

## IRELAND.

*State of the Law.*

756. The principal laws affecting these classes in Ireland are the following:—

6 & 7 Vict. c. 92 (1843).

Maintenance of deaf and dumb or blind in institutions approved by the Commissioners may be paid out of rates.

14. And be it enacted, that the guardians of any union may send any destitute poor deaf and dumb or blind child under the age of 18 to any institution for the maintenance of the deaf and dumb or blind which may be approved of by the Commissioners, with the consent of the parents or guardians of such child, and may pay the expense of its maintenance there out of the rates raised under the authority of the said first-recited Act.

41 & 42 Vict. c. 60 (1878).

Guardians may provide for the reception of certain paupers in suitable institutions.

3. The guardians of any union may provide for the reception, maintenance, and instruction of any pauper above the age of 18, being blind, or deaf and dumb, in any hospital or institution established for the reception of persons suffering under such infirmities, and may pay out of the rates the charges incurred in the conveyance of such pauper to and from the same, as well as those incurred in his maintenance, support, and instruction therein: Provided always, that the amount to be paid by such union for the reception, maintenance, and instruction of every such pauper so received in any such hospital or institution shall not exceed the sum of 5s. weekly.

Guardians may provide for the reception of pauper idiots, &c. in suitable institutions.

4. The guardians of any union may, with the consent of the Local Government Board for Ireland, send any idiotic or imbecile pauper to the workhouse of any other union, with the consent of the guardians of such last-mentioned union, or may, with the consent of the said Board, contract for the reception, maintenance, and support of any idiotic or imbecile pauper in any public or licensed asylum or establishment for the reception and relief of idiots or imbeciles, and pay out of the rates the cost of the maintenance, clothing, and lodging of such pauper in such workhouse, asylum, or establishment, as well as the cost of his conveyance thereto, or his removal therefrom, and the expenses of his burial when necessary: Provided always, that the amount to be paid by the guardians of such union for the maintenance of every such idiotic or imbecile pauper shall not exceed the sum of 5s. weekly.

Guardians may bring back paupers to union.

5. The guardians may at any time, at their discretion, and shall upon the requisition of the managers of any such hospital, institution, asylum, or establishment, cause any such pauper to be removed therefrom and brought back to their parish or union.

Conscience clause.

6. No idiotic or imbecile pauper shall be sent by the guardians of any union to any hospital, institution, asylum, or establishment under the provisions of this Act, other than a hospital, institution, asylum, or establishment maintained out of public rates, unless with the consent of such relatives, if any, of the said pauper nearest of kin as can conveniently be found.

757. In considering the question whether, in Ireland, the education of these classes should be compulsory, we are confronted with the fact that, even in the case of the seeing, education is *not compulsory* in this portion of the United Kingdom. It is not within our province to enter into the question whether this is desirable or not, the fact, however, must influence us in forming an opinion as to the desirability of compulsory education in the case of the classes we have at present under our consideration.

758. It is possible, however, that the matter may be more simple than would at first appear; if education be offered to these afflicted classes in an acceptable form, it is stated that it is probable the parents and guardians of such children would be led to avail themselves of it; and therefore compulsion would be unnecessary. The evidence on this point of Dr. Walsh, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, and President of the Cabra Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb, is most important.

Archbp. Walsh's Memo.

"If an educational system be established in Ireland fully and freely available in every case for the education of the classes of children in question, there will not be, I should consider, any need to apply compulsion to induce the parents and guardians of those children to give them the advantages of it.

Answer to Question 2. (Appendix 5.)

"Two things are here to be taken into account, both of them firmly established and abundantly illustrated by experience. First, there is amongst our people, even amongst the poorest of them, an earnest desire to have their children educated. Secondly, in the exceptional cases where this desire may be wanting, the influence of the clergy—and I may take the liberty of observing that in this I speak of the clergy of all religious denominations in Ireland—may be relied upon to give most effective aid to the legislature in securing the sending of the children to school, always, of course, provided that the system of education maintained by the public authority is one that puts no strain upon the conscience of either clergy or people."

