum.

19,309,  
Shuttleworth.

657. Intemperance is another cause; according to the experience of the witness not so preponderating a cause as other authorities have stated. In 14 per cent. of the Lancaster cases there is some evidence of intemperance. It is a very difficult matter to arrive at a true statement with regard to that; the witness has taken some pains not merely to accept the statements of the friends, but to make inquiries from people who know the parents. When admitting a case the question is asked, whether there was any intemperance on the part of the parents previous to the child's birth. The answer generally is, certainly not; afterwards (from other sources, perhaps) it is found that the father is a notorious drunkard; but still 14 per cent. is much less than has been calculated by some American and other authorities.

19,415,  
Shuttleworth.

"The per-centage of cases where idiocy or imbecility has been found to be due to epilepsy in the parents is not nearly so large as the per-centage of cases where it has been found to be due to the marriage of consumptive or scrofulous subjects; 24 per cent. of our children have a decided family history of phthisis; other observers have made the per-centage much larger than that."

19,416,  
Shuttleworth.

"There are not many imbeciles who have outward signs of hereditary syphilis; under 1 per cent., I believe, but altogether there is a suspicion of hereditary taint of syphilis in 15 cases out of the 1,000 of which I know the history: that is not more than 1.5 per cent."

19,417,  
Shuttleworth.

"The idiocy or imbecility developed from that source does not develop itself fully till the second dentition, and then there is a breakdown. The child is more or less intelligent, and is able to attain a certain amount of instruction in ordinary schools up to the age of 8 or 10; and then, at the period of the second dentition, there is a gradual mental breakdown, and they become very hopeless cases. The commonest assigned cause is that of convulsions during teething; but that is only the proximate and not the ultimate cause in such cases. Convulsions are said to account for as many as 33 per cent. of all our cases."

*How far preventible or capable of diminution?*

Royal Albert  
Asylum  
Report.

658. Idiocy being generally accompanied by an abnormal or imperfectly developed physical organisation, which retards the growth of the intellectual and moral powers, idiots require a distinctive treatment in separate institutions, where the resources of the skilful physician can best be employed for the modification or correction of those defects which obscure the mind. The Commissioners in Lunacy, and the medical profession generally, condemn the association of idiots with lunatics as in all respects very objectionable and mutually injurious. In their Report for 1865, the Commissioners observe: "It has long been our opinion, as the result of extended experience and observation, that the association of idiot children with lunatics is very objectionable and injurious to them, and upon our visits to county asylums we have frequently suggested arrangements for their separate treatment and instruction."

Report of  
Commissioners in  
Lunacy for  
1865.

"It is always to us a painful thing to see idiot children, whose mental faculties and physical powers and habits are capable of much development and improvement, wandering, without object or special care, about the wards of a lunatic asylum. The benefits to be derived, even in idiot cases apparently hopeless, from a distinctive system, and from persevering endeavours to develop the dormant powers, physical and intellectual, are now so fully established that any argument on the subject would be superfluous."

659. We agree with the opinion of the Commissioners. As such distinctive treatment is necessary, the question is, how far are they capable of improvement?

*Improvement or Education of Imbeciles.*

660. The evidence we have received, and the visits we have made to the existing asylums, have convinced us that a substantial per-centage of the idiot class are capable of improvement.

661. The evidence of Dr. Shuttleworth shows that they can be divided into three classes:—

19,347,  
Shuttleworth.

"First, those capable of learning to read and write; secondly, those capable of benefiting in a minor degree by school instruction and discipline; and thirdly, the ineducable class. \* \* \* Their capacity for education is that about 40 per cent. are capable of learning to read and write (*i.e.*, 40 per cent. of those at present attending school); and that about 45 per cent. are capable of benefiting in a minor degree by school instruction and discipline. These learn useful matters in school which make them better able to be employed industrially; for instance, they are rendered more obedient and intelligent, and perhaps become able to discriminate colours, or tell the time by the clock, or practical matters of that sort, which, though not reading and writing, are very important to them in daily life. Then the ineducable, those that will not improve much, if at all, are set down as 15 per cent. of the present number. This is an estimate, not the actual proportion of results."

"The records of the asylum show that 'out of 100 boys discharged after seven years' training there were 36 who had learnt to read, 14 well, and 22 fairly; 36 who had learnt to write, 21 well, and 15 moderately;—more can write well than can read well. In arithmetic, in which, unfortunately, the patients do not excel, there were only 20 who had learnt anything appreciable in the way of sums; four who could work sums in the four simple rules, and 16 who could work sums in simple addition only."

"At the Albert Asylum, out of the 424 discharged since the opening of the institution, four have been returned on their books, and to the Commissioners, as 'recovered,' that is to say, having no longer any such imbecility as would justify the asylum authorities in certifying them as imbeciles. 546 remain in the institution; there is no description of those. 355 have been returned as 'relieved' (a technical term), that is to say, improved in a greater or less degree. Of those, roundly classified, there were 110 very much improved, 120 moderately improved, and 125 slightly improved only. Then 65 were 'not improved,' many of these being confirmed epileptics, or children who on arriving at the age of puberty have become insane; and some of them were unwisely removed by their friends before they had time to improve."

19,294-5,  
Shuttleworth.

"The account of those received after at least a year subsequent to their discharge is that 18 are, or have been, earning wages, that is equivalent to 10 per cent.; nine are remuneratively employed at home, that is equivalent to 5 per cent. (remuneratively employed at home means that they are doing work which their parents would otherwise have to pay people for doing); there are six who are quite capable of earning wages, as their parents tell us, if they could only find suitable situations for them; that is equivalent to 3.5 per cent. Then there are 33 others who are more or less useful in small domestic matters at home, that is equivalent to 22 per cent.; there are 39 at home reported to be of little or no use, equivalent to 22 per cent.; there are 51 in asylums and workhouses, equivalent to 29 per cent.; and 15 have died since leaving the institution, equivalent to 8.5 per cent. So that, speaking generally, over 40 per cent. are favourably reported of, and to this might be added 10 per cent. more from the asylum and workhouse contingent as patients who are really able to work if they have the opportunity, and in fact are working in those institutions."

