

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).

several letters from the head teachers of the schools certifying to the good progress of their blind pupils, and the habits of self-reliance and energy engendered in them by association with the seeing. One of the blind boys had been successful in obtaining a bursary, and three blind children had gained free scholarships, in competition with seeing pupils.

727. The blind are specifically included in the 69th section of the Scotch Act of 1872, which gives power to the parochial boards to pay the fees of poor children, but the deaf and dumb are omitted. There appears to be no doubt entertained by the Board of Supervision in Edinburgh (which exercises much the same control over the parochial boards throughout Scotland that the Local Government Boards do in England and Ireland) that the section referred to imposes on parochial boards the same duty as regards blind children as it does respecting seeing children. Nevertheless it will be apparent from what we have already said that the powers conferred by the Statute are very insufficiently put in operation, a considerable number of poor blind children being still uneducated.

728. We are of opinion, therefore, that it should be enacted beyond all possibility of doubt that it is the duty of every school board to see that every blind child should attend school in the same way and at the same commencing age as seeing children. The education of these children should be much facilitated by the fact that every parish in Scotland has its school board, and that every branch of education, from the lowest grade up to the universities, is under its control.

Industrial training.

729. There is, however, need of better arrangements to ensure that blind pupils who have passed the Standards shall receive industrial training. At Glasgow this want was brought prominently under our notice, and we were informed that the total number of those eligible for admission to the Blind Asylum, who could not then be taken in for want of room, amounted to over 50. In cases like this we hope that the grant which we recommend (*see* paragraph 247) to be given by the school authority to enable young persons and adults to learn a trade, will encourage the institutions to enlarge their workshops and provide all requisite trade instruction. But in case of their failure to do so, or in places where no such institution may exist, we think that it should be incumbent on the school board either to start a technical school of their own under the Act 50 & 51 Vict. c. 64., or to send the pupil at the expense of the board to an institution elsewhere for the requisite training. In any case it is most desirable that there should be complete understanding and joint action between school boards and the authorities of institutions for the blind, so that immediately the pupil shall have passed the standards, industrial training may be begun.

Parochial Boards.

730. It has been represented to us that it might be convenient in some places to leave the parochial boards to deal, as heretofore, with the questions of the parents' means, and of the proportion of the cost of educating a child which they are able to bear. At Glasgow, the parochial boards have, as we were informed, a department and special organisation for dealing with educational cases, and the school board appeared averse from any change in this part of the arrangements.

731. We are, however, bound to state that there is strong preponderating testimony, in Scotland as in the rest of the United Kingdom, in favour of vesting the power of contributing to or defraying entirely, the cost of the education and maintenance (if necessary) of children of these classes, in the hands of the school authority rather than in those of the parochial board.

Adult Blind.

732. With regard to the adult blind in Scotland, it must be borne in mind that in one important respect they are less favourably situated than those in England and Wales, as the pensions there enjoyed by the blind practically do not exist in Scotland. It is doubtless this fact that has helped to make the Scotch industrial blind contend so strongly for the education of blind children in ordinary board schools, so that the industrious blind may enjoy a larger share of the funds of the Scotch Institutions, and other endowments, given from time to time specially for the benefit of the blind.

Endowments.

733. These endowments have, in nearly every case, been left in connexion with existing institutions, and, in the case of Aberdeen, the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Commission, have framed a scheme for its better administration. The scheme is not very far-reaching, and is mainly designed to meet difficulties experienced by the governors. With the other Scotch Institutions the Educational Endowments Commissioners do not apparently contemplate dealing.

734. The income from the invested funds of the Scotch Blind Asylums amounted to 2,420*l.* in 1887, exclusive of the Donald Fraser bequest at Inverness, which may amount to a capital sum of from 25,000*l.* to 30,000*l.* In addition to these there are a few miscellaneous trusts, the income of which amounts to about 680*l.* per annum. The most important of these is the Webster, Speed, Watt and Johnston Mortification, which is distributed in sums ranging from 5*l.* to 10*l.* per annum chiefly for the benefit of the blind bearing these names. This trust has recently applied for and obtained a scheme from the Educational Endowments Commissioners.

Missions, &c.