*Institutions or Day-schools.*

759. The question arises whether, in making further provision for the education of these classes, the system of denominational institutions, popular in Ireland, should be extended, or the day-school system adopted, as is partly the case in England and Scotland.

760. The day school system is obviously best suited to large towns. In Ireland the rural population is relatively large (including in the rural population small towns or villages not large enough to supply sufficient deaf and dumb, and blind children to form classes). Besides the distribution of the population, however, there are other grounds dwelt on by witnesses, who speak with authority, for thinking that the system of education in institutions is, for the most part, that best adapted to Ireland.

17,647.  
Dickinson.

761. Upon this subject the testimony of Archbishop Walsh and Sir Patrick Keenan are in accord. Sir P. Keenan says,—

"I know something about the interesting system of 'centres' for extern pupils which prevails in London. This system, however, would not be feasible in Ireland. I have caused very careful inquiries to be made in the three largest cities, Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, and have ascertained that the elements to constitute a 'centre' in any one of them are not found to exist. You have therefore nothing for it, in Ireland at all events, but to perpetuate the present utterly inadequate and defective system, even with a little modification, to which I shall refer, or to extend the resources and the numbers of the 'institutions.' The latter is the course I warmly advocate."

20,934.  
Keenan.

762. Archbishop Walsh's view is substantially the same.

"The fact mentioned by Sir Patrick Keenan (20,934) as to the absence of a sufficient number of those afflicted children to form even one educational 'centre' for them, even in the city of Dublin, is of vital importance in the consideration of this portion of the subject.

Archbp. Walsh's Memo. Question 3.

"I may add that by inquiries carefully made through the police and other official channels of information, it was recently ascertained that the total number of blind children in the city of Dublin not already provided for in our existing institutions was but two. This most satisfactory result, I need hardly add, is in great measure if not exclusively due to the watchful zeal and energy with which the interests of the poorer classes of our people are looked after by the clergy of the city, whether Catholic or Protestant.

"As to whether the education of the blind, and deaf and dumb should be conducted in special institutions or in the ordinary national schools of the country?

"On this point also I see no room for doubt. I fully agree with much that is said by those who are opposed to the training of children in institutions, at least to this extent, that I fully recognise the many and serious defects, or rather drawbacks, almost inseparable from such a mode of training. But in the circumstances of the present case the drawbacks to which I refer must, I fear, be regarded as necessary evils. The institution system is, notwithstanding all its drawbacks, a useful and desirable system when no better system is available. I cannot see that for the education of the children in question any other system is available in Ireland."

763. It is not unlikely that in Belfast, as in Glasgow, the day school system may be adopted for the early education of these classes, but it must be borne in mind that as regards the Roman Catholic population of Ireland there exists in the religious teaching Orders a machinery peculiarly favourable for making the institutions successful. The Commissioners at their visits to Cabra, Merrion, and Cork were much struck by this, and they have evidence that the same machinery may be applied to the industrial training of the blind, &c. in Ireland.

764. Archbishop Walsh, when asked,—

"Do you think that any religious Order in Ireland could be found to undertake the *industrial* training of the deaf and dumb, and blind in schools analogous to the Artane Industrial School, or the education of the educable class of imbeciles?"

Archbp. Walsh's Memo. Question 8.

Replied,—

"No misgiving need be entertained on this score. As regards the Catholic side of the question—and of course on this point I can speak only for the Catholic side—our resources in this respect are practically unlimited."

765. In the opinion of Sir P. Keenan it would be necessary to have denominational schools for the blind, and the deaf and dumb; Protestant and Roman Catholic schools. The general opinion is that an institution must necessarily, like a home, recognise an identity of religious belief amongst its inmates. So far as the Roman Catholic schools are concerned, the system of religious Orders necessarily leads to complete separation of the sexes, and thus avoids to a great extent the evils attending the ordinary social intercourse of the deaf and dumb in a mixed institution to which we have referred in the earlier part of our Report (*see* paragraph 566).