662. The Scotch Commissioners in Lunacy reported in 1886 of the Larbert Asylum:—

"Eighteen boys and sixteen girls are at present regarded as incapable of receiving any education beyond the cultivation of orderly and cleanly habits. Great care is, however, bestowed on these children, in giving them such training as they can receive. And the benefit which is thus conferred upon them is properly regarded as one of the most beneficent parts of the work of the institution; for though the level to which they are raised is not a high one, they are lifted out of a condition of extreme depravity, and they are removed from a state of constant discomfort to one of not only comparative but of great comfort."

"Forty boys and twenty girls receive training in school which is intended to cultivate their intelligence and their physical capacities, so as to make them, more or less, helpful to themselves."

"Sixty boys and twenty girls receive elementary instruction of the kind ordinarily given in schools, including reading, writing, and arithmetic. All who are capable of singing receive a lesson every day."

"The progress made by the children in education is in many instances very gratifying and encouraging. One boy, who is about to leave the institution, has learned to play the piano, and is to be apprenticed to a music dealer, with the expectation that he will be of use as a tuner of instruments."

663. It must not be supposed, from this comparative success, that it is possible to overcome the mental depression of this class by training, however careful. To develop the capacity of imbeciles in every way, either for education, happiness, or industrial employment, is an object worthy of attainment, and of all the pains bestowed on them; but such training can never qualify imbeciles to compete on equal terms

Report of  
Royal Albert  
Asylum.

with those who possess the "mens sana in corpore sano." In the last report of the Albert Asylum, Dr. Shuttleworth states that:—

"A comprehensive retrospect of the experience of the institution enables me to state that from 15 to 20 per cent. of the patients discharged after full training, whose histories were known, were capable of remunerative work, and were for the most part earning their living. Amongst the occupations followed, five were working on farms; one was a cattle-drover; one was an under gardener earning 14s. a week; five were in shops; two were working as tailors; two were shoemakers; two were in mills; and one was a joiner on his own account in New Zealand. Of the girls, three were in employment as domestic servants; one had been apprenticed to dressmaking; one picked silk for a mill; and eight were engaged in domestic work at home."

664. It has been proved by the records of the institutions that they have succeeded in a certain per-centage of this class, who are improved in their habits, and become greatly lessened burdens on their families and society. Dr. Duncan, F.R.S., and Mr. Millard, in their work on the "Classification, Training, and Education of Idiots," thus describe the success of specific treatment:—

"Weak physical powers have been strengthened, uncleanly habits have been cured, the spiteful and irritable have become calm, the dependent self-depending; the idle have been rendered useful, the untutored have learned to read, write, count, and draw; the ability to earn much towards their own livelihood has been acquired by some, while in a few instances the capacity for earning sufficient for a maintenance and laying it out for themselves has been gained; and the moral and religious feelings have been aroused and fostered, so that excellent characters have been produced, and deeds of simple kindness have been performed by those who were once selfish, sensual, and depraved."

665. This improvement leads, in Dr. Shuttleworth's experience, to the following satisfactory results:—

(a.) *To the extent of being self-supporting.*

19,341,  
Shuttle-  
worth.

"Some who are not capable of making much progress in book learning are of considerable use in the laundry, and other labouring departments of the place, in domestic work, in making beds and scrubbing floors, and in outdoor work, in such matters as weeding and wheeling barrows.  
"Others are useful on the farm, and show a great love of animals, and can be trusted to look after stock."

(b.) *To the extent of being self-helpful and of some use to their friends.*

"The degree of improvement in some cases was of course very various, ranging from a fair degree of industrial capacity acquired to slight amelioration of intelligence and habits, the latter improvement, though of humble character, being much appreciated by parents. It may be estimated approximately that about one-fourth of those discharged were able to do serviceable work under more or less supervision. Another fourth, though less capable, had made some progress in education and industry; and the remainder were better conducted, and more able to do simple matters for themselves than when admitted. One or two patients were removed by their friends with a view of finding situations for them before their period of training had expired."

666. Sir A. Mitchell says:—

18,465,  
Mitchell.

"It is of very little use to be able to read words of two or three letters, but it is of great use to teach an imbecile to put his clothes on and take them off, to be of cleanly habits, to eat tidily, to control his temper, to avoid hurting others, to act with politeness, to be truthful, to know something of numbers, to go messages, to tell the hour by the clock, to know something of coins, to enjoy and understand games, and a hundred other such things."

667. The late Dr. Seguin, the distinguished physician, who may be regarded as the pioneer in this noble work, said, after thirty years' practical experience in the education and training of idiots:—

Report of  
Royal Albert  
Asylum.

"Idiots have been improved, educated, and even cured; not one in a thousand has been entirely refractory to treatment; not one in a hundred who has not been made more happy and healthy; more than thirty per cent. have been taught to conform to social and moral law, and rendered capable of order, of good feeling, and of working like the third of a man; more than 40 per cent. have become capable of the ordinary transactions of life, under friendly control, of understanding moral and social abstractions, of working like two-thirds of a man; and 25 to 30 per cent. come nearer and nearer the standard of manhood, till some of them will defy the scrutiny of good judges when compared with ordinary young men and women."

19,299,  
Shuttle-  
worth.