735. The mission to the out-door blind in Scotland, which has for its main object to teach the blind to read raised type, and encourage them in finding employment, was originated in 1857 with one teacher. There are now 10 separate societies (Aberdeen, Dundee, Dumfries and Galloway, Edinburgh, Fife, and Kinross, Forfarshire, Glasgow and West of Scotland, Northern Counties, Perth, and Stirling,) employing 21 missionaries, who regularly visit throughout the whole of Scotland 3,100 blind at their homes. This does not include those in institutions. This number, when compared with the total given by the Census, 3,158, will show (even after allowing for these latter figures being under the mark) that the ground is practically covered by the operations of the societies. Their libraries contain an aggregate collection of 9,755 volumes, by far the greater proportion being in the Moon type. Of the whole number visited 45 per cent. are able to read.

736. With a view of encouraging the blind to become self-supporting as far as possible, the Glasgow and West of Scotland Society have collected and invested 6,000*l.*, the income from which is annually given in grants or loans to necessitous deserving blind in that district who desire to commence trading for themselves.

737. The memorial submitted to us by the industrial blind of Scotland (*see* Appendix-1), expresses an opinion that State aid of a regular and reliable nature should be granted to all blind persons unable to earn a sufficient livelihood, and also a hope that such State aid may in no way interfere with their civil rights. We have referred in our general report (para. 124) to the position of the aged blind, and our recommendations that, on general grounds, they should be treated on a different principle from the ordinary pauper, and should not be subject to any legal disqualification in consequence of their receiving out-door relief, are intended to apply to Scotland as well.

DEAF AND DUMB.

Census.

738. The number of deaf and dumb persons in Scotland at the time of the Census of 1881 was stated to be 2,142, of whom 1,149 were males and 993 females. The proportions of the deaf and dumb to the general population were 1 in 1,333 in 1851, 1 in 1,315 in 1861, 1 in 1,612 in 1871, and 1 in 1,754 in 1881, which indicate a diminution in the total numbers of persons so afflicted.

739. Of the total number in 1881, 93 men and 38 women were engaged in agricultural employment; 46 men and one woman in bookbinding, printing, &c.; 88 men and seven women did tailoring business; 67 men were in the shoe trade; and 76 females were milliners, dress-makers, stay-makers, &c. These appeared to be the favourite occupations for the deaf and dumb in Scotland, though a good number were distributed in various other occupations, particularly in different industries connected with textile fabrics, which engaged 39 men and 58 women.

Parliamentary Return No. 328 of 1887, p. 3.

740. The total number assisted from the poor rates in May 1887 was 221, but of these 83 were children under 15 years of age undergoing instruction in special schools, so that the number above school age was 138 in all, viz., 44 in the poor-house, and 94 others receiving outdoor relief.

Institutions.

741. The institutions in Scotland for the deaf and dumb are six in number, viz., Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh (Donaldson's Hospital, and Henderson Row), Glasgow (Langside), and the Smyllum Orphanage at Lanark for Roman Catholics. All except one have been visited by the Commissioners. The total number of pupils under instruction was 367, 207 being boys and 160 girls; of these 72 were paid for by various parochial boards (the number as given in the Parliamentary Return referred to above is 83), who annually contribute sums varying from 8*l.* to 16*l.* per head.

See List of Institutions (Appendix 24).

742. The majority of the pupils in these institutions appear, from the returns furnished by the authorities of the Institutions, to be taught on the combined system in one form or another, no less than 252 being so educated; 77 are taught on the oral system at Edinburgh (Henderson Row) and Glasgow (Langside); and 38, or a little over 10 per cent. of the total number, are taught entirely on the sign and manual system. These latter classes belong to the two Edinburgh Institutions.

School Boards.

743. Three of the school boards in Scotland, viz., Dundee, Govan Parish (Glasgow), and Greenock, have established classes for the education of the deaf within their districts, and in 1888 were educating 23 boys and 22 girls, all on the pure oral system.

Adult Deaf and Dumb.

744. With regard to the adult deaf and dumb in Scotland there are six societies which concern themselves with their welfare, viz., the Aberdeen, Ayr, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Greenock Societies. The deaf and dumb members number upwards of a thousand, and the aggregate income in 1887 was about 2,000*l.*

IMBECILES.

State of the Law.

745. The only special law in Scotland affecting imbeciles is contained in sections 7 and 8 of the Act 25 & 26 Vict. c. 54.

S. 7. It shall be lawful for the Board to grant licenses to any charitable institution established for the care and training of imbecile children, and supported in whole or in part by private subscription, without exacting any license fee therefor, and such license may be in name of the superintendent of such institution for the time being.

S. 8. With the sanction of the Board, agreements and arrangements may be made for the reception and detention of all or any of the pauper lunatics of any district, county, or parish in any public, private, district, or parochial asylum or hospital within or beyond the limits of such district, county, or parish.

18,457, Mitchell.