20,962.  
Keenan.  
17,725 and  
6, and  
17,652.  
Dickinson.

766. The national schools in Ireland are at present open to the children of every denomination.

"But unless you made these special schools to which deaf and dumb, and blind children were sent denominational schools, you would not get those to whom you might naturally look to be concerned in the work of educating these afflicted children—the clergy and the monks and nuns, and so on—to take an interest in the thing. They should be established on the denominational principle."

20,963-4  
Keenan.

767. It is stated that this view would also be taken by the parents of children if they had the choice between an institution and a national school.

20,972.  
Keenan.

20,966. Keenan. 768. With regard to large towns, the same witness inquired through the inspectors and the clergy of all denominations if there existed any number of children of these classes in the three large cities not in institutions, and he found that, except a stray one here and there, there was nothing of the kind. In country districts, of course, they will be scattered in ones and twos.

Report of visits. 769. Our own inquiries in Cork and Belfast led us to infer that there must be a good many of the deaf and dumb, and some of the blind, growing up without instruction in those cities, and doubtless in other parts of Ireland as well. But, owing to the absence of compulsory education and such machinery as attendance officers, committees, &c., it is not possible to ascertain exactly the number of those who on account of their infirmities may be excused from attending school.

20,968. Keenan. 770. The Rev. Dr. Macnamara had the names of nearly 400 deaf and dumb children who ought to be in institutions, and are not.

20,981. Keenan. 771. Of the two alternative schemes (viz., day schools or institutions) Sir P. Keenan prefers the institution system.

20,982. Keenan. 772. Upon being asked whether, if a blind child could attend the national school of its village for some three or four years, so as to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic, the elements of geography, and so on, it would be in a better position to go to an institution than if it had not had the advantage of that training along with seeing children, the witness answered that—

“Such a child would go to an institution infinitely better prepared to derive the higher advantages of the institution than if he had not had the advantage of that training. If such preliminary education as you are pointing at could possibly be given to a blind child in an ordinary national school for a certain number of years, that child, when it went to an institution, would very likely master all that the institution would teach him in a much shorter time than if he had not had that preliminary training.”

20,983. Keenan. “But its general education, as I have already ventured to surmise, would proceed more satisfactorily in an institution with children of its own class.”

20,960. Keenan. 773. The question was asked,—  
“Is it a fact that deaf and dumb, and blind children do not get adequate education in the national schools, where they are in national schools?”

774. The witness (Sir P. Keenan) replied, that so far as he could judge none of the present inspectors could tell of any genuine case of education, but he could himself testify to the following genuine case of a blind child.

“I was, 33 years ago, head inspector of schools, and had under my direction the schools of the province of Ulster. In an ordinary national school in a remote part of the county Donegal I found a little blind boy, about 14 years of age, and, except that he could not read a book or a newspaper, he was the best educated national school boy of his age I had ever met; yet he had never been in any school in his life but that national school in that wild part of Donegal. He could calculate a sum in his mind just as well as other children could on their slates. As to his singing, one could not help being quite enchanted with it; he had a thorough knowledge of geography and grammar, and everything that a child in a national school might be expected to know; and he was unquestionably the brightest and most intelligent of all the children in the school. But he was an exception; he was a child of genius.”

20,934. Keenan. 775. If the parents of blind children were encouraged to send them to the ordinary national schools throughout the country, such cases might be more frequent than the witness seems to imagine possible. He himself suggests that a special results fee for the instruction of such children might be an inducement to teachers to undertake as an extra branch this diversion from their ordinary duties.