668. Dr. Shuttleworth knew several cases of boys who were working well on the farm or in the garden, or in the shops, who have been sent to lunatic asylums because their friends were not people who were capable of managing them, and finding situations for them; and in the lunatic asylums they are still employed on the sort of work that they had learnt previously.

(c.) *To the extent of being happy, and less offensive to the community.*

669. The contrast between the idiot at home and the idiot in an institution is very great. In the opinion of Sir A. Mitchell—

18,464,  
Mitchell.

"However great the improvement, every child leaving the best of institutions for the education of imbeciles, will still be imbecile. He may be much less imbecile than when he entered, but he will still be

imbecile. This, however, is no reason why earnest efforts should not be made to do all that can be done, and it does not seem to us to weaken in any material sense the claims of imbeciles to get such education as they can receive."

670. We have seen that education of this class is possible, but the ordinary means of education are not suitable, and these children require exceptional treatment.

671. The means requisite for such improvement, are—

(a.) *Physical:—*

The low vitality and generally defective physical organisation of idiots and imbeciles (proved by the feeble health and high mortality of this class as compared with normal children) necessitate efforts to improve their constitutional condition and physical powers by good food, healthy surroundings, judicious medical and nursing care, and specially adapted physical exercises. Faulty personal habits have to be corrected.

19,314,  
Shuttle-  
worth.

672. Many of them have not had sufficient nutriment to develop their intelligence.

"It is the exception that they should be of good physical development; and before the intellect can be developed it is necessary to develop the bodily powers, to give them good food, and to train their muscles.

In the first place it is absolutely necessary to train the body as a preliminary to training the mind, by putting the children through various physical exercises which command their obedience, and so fix their attention, that is to say, drill and calisthenics of the simplest character. Then the senses have to be more or less exercised; and we have exercise of a simple character for the hands. Physical imperfections are often shown in the use of the fingers; some of these children have spasmodic affections of the fingers which prevent them holding a pen or pencil. Until those are overcome you cannot set them to write or to draw. Many remarkable instances of that kind are recorded at Lancaster. Such children when they came into the institution were not able to hold a pencil, but by a series of exercises, exercises very often such as putting pegs into holes in a board, which makes it necessary for them to grasp firmly, they get, after a while, the control of these unruly muscles, and are able to hold a pencil or pen. We have some half dozen boys in the institution who can draw and write extremely well who were not able to hold a pen or pencil when they came in. This shows the usefulness of these preliminary exercises."

19,321,  
Shuttle-  
worth.

(b.) *Moral:—*

"Kindness and firmness are essential to gain the confidence and obtain due control of the pupil. Religious feeling must be awakened and informed.

"The moral education of these children involves the question of not merely the instruction they receive in school, but their care out of school as well; it is necessary to have, therefore, a staff of persons who have the necessary kindness in their composition, and the necessary firmness to gain the confidence and obtain a control of the pupils. These children, like other children, can be taught the difference between right and wrong. There are, of course, a class of imbeciles who are more difficult to deal with than ordinary children, but that is a matter that should be borne in mind in any system of education; they should be taught by rewards and punishments the difference between right and wrong, and their duty towards their neighbour, and so forth. Some of them are very susceptible to religious feeling."

19,312,  
Shuttle-  
worth.

(c.) *Educational, consisting of:—(I.) School exercises.*

673.—(I.) School exercises based upon the axiom of Seguin, that "The education of the senses must precede the education of the mind," and include—

- (a.) The cultivation of the perceptive faculties, and improvement of speech.
- (b.) Simple manual exercises (to overcome imperfections on use of fingers, &c.).
- (c.) Occupations, like those of the kindergarten, object and picture lessons, lessons in shopkeeping, and other practical matters forming an introduction to education.

19,322,  
Shuttle-  
worth.

674. All the kindergarten exercises are exceedingly valuable in the same way, and such as threading beads, laying sticks, paper plaiting, and so on.

"Those are very good preliminary exercises, leading to what is really useful work afterwards. This paper plaiting, for instance, is a good preliminary for darning stockings. To the practical effect of these school exercises must be considered, every lesson must be presented as far as possible in a concrete form, that is to say, illustrated by objects or pictures. These children have very little imagination, and their imagination is apt to go wrong if they have not the meaning of things explained to them through the eye, or by touch sometimes.

The shopkeeping lesson is of great use to them, inasmuch as when they go to their friends, and are sent to a shop for common articles, they see that they get the right articles, and that they receive the right change."

19,323,  
Shuttle-  
worth.

675.—(II.) Industrial training:

- (a.) Simple housework.
- (b.) Simple out-door work and garden and farm work.
- (c.) Sewing and certain handicrafts.

"Plain knitting, plain sewing, house-cleaning, washing, digging, filling, wheeling, and emptying barrows; these and such things are what the many can learn to do in a way which makes them really more useful in after life, and which helps them to contribute to their own support. They are not showy acquirements, but they are solidly useful, and their importance seems to me to be increasingly recognised."

18,465,  
Mitchell.

676. These are all successfully carried on at Larbert, Earlswood, Darenth, Lancaster, and Starcross, as are mentioned in the reports of our visits.

677. The means above indicated imply,—

(a.) Skilled supervision and hygienic surroundings.

In the visits to Lancaster, Starcross, Earlswood, Darenth, Larbert, and the Stewart Institution, we saw everything that is possible to be done under a good staff by a cheerful and healthy atmosphere, both physical and moral, to stimulate and encourage the dawn of intelligence, and when elicited, to foster it, seems to have been thought of and carried out. The staff in every case seemed well selected.

(b.) A healthy moral atmosphere.