746. They are supported out of the poor rate, whether they are in their own homes or are sent to institutions, and it is as compulsory on parochial boards to extend relief to these imbecile children as to extend relief to adult lunatics.

18,461, Mitchell.

747. The law in Scotland still regards idiots and imbeciles as lunatics. What would necessitate the giving of relief in Scotland to an adult lunatic would necessitate the giving of relief to a juvenile lunatic. Age would not make any difference. All the children in the Institutions are intimated to the Board of Lunacy as lunatics. When an idiot child has a valid claim to relief, the parochial board must give relief, and in the way which is best for the child as determined by the Board of Lunacy.

18,515, Mitchell.

Institutions.

18,476, Mitchell.

748. There are only two institutions for idiotic and imbecile children in Scotland, one at Larbert near Stirling, and one at Baldovan near Dundee. Both of these institutions are licensed by the General Board of Lunacy, under the provisions of section 7 of 25 and 26 Victoria, chapter 54.

749. The institution at Larbert is licensed to receive 180 children, and there are 181 now in it—that is, one child in excess of the number for which it is licensed. The institution at Baldovan is licensed to receive 70 children, and there are only 50 children now in it.

18,478, Mitchell.

750. The inmates of these institutions consist of three classes: (1.) Pauper boarders or pupils who are maintained out of the poor rate; (2.) Election boarders or pupils who are maintained out of the contributions of the charitable; (3.) Private boarders or pupils who are maintained by their friends. In considering the question of State aid, these three classes must be dealt with separately. The pauper inmates of these institutions participate in the Parliamentary grant towards the maintenance of pauper lunatics. For each pauper child there is a grant in aid of 4*s.* per week, when the cost to the parish reaches or exceeds 8*s.* per week. When the cost is less than 8*s.*—in consequence, say, of part of the board being paid by relations—then the grant in aid is one-half of the cost. Before any pauper child can be admitted either into Larbert or Baldovan the sanction of the Board of Lunacy must be obtained. It is granted on a petition by the inspector of poor of the parish sending the child, the petition being accompanied by a statement of particulars and by 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." All the pauper children are thus certified to be in a greater or less degree educable. But the aid from Imperial sources may be regarded as given to them independently of the question of educability. They get it in consequence of being certified by two medical men to be "of unsound mind," which is enough to make them technically or legally "lunatics."

"Before any parish can receive the grant of 4*s.* per week on account of any idiotic or imbecile child, whether he is provided for in an institution or under private care, the General Board of Lunacy must grant a certificate to the effect that the child was 'necessarily detained and properly cared for' in the institution or house in which he was during the time for which the claim for participation is made."

18,479, Mitchell.

751. Pauper idiots and imbeciles who are not in institutions, but who live, with the Board's sanction, in private dwellings under the care of relatives or strangers, also participate in the grant towards the maintenance of lunatics. They do so on the same grounds as those which lead to participation in the cases of pauper imbeciles who are in institutions.

"The question is whether it would not be as proper to give State aid to the children in institutions who are maintained out of the voluntary contributions of the charitable as to give it to the paupers. It would not be necessary in their case to give it to them as being lunatics, but it might be given to them as being educable children whose parents are unable to pay for the costly educational appliances which the exceptional condition of the children renders necessary."

18,483, Mitchell.

752. By the rules of Larbert Institution election pupils can remain for only five years unless special exception be made in their favour, and by the regulation of the Commissioners in Lunacy children are not allowed to remain either in that Institution or at Baldovan after having attained the age of 18, unless it be shown that they may with propriety be still regarded as children.

753. There are many imbecile children in Scotland, whose condition would be improved by the training which is given in institutions, but who are kept at home. The existing accommodation for such children, however, is not fully occupied. The two Institutions at Larbert and Baldovan are licensed to receive 250, but owing to the latter not being full the total number resident rarely exceeds 230 in the two institutions. Increased accommodation would be needed if all imbecile children who are capable of deriving benefit from special training were placed in institutions which could give that training.

754. Sir Arthur Mitchell considers that no alteration of the law is requisite in Scotland, but that to separate the educable from the ineducable would mean providing a fresh Institution at considerable cost. He adds that accommodation for from 300 to 350 educable imbeciles would be sufficient for the needs of Scotland for many years to come.

18,511, 18,514-5, Mitchell.

755. Although there are some differences both in the law and the circumstances of the blind, deaf and dumb, and imbeciles in Scotland, we recommend that for that part of the United Kingdom enactments similar, as far as possible, to those which we suggest for England and Wales should be carried out. See para. 12.