*State Aid in Ireland.*

21,021. MacCabe. 776. The State in Ireland, as in England, does nothing in the way of paying the cost of educating the deaf and dumb or blind, save by contributions made to institutions from the boards of guardians. An Act (6 & 7 Vict. c. 92.) provides that the guardians of any union may send any destitute poor deaf and dumb or blind child under the age of 18 to an institution. A subsequent Act (41 & 42 Vict. c. 60.) removes the restriction as to age, and while giving the guardians power to pay for each person, provides that the weekly payment in each case above the age of 18 shall not exceed 5s.

See Reports of visits (Merriion). 777. It has been stated to us that children have been withdrawn from institutions to which they have been sent, as the guardians could not afford to go on paying for so long a time as is required for the education of a deaf and dumb or blind child. The question, therefore, naturally arises:—Should the guardians be compelled to pay for the education of such children, and to what extent? Should the entire, or only

a part of the cost of education of such children fall on the ratepayers, and what should be the area of taxation for levying such rates?

778. Sir Patrick Keenan's evidence on this subject is exhaustive:—

“The ‘institutions’ at present existing, though nominally private, are yet largely aided by contributions from the poor law guardians. I have, however, heard from most reliable authority that sometimes the guardians are stingy in making these contributions. Whatever the system of the future may be, the requirement of some local contribution will not, I presume, be abandoned. I would, however, make the local contribution compulsory, or in other words, I would require each board of guardians to send every deaf and dumb, and blind child, within certain limits of age, and whose parents belong to the poorer classes, to an institution. To minimise the tendency to stinginess, I am inclined to think that the best course would be to levy the poor law contribution, as was done in the case of the cattle plague contributions, by a ‘national rate.’ This would, probably, be only a farthing or a halfpenny in the pound. Whilst I feel so strongly as to the duty of the guardians, I feel quite as strongly as to the duty of the State. I think that, as in Ireland, the State awards four-fifths of the cost of the primary schools and gives, as in England, Scotland, and Wales, three-fourths of the cost of the denominational colleges for the training of school-masters and school-mistresses, at least the latter proportion, three-fourths of the cost of each deaf and dumb or blind pupil at an institution should be derived from the Imperial Treasury. If the cost per child were, say, 20l., then 15l. of it should come from the parliamentary vote, and the other 5l. from the rates. To contribute to the maintenance of pauper lunatics is now an acknowledged obligation of the State. In the estimates of this year, 104,460l. for this purpose is provided for Ireland. But to speak of education alone, every phase of Irish education but this of the education of the deaf and dumb, and blind, commands a share of the parliamentary funds.”

“The pauper children in the workhouse are taught by teachers whose salaries come from Imperial funds; the orphan and the outcast in an industrial or reformatory school is supported and educated largely by the votes of Parliament; the 400 and odd children of soldiers who are pupils at the Royal Hibernian Military School are supported and educated entirely by Imperial funds; the half million of children in daily attendance at the national schools get four-fifths of the cost of their education from Parliament; the Intermediate schools get the interest of a million of the Irish Church fund, practically a public grant; the students of art and science in Irish schools get parliamentary aid through South Kensington; students in archeology and Celtic literature are aided by the Imperial vote to the Royal Irish Academy; and, then, not to speak of the Queen's Colleges or the Royal University, or of any of the incidents of ‘professional’ education, I think it may reasonably be asked why it is that the deaf and dumb, and the blind, are apparently alone left out in the cold. I shall not venture to dwell upon the generous practice of foreign governments in relation to the class of institutions under consideration. If, as I think ought to be the case, at least three-fourths of the cost be borne by the State, it then becomes necessary to arrange for efficient inspection. As the Commissioners of National Education already inspect, as I have shown, many different classes of schools, I do not apprehend any unwillingness on their part were the Government to desire them to undertake the inspection and administration of the institutions.”

20,934. Keenan.

779. Archbishop Walsh's replies to the following questions show that on several points he is in accord with the witness just quoted.