Much depends on their surroundings, on the cheerfulness and healthy moral tone of their teachers and supervisors. Drill and gymnastic exercises fix their attention, and promote physical development.

19,390,  
Shuttleworth.

678. Musical entertainments, dancing, and dramatic entertainments are especially useful as a means of training. Since the visit of the Royal Commissioners a large recreation hall has been opened at the Royal Albert Asylum.

18,466,  
Mitchell.

"Play constitutes a most important part of the training of imbecile children. It is a question, indeed, if anything does more to strengthen and brighten their weak, dull, mental faculties. I refer to free play, and not to play which has a certain character of drill and discipline about it.

This free play is an essential part of the training of imbecile children. It should never be omitted, and it should be independent of weather. More thought should be given to this means of education and training than has yet been given. It tends greatly to the success of other means of training."

19,330,  
Shuttleworth.

(c.) A large staff of well-trained instructors.

"It is very important to have a staff of well-trained teachers. That would follow almost from the description of the sort of school exercise necessary; it requires an immense amount of patience to be a good teacher of imbeciles. The ordinary idea that anyone would be able to teach imbeciles is not a correct one; a person must be a good teacher of ordinary children to be a good teacher of imbecile children.

19,332,  
Shuttleworth.

At Lancaster they are usually persons who have gone through the pupil-teacher course in an elementary school. Not necessarily certificated, but they have gone through the course which pupil-teachers have to take; some of them are certificated.

19,333,  
Shuttleworth.

If the State should require certificated teachers there would not be any difficulty about it, but it would be well to have them certificated specially, because the training we require for those classes is something beyond what suffices for an ordinary school."

#### Age of entry.

679. At the Albert Asylum the children are admitted at seven years, and are generally, as a rule, retained seven years, but Dr. Shuttleworth considers that time far too short. The training should be extended to ten years or more.

19,447,  
Shuttleworth.

680. It would be very undesirable to send a child home at the age of 13, and the education should begin at a later age than six; ten years is a better age than six or seven, because by the end of the education period the boy or girl will have almost grown up. If the committee find that the friends cannot pay for the child, it has to go home. That is a matter of finance, but in any general system the educational period, which includes industrial training, should be extended beyond that; it should extend to the age of 21, imbeciles being of slow physical as well as mental development. The practice at Lancaster has been as follows:—The elected cases have been discharged as a rule at the end of seven years. Sometimes the committee have increased the term to eight and even nine years when progress has been evident at the end of the seven years, and there was a probability of its being continuous by extending the period, and if a boy is learning a trade at the time his election period has expired, the committee often give him an extra year or two; and a few patients have been retained for their services.

19,449,  
Shuttleworth.

19,392,  
Shuttleworth.

#### Occupations.

681. The occupations which are most suitable to imbeciles are of an industrial character.

19,361,  
Shuttleworth.

"With regard to industrial occupations, about one-fourth of those who have been put to trades, that is to say, to handicrafts, shoemaking, and so on, do well; whereas, about half of those employed in outdoor work do well, that is to say, outdoor occupation is generally better suited to imbeciles than indoor handicraft occupation. That is borne out by what is found with regard to the nature of the occupations of the discharged patients, of which returns from time to time were obtained."

#### Separate Schools.

"Such an education as is given in a special institution could not be given in the ordinary elementary schools, even if there were a class for imbecile children in such schools. The number of children called imbecile would be extremely small who would be benefited by classes at an ordinary school, because so much of the training depends on care out of school, and if they went to their own homes, where they would not have that care, a good deal of the school education would be wasted."

19,370,  
Shuttleworth.

#### Difficulty of Compulsion as regards Educational Conditions.

682. Should the educable imbeciles and idiots be compulsorily educated by the State, in the same way as other children, as far as they are capable of education? Dr. Shuttleworth thinks it is the duty of the parents, and the State should enforce that duty, to improve imbecile children as much as they are capable of being improved; and in any general scheme of education the interests of the imbecile class should not be left out of sight.

19,303,  
Shuttleworth.

683. In America 11 out of the 14 institutions are supported by a grant of the State Legislature as part of the educational system of the State.

"As a certain per-centage are capable of improvement, and able to support themselves or to help their friends, it is therefore maintained that it is desirable on general-economical grounds that this class should, as far as possible, be taught to earn their own livelihood.

19,304-5,  
Shuttleworth.

There is great difficulty in getting the parents to send their children compulsorily to some school. It is to be borne in mind that these children are the offspring of not very strong-minded people; and the mothers of imbeciles very frequently make some amount of trouble about parting with them. There is naturally a very strong affection on the part of mothers towards their afflicted children. At the same time, if imbecile education came to be a system recognised by the State, a good deal of that objection would pass away.

19,311,  
Shuttleworth.

It is also found that the better class of girls are kept at home by their friends to a greater extent than the corresponding class of boys. Of course that is the reason of their slight scholastic inferiority; but with regard to the number, the number of girls in institutions is only half that of boys. That is the case throughout this country, and in the United States and other countries there seem to be fewer imbecile girls born than imbecile boys."

19,407,  
Shuttleworth.

684. However desirable it may be to compel parents to send their imbecile children to an institution, it would not be possible to do so till there were greater facilities for getting the imbecile children of paupers, or of persons just above that class, into an institution, as the law by which up to now unions can combine together to provide one is practically a dead letter.

21,332,  
Wodehouse.

685. At present Darenth is the only asylum exclusively for paupers to which they can be compulsorily sent, and then only from the metropolitan district; at the other institutions the inmates are admitted either by election or payment.

686. Mr. Wodehouse of the Local Government Board is not in favour of compelling parents to send children under medical certificate to such institutions, at least, certainly not by legislation, but thinks—

21,334,  
Wodehouse.

"It might be possible for the Local Government Board to issue an order, where they were satisfied that the person in question was a fit and proper person to be sent to such an asylum and the guardians refused to send him."

687. Even when they have bad parents, it is a very serious thing to interfere with parental responsibility, and the witness would require very strong evidence to induce him to support a proposition which amounts practically to compelling a person to send his child to a pauper institution.

21,340,  
Wodehouse.

688. If it could be shown that a parent was neglecting a child, he thinks proceedings might be taken before a magistrate.

21,341,  
Wodehouse.

689. But that would not meet the cases where the child is not neglected by his parent, cases where it is cared for at home but is not properly treated; because it cannot be properly treated in a private home in the same way as in an institution so far as curative treatment is concerned. In cases like that Mr. Wodehouse thinks that any such compulsory provision should be fenced round with the most serious provisions for magisterial investigation into the circumstances of the case before such an order is issued. The real difficulty is the extreme difficulty that the guardians have in providing for these idiot children. It is not that the guardians neglect, or are unwilling to perform, their duties, but that they really have no means of doing it.

21,342,  
Wodehouse.

690. If these asylums were made more numerous in England, and situate at more convenient centres, there would be less objection to sending the children to a

21,343,  
Wodehouse.

neighbouring place than there would be to sending them to a large asylum at a considerable distance from the parents' home.

21,344, Woodhouse. 691. It is admitted by the same witness that there is a very inadequate provision for the imbecile class.

15,475, Diggens. 692. The Special Committee of the Charity Organization Society recommended in 1877 the establishment of schools for 500 imbeciles, and of asylums for adults in every large centre or group of counties.

693. We think there should be for every group of counties an institution similar in character to Darenth, divided into two sections, one of which should be confined solely to educable imbeciles, where the children of those parents who are either paupers or cannot afford to pay for the maintenance of their children in an institution could be sent by the guardians or school authority. When this is accomplished it is possible that there would be no necessity for compulsory legislation, as the parents would probably see the advantage of sending such children to an imbecile home.

#### *State Aid to Imbecile Institutions.*

694. We think generally that this class should be treated by the State in the same way as we have recommended that the deaf, dumb, and blind children should be treated, and participate in capitation grants, based not on individual results but on the general character of the institution as a training and educating body.

18,478, Mitchell. 695. At Lancaster the guardians pay from 26*l.* to 35*l.* a year for the pauper patients. They get 4*s.* a week from the Government on application to the Local Government Board, and the grant is given because the idiot is still considered a lunatic in the eye of the law. In Scotland a similar grant is given to the children, not only as lunatics but as paupers, on application to the Board of Lunacy, with two medical certificates in a prescribed form. These certificates must declare the child to be of unsound mind, and also to be capable of deriving benefit from training and treatment in an institution for the training of imbecile children. We think that the grant should be given, not, as in Scotland, to the children as paupers, but as imbeciles under proper medical certificate, whether the parents are paupers or above that class; that is to say, not only for paupers but for election cases, on the ground that their parents could not afford the costly educational appliances which the exceptional condition of the children render necessary.

#### *Cost of Inmates at Asylum.*

19,156-7, Diggens. 696. At Lancaster the cost is 12*s.* 3*d.* per week; including building and furnishing, 13*s.* 4*d.* At Darenth it is 10*s.* 2½*d.* per week; at Starcross, 8*s.* 4*d.*; and at Larbert, 13*s.* 10½*d.* per week.

#### *Inspection.*

19,343, Shuttleworth. "If the State were to give an Education Grant to these institutions, the inspecting authority should report as to the general equipment and character of the institution, and the efficiency of the educational methods pursued, rather than judge by an individual examination of every pupil; for this reason, that the pupils themselves are a very peculiar class, and they vary very much from day to day. It would be very difficult for a person coming as a stranger to an imbecile school to accurately gauge the knowledge of each pupil. Imbecile children are prejudicially affected, sometimes by differences of atmosphere, and certainly by the presence of a stranger. Besides, much of the subject-matter of the education of imbeciles can hardly be put down on paper, the finger exercises, the exercises of the senses, &c. for which it would be rather difficult to give marks to an individual pupil."

697. The Government inspection of imbecile institutions is at present vested in the hands of the Commissioners in Lunacy, who are required both by the Idiots Act of 1886 and the old lunacy law to visit registered hospitals and houses at least once a year. Such visits are usually made without notice; the Commissioners see the children in the institution; they make numerous inquiries with regard to the management; they see the books, and with regard to the limited education which is given, although they have no power to enforce any recommendations, they generally take note of all the education and training there imparted.

698. Dr. Reginald Southey and Mr. Bagot, on the 4th June 1887, made a report on the Darenth Asylum. They say:—

"An average number of 320 children appears upon the school register, and of these again 286 attend the schoolrooms both morning and evening, the remainder working only half-days. The staff of teachers consists of one schoolmistress, three assistant schoolmistresses, and five school attendants. We can express our entire approval of the order maintained in the several class-rooms, and the attention paid by the children to their teachers. Many, no doubt, learn and retain something of what they do learn, but perhaps the greatest good derived is due to the habit of self-control thus promoted."

699. In addition to the inspection of the Commissioners in Lunacy, one of the imbecile institutions in England and Wales (as well as many other charitable institutions, such as those for the blind, deaf, &c.) is inspected by the inspectors of the Local Government Board, Whitehall, under the provisions of 25 & 26 Vict. cap. 43. But such inspection follows only on the institution being certificated; it is not compulsory for institutions to apply, and apparently it is not continued at regular periodical intervals, while institutions, even if uncertificated, are at liberty to receive cases sent by guardians of the poor. There is, moreover, this curious anomaly in the law, that the authorities of an uncertificated institution are at liberty to settle their own scale of payments with the guardians of the poor, whereas in certified institutions the amount sanctioned in that particular case by the Local Government Board must not be exceeded. The Royal Albert Asylum at Lancaster is an example of an uncertificated institution. It will be apparent, therefore, that the Local Government Board, under their existing laws, could not well undertake such inspection as we refer to above.