“The vast majority of the deaf and dumb and blind are children of poor parents. What proportion of the funds should in such cases the Imperial Treasury contribute?”

“It has been suggested that the latter pay 15l. and the local rates 5l., out of the 20l. which may be assumed to be approximately the annual cost?”

“Should this be conditional on annual inspection?”

“In such cases, should it be compulsory on (poor law) guardians to pay their share?”

See also 17,639, &c. Dickinson.

Archbp. Walsh's Memo, Question IV.

ANSWER.

“The distribution of cost indicated in the question seems to me satisfactory. But the total amount mentioned, 20l., seems altogether insufficient.”

“As to inspection, I know of no reasonable objection to it. I have never heard of any objection being taken to it in the case of our industrial schools. The two cases seem parallel.”

“I think the local contribution in aid of the Imperial grant should be compulsory.”

“If possible, I should wish to see it levied by some other authority than the poor law guardians. The reason is obvious. The contemplated system embraces elements which have nothing in common with the system administered by the guardians. Anything calculated to obscure the distinction would seriously embarrass the work.”

“If, for any reason, it be deemed advisable to have the contribution made by the guardians, I should, with Sir Patrick Keenan (20,934) prefer to see this contribution levied as a ‘national’ rate. In such a case as this, the system of rates levied by local district authorities is open to many objections from which the other system is free.”

“As a result of levying the rate in this way, the local contributions should be paid, not directly to the institutions by the guardians of each union, as a contribution in aid of the support of a certain number of children then in the institution from that union, but into a common fund, out of which each institution would receive the sum payable to it.”

“Arranged, in this way, the payment would be clearly separated from those made by the guardians for the ordinary purposes of poor law relief.”

“I would furthermore suggest that the national rate when collected should be so placed as to form one fund with the Imperial grant, the amounts payable to each institution from the two sources being then handed over to the institution in one payment.”

Compare with this 17,639, Dickinson.

780. With regard to compulsion, there is some difference of opinion; two witnesses are in favour of compulsion being applied to guardians to send all deaf and dumb, and blind children in their districts, whether pauper children or not, to some recognised

20,974. Keenan. 17,610, 17,630, and 17,728. Dickinson.

institution for the deaf and dumb or the blind, but only on the condition that the State should pay three-fourths of the estimated cost.

781. Dr. MacCabe, on the other hand, rather resents the idea that the guardians require any such pressure to be put upon them. He says:—

21,026. MacCabe. "I am of opinion that to render compulsory the payment by guardians for the maintenance of children in special institutions is not necessary or advisable. I do not consider it necessary, because boards of guardians, as a rule, have not shown any disinclination to take advantage of the provisions of the existing enactments upon the subject.

21,043. MacCabe. "I think," he continues, "that return that we made to the Commissioners shows after all that the guardians have not been wanting in their duty with regard to either blind or deaf-mutes at an educable age."

782. No doubt there are many instances in which "the guardians have not been wanting in their duty," and where compulsion may be unnecessary.

783. But, on the other hand, we have had evidence from the institutions that some boards of guardians do not pay anything, and that in cases where they did pay they have of late years withdrawn their support from the institutions on the ground of their not being able to afford it out of the rates.

21,042. MacCabe, and Reports of visits (Merrion).

784. In answer to the question whether a national or union rate would be preferable, Dr. MacCabe remarks:—

21,094-5. MacCabe. "I think that a union rate would be better. At one time I was rather disposed to be in favour of a National rate; but those who had much longer experience than I are very averse to seeing that principle ever again introduced. They tell me that it was very much abused when rates in aid, which were really national rates, were in use, and they think it better to retain the union as the area for rating purposes."

Archbp. Walsh's Memo. Answer to Question 14.