700. We feel that though the school authority in the first instance as an educational authority should send a child to the institution most fitted for it, yet it would cause a conflict of authority if the school authority as well as the Lunacy Commissioners were to inspect and report upon the education in imbecile institutions. Moreover, considering that the mental training and the school education can never approach that higher scholastic character which would require its being placed under the supervision of the Educational Department of the State, and that other matters, such as the general health of the patients and their industrial occupation, equally demand attention, we think that there is every reason why this inspection might well be vested in the Lunacy Commissioners, who under their existing powers already exercise most of the above duties. They have a special knowledge of, and a sympathetic interest in, the work, and would probably do it better than anyone else.

#### *Classification.*

701. It is necessary for the good government of an institution consisting of boys and girls of various ages that it should be classified in order that they may be properly supervised.

702. In institutions generally there appears to have been no difficulty in keeping the boys beyond a certain age, as in the Albert Asylum, together with a great number of young boys under proper regulations, by classifying them, and supervising the classes. There are also a number of girls of different ages in some of the institutions. No practical inconvenience has been experienced at Lancaster.

703. There ought to be two classes of institutions established under public administration, Schools and adult Asylums.

"Till within the last few years the idiot or the imbecile child was invariably accommodated, not only in the same building, but in the same ward, with the victims to dementia, melancholia, or chronic mania. The effects of this indiscriminate classification and treatment were most pernicious. The young idiot or imbecile, at the impressible and plastic period of his life, suffered from daily and nightly contact with those confirmed or aggravated cases of lunacy, and the only opportunity available for his rescue was then allowed to slip, until his case also became aggravated or confirmed. The benefits of the new system have been signally satisfactory.

The complaint made with regard to Darenth is that when the children are grown up and are transferred to the adult asylum, they imitate the lunatics and pick up habits which they had broken off in the schools and which are very pernicious indeed. Of course imbeciles are very imitative, and they cannot distinguish when an act is committed or a word is said, whether it is the correct one or not, and they are just as likely to imitate the wrong one as the right.

Beyond that it is desirable to keep the educable classes from those who are apparently uneducable, they should be kept in separate departments in the same institution, but the departments should be entirely separate, so that the offices which are necessary, and the playground which is necessary, should be distinct, because the training of the children is a good deal affected by those they are associated with, and if a number of very dull children are sent into the same playground with the more hopeful ones, naturally they interfere with their recreation. Moreover, these dull children require a greater amount of care, and the conditions of playing are different with them."

19,534 Diggins. 704. It is the opinion of competent authorities that idiots and imbeciles should not be associated with lunatics, and in this we entirely concur.

*Supervision after leaving Institution.*

705. The adult imbeciles do not come under our direct survey. There is a great want of a home for idiots and imbeciles when they leave institutions, both for those who cannot support themselves and those who are a burden on their friends.

706. The result is that, for want of some assistance, they are sent to workhouses and asylums, and lose the benefit of much of their previous training.

19,421, Shuttleworth. 707. It is difficult to ascertain how many imbeciles there are in workhouses and lunatic asylums. Many have never been to an institution. Dr. Shuttleworth describes how he has seen in some of the large unions in South Lancashire a number of imbeciles who are not trained in any way.

"They sit all in a row in the imbecile ward and do nothing, and it is highly desirable they should be under some sort of training."

We have observed the same in the workhouses which we visited.

708. Dr. Rhodes, in his address at the Poor Law Conference at Chester, October 1888, stated that out of 4,500 idiots in Lancashire and Cheshire it was estimated that 1,400 were under 20 years of age; of this total number there were in the Royal Albert Asylum 293, so that there were five times as many idiots whose education was neglected or imperfectly carried on, as there were under proper care and tuition.

*Feeble-minded Children.*

19,373, Shuttleworth. 709. The Royal Commission on the Elementary Education Acts having suggested that the case of feeble-minded children would come more appropriately within our terms of reference, we have received evidence that there are a great many backward children in our elementary schools who require a different treatment to that of the ordinary children, and this had led to the recommendation of auxiliary schools for such classes.

19,087-S, Warner. 710. There are a large number of cases excused from school.

711. Many children are absent from the elementary schools, not because they are incapable of being taught, but because of some physical infirmity. Dr. Warner, among the out-patients at children's hospitals and at the London Hospital who, on account of their exceptional condition are not attending schools, found—

"Such cases as children who occasionally have slight epileptic fits, perhaps three or four in their lifetime, cases of slight chorea, cases of children who suffer from repeated sick headaches, especially when attending schools and who, upon that ground, are exempted; children whose nerve system is completely exhausted and appears to have been so for months or years; cases of paralysis, of defective development from birth, cases of defective development of body, with slight defect of brain (I do not mean idiots); cases of nystagmus; cases of squinting; cases of myopia; cases of rickets, specially seen about the head with frequent co-incident nervous symptoms; and cases of diseased heart and lungs; these cases seem to require an exceptional method of education. Children who are suffering from any of the defects mentioned ought to be under exceptional methods of education.

9,088, Warner.

"A large number of them are absent apparently without any certificate at all; only a few get certificates from me when they are my patients. (One hears at the East end of London they can buy them at 2d. apiece.) It is only in a few cases that patients of mine who, according to Act of Parliament ought to be in attendance and who are absent, have asked me or any of my assistants for any certificate, and from inquiries that I have made in the schools I believe that they are often absent without any certificate at all."

19,090, Warner. 712. The remedy proposed by Dr. Warner is that they should be educated in a separate class in each school. He gives an illustration of the class of children that he refers to:

"A little boy eight years of age, bright and intelligent in appearance, had lost both his parents; the mother died insane; he lived with his grandparents. He was liable to such strong and sudden outbursts of passion as to be uncontrollable both at home and in the day school, from which he had eventually been withdrawn as unmanageable. When removed to the country his health improved, and he became good and quiet; but when he returned to London and his grandparents the quasi-epileptic outbursts of passion returned. He had suffered a few genuine epileptic fits, and his younger sister also. When last heard of the child was neither being educated nor properly controlled, and although at present harmless and capable of being taught self-restraint, he is likely on arriving at manhood to be a social failure, if not an absolute danger to the community. That is a type of many cases."

713. He places the number of such children at a much higher figure than the witness, General Moberly, who represented the London School Board.

"Out of 10,000 school children probably something like five per cent. of the class to which I refer are not being educated. When once a fine for non-attendance is paid, no steps are taken to see that a child who, from special circumstances, is unable to be educated in the ordinary school, is cared for in any way; consequently a large number of cases are destined to certain failure. Such cases as those to which I have referred form a special class which could be easily picked out of the schools, and placed in small quiet classes, which could be easily dealt with under trained teachers."

19,091, Warner.

19,101, Warner.

714. General Moberly says that the practice of the London School Board is, or ought to be, to require a medical certificate in order to exempt from attendance those who claim exemption from some infirmity.

22,012, Moberly.

715. He states that there are 20 idiots attending school, and 435 not attending; under the head of those under 13 and permanently disabled there are a little under 3,000; 596 attending, and 2,358 not attending.

22,029-31, Moberly.

22,042, Moberly.

716. He believes that there is not 1 per cent. of the children in the four schools he knows who are not being educated if they are capable of receiving education.

22,048, Moberly.

717. After taking from the 605,337, which is the total number scheduled, those who are on the rolls of the London board schools, and the defective classes, there are 14,259 children not accounted for in any way.

22,156, Moberly.

718. The London School Board has no medical supervision of the children in their schools to ascertain whether a child is weak-minded or an idiot; it is left to the master to determine whether the child is educable or not.

22,206, Warner.

719. Dr. Warner does not think there is a great amount of harm done to healthy children of this class by school-work. The great evil is that children who are not capable of being educated by the ordinary methods are exempted from school attendance; that is to say, the treatment they get at the school leads to their exemption, and practically they get no training at all, and they degenerate morally and mentally, until one traces many of them in the hands of the police. He mentions a case:—

19,115, Warner.

"A little girl came under my care who was suffering from chorea; she got well and was discharged; she came back a second time, she was cured and went away; a third time she came back; inquiries were made, and she proved to be the child of some gipsies; every time the parents were hard up the child relapsed. She was then taken care of in a small home school, and all the nerve symptoms subsided. Shortly after she was at this school she began to steal in the school and at the home, and my opinion was asked again (I should have said that she had permanent heart disease, it was a case of brain defect), and after careful treatment all the tendency to steal had completely passed away. She has had one attack of chorea since, but she is now all right."

720. Deaf children or those with defective eyesight are not treated early enough in board schools.

19,115, Warner.

"I have seen children going blind, and have pointed it out to the schoolmaster; sometimes the children have been sent to a hospital to be treated, in some cases no attention has been paid to them. We frequently in hospital practice meet with deaf children who have remained utterly uncared for in any special way in the school; such children were found among the unplaced or in the lower standard."

721. In a school in Liverpool witness said to the teacher,

19,116, Warner.

"Have you any special case to show me?" and he showed me a child that used to be a bright child, but which had distinctly deteriorated in brain power. When I looked at it I saw certain signs showing that the child was a subject of congenital syphilis that was attacking the organs of hearing, and the brain."

722. Dr. Shuttleworth is in favour of an auxiliary class or school in connexion with the elementary school; to take children who are not capable of being promoted during two years, that is, moved up to a higher class for two years. Selection must be made of those suitable for instruction, as there are certain physical defects which disqualify children from attending ordinary schools; such as affections of the brain, uncleanly habits, and debility of body. These children, Dr. Shuttleworth thinks, would not make progress in such auxiliary classes.

19,375, Shuttleworth.

723. Dr. Warner thinks that these feeble-minded children can be recognised by certain outward and visible signs, which their teachers ought to know. Dr. Warner's views are not at present generally accepted, but they are under examination, and the British Medical Association have appointed a committee to conduct an investigation

19,377, Shuttleworth.

as to the average development and condition of brain function among the children in primary schools.\*

See Appen-  
dices 37  
and 38.

724. Dr. Shuttleworth has furnished us with a memorandum on the treatment of feeble-minded children in Germany and Norway, which we think is well deserving of consideration and worthy of being followed up in this country. With reference to the education of children of abnormally weak mental capacity, we also insert a reprint from the Journal of Medical Science, and a paper by Dr. Warner, read at the Glasgow meeting of the British Medical Association.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

We recommend—

1. That power should be given to school authorities to cause the attendance officer to report all cases of imbeciles neither attending any institution nor receiving education, and to obtain a medical certificate as to their fitness for entering an institution for educable imbeciles. On the receipt of such certificate, and on the application of the parent, the school authority should have the power and be required to send the child to an institution and contribute to its education and maintenance as we recommend in the case of blind and deaf and dumb children.
2. That in all cases parents should contribute according to their ability.
3. That power should be given to county or town councils, jointly or severally, to set up an institution for educable imbeciles, out of the funds at their disposal, wherever, as is generally the case, there is either insufficient or no accommodation.
4. That there should be a careful separation and classification of all cases in institutions.
5. That the education and maintenance of educable imbeciles should, when necessary, be continued in institutions up to 21 years of age or upwards.
6. That educable imbecile children should not be left for any time in workhouses or lunatic asylums, and that the guardians should report from time to time to the school authority and the Lunacy Commissioners all cases of imbeciles now or hereafter in workhouses in order that it may be determined whether they are suitable cases for transfer to proper institutions for educational treatment.
7. That the Lunacy Commissioners should inspect and report upon the training and education in all institutions open for imbeciles, and that they should also report as to the general equipment and character of the institution, and the efficiency of the educational methods pursued.

#### *Feeble-minded Children.*

We recommend—

That with regard to feeble-minded children they should be separated from ordinary scholars in public elementary schools in order that they may receive special instruction, and that the attention of school authorities be particularly directed towards this object.

\* The Committee of the British Medical Association have since seen 2,716 children in seven schools, and find their condition to be as follows:—

*Nervousness*, and signs of nerve-weakness in 160; the signs of nervousness being to some extent of a temporary character.

*Mental dulness*, as indicated by facts observed and teachers' report in 88; of these signs of low nutrition were seen in 33.

*The head (skull)* was defective in size, shape, or form in 73.

*Eye cases*, including cases of squint and errors of refraction, 69.

*Signs of disease and paralysis* as well as indications of epilepsy were seen in a few cases.

*Signs of defective nutrition* were seen in 94 cases; of these signs of nervousness or nerve-weakness in 46.

## SCOTLAND.

### *State of the Law.*

#### *Parochial Board may contribute towards Asylum for Blind or Deaf and Dumb.*

8 & 9 Vict. c. 83. s. 67. And be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for the parochial board in any parish or combination, for the benefit of the poor of such parish or combination, to contribute annually, or otherwise, such sums of money as to them may seem reasonable and expedient, from the funds raised for the relief of the poor, to any public infirmary, dispensary, or lying-in hospital, or to any lunatic asylum, or asylum for the blind or deaf and dumb.

#### *Parochial Board may pay for whole or part of elementary education fees of poor Blind Children between five and thirteen years of age.*

35 & 36 Vict. c. 62. s. 69. It shall be the duty of every parent to provide elementary education in reading, writing, and arithmetic, for his children, between five and thirteen years of age, and if unable from poverty to pay therefor, to apply to the parochial board of the parish or burgh in which he resides, and it shall be the duty of the said board to pay out of the poor fund the ordinary and reasonable fees for the elementary education of every such child, or such part of such fees as the parent shall be unable to pay, in the event of such board being satisfied of the inability of the parent to pay such fees, and the provisions of this clause shall apply to the education of blind children, but no such payment shall be made or refused on condition of the child attending any school in receipt of the parliamentary grant other than such as may be selected by the parent.

#### *Children under fourteen must obtain Certificates of Elementary Knowledge.*

46 & 47 Vict. c. 56. s. 4. Section sixty-nine of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872, shall be read and have effect as if it provided that it shall be the duty of every parent to provide efficient elementary education in reading, writing, and arithmetic for his children who are between five and thirteen years of age, and who have not obtained a certificate of ability to read and write, and of a knowledge of elementary arithmetic under section seventy-three of the said Act as amended by this Act, and also for any of his children between thirteen and fourteen years of age who have not obtained such certificate.

## BLIND.

### *Census.*

725. The number of blind in Scotland, according to the Census of 1881, was 3,158, of whom 1,556 were males and 1,602 females. The proportion was one blind person for every 1,182 of the general population, which seems to indicate that blindness is gradually decreasing, the proportions at the Censuses of 1861 and 1871, being one in 1,085 and one in 1,112 respectively. As already mentioned in our general remarks on the Census returns, there is good reason to suppose that the figures are, if anything, below the actual mark, and the superintendent of the Mission to the Out-door Blind for Glasgow and the West of Scotland, considers the real total to be about 3,650. Of these the number of school age (*i.e.*, between five and 15 years of age) were believed to be 240 in 1881 (the Census gives 210), and, striking off 30 as incapable of receiving education owing to bodily or mental infirmity, and 102 as undergoing instruction in schools, there were no fewer than 108 children of that age receiving no education beyond the occasional visits to some of them of missionaries and teachers of the Out-door Blind Association. This state of things the superintendent of the above-named mission and other witnesses attribute mainly to the difficulty arising from the expense of providing educational books and school appliances for them.

14,189  
Macdonald.

### *Institutions.*

726. The educational institutions for the blind in Scotland were, until recently, five in number, *viz.*, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Inverness, and in these industrial training and occupation were given to adults in workshops, as well as an elementary education to children in the schoolrooms. A very strong feeling, however, is beginning to manifest itself in Scotland for educating blind children in board schools along with the seeing, and several Scotch witnesses and deputations have expressed themselves in favour of this. Since the appointment of the Commission one school board (that of Glasgow), in addition to the education formerly given by them to a few blind children within their area, has taken over the education of the blind children formerly carried on by the Blind Asylum of the city. At the time that the Commissioners visited Glasgow in 1888, 28 blind children were being educated at various board schools, the special teacher dividing her time between the children in different schools, which she visited in turn. The board expressed themselves as highly satisfied with the result of the experiment, and they produced

14,280,  
Macdonald.  
15,796,  
Stoddart.  
16,026, &c.  
Meldrum.  
19,826,  
Craik.

Also  
Memorial  
No. 2  
(Appen-  
dix 1.)  
See Reports  
of visits  
(Glasgow).