784. Archbishop Walsh, although preferring the larger area, is prepared to give due weight to this witness's opinion. He says:—

"I have already observed that I agree with Sir Patrick Keenan's view as to the area from which the local contribution should be raised, rather than with Dr. MacCabe's. But I feel bound to add that I know nothing of the reasons which influence Dr. MacCabe in his preference of a district or union rate to a National one. I fully recognise his claim to speak with authority on such a question."

#### *Adult Blind.*

786. The limited area and population of Ireland seem to offer advantages for giving a fair trial to the Saxon system.

787. The opinion of Archbishop Walsh is clear as to the suitability of this system of supervision of the blind to Ireland, and its probable success. In speaking of the "Saxon system," he says:—

Archbp. Walsh's Memo. Answer to Question 9.

"So far as I understand its arrangements, I regard it with unqualified admiration as a noble work of benevolent ingenuity. Its organisation seems to me to combine the maximum of efficiency with the minimum of administrative machinery. Even as a model in this respect, apart from every other consideration, I should be glad to see it introduced into Ireland.

"I have no doubt it can be most successfully worked here. Certain existing charitable and benevolent organisations may be looked upon as having laid a solid foundation for its introduction. And many circumstances seem to show that in Ireland the system can be introduced with an exceptionally good promise of fruitfulness in results.

"The main feature of the Saxon system, as I understand it, is the arrangement by which a permanent connection is kept up between the old pupils and the institution.

"For our large towns, the establishment and supervision of workshops for the blind would form an essential part of the 'Fürsorge' system if introduced into Ireland. From the want of some such provision the condition of many of the blind working men in Dublin, and, I daresay, in other cities and towns in Ireland, is deplorable."

788. We think that every institution receiving aid from the State, should be required, as a condition of the grant, to keep a register of former pupils. A groundwork would thus be formed for carrying out the Saxon system in detail.

789. Little is done, except in Belfast, to help the adult blind in Ireland by providing workshops for them. We should like to see the Richmond Institution in Dublin adapted to meet this want in that city. The principles we have recommended for England should, in fact, be extended to Ireland.

#### *Aged and Infirm Blind.*

790. Before considering how best to deal with this class in Ireland, there is one important fact which should not be lost sight of.

791. In England some 35,000*l.* is annually given to blind persons in the form of pensions. Most of these pension societies have their seat in London, and although

not restricted to the Metropolis, they practically do not extend to Ireland, and are in some instances limited to natives of England and Wales or residents therein.

792. In Ireland such pension societies do not exist. The good work therefore done in England by these societies must be accomplished in Ireland in some other way.

See Reports of visits (Belfast).

793. In the case of poor blind persons who have been industrious in their earlier days, who are known to be of good character, and have relatives willing and inclined to make them comfortable at home, out-door relief should be given to an amount at least equal to the cost of their maintenance in the workhouse.

794. Those whose domestic surroundings render living with their friends impossible or undesirable should be maintained at the cost of the union in an asylum or home, such as exists in Cork. At Armagh and Limerick there are also homes supported by voluntary funds. Such homes are not sufficiently numerous, and should be open to all the aged and infirm blind, instead of their being placed in the workhouse.

21,061. 21,128. 21,134. MacCabe. Reports of visit to Cork Blind Asylum.

795. Our own observation, as well as the evidence brought before us, has convinced us that the aged and infirm blind in many workhouses have a wretched existence.

796. The workhouse is nowhere adapted for such inmates, and Ireland does not form an exception.

797. Archbishop Walsh, when asked his opinion as to relaxation of the workhouse test in these cases, and whether, if their circumstances as regards domestic life were suitable, out-door relief should be given to the aged and infirm blind, replied:—

Archbp. Walsh's Memo. Question 10.

"Yes, undoubtedly. So far as I can follow the arguments of political economists against the giving of outdoor relief, those arguments are none of them applicable in such a case as this. There is no danger here of encouraging improvidence by the giving of relief on too easy terms. The poverty to be relieved in cases of this class has not been brought on by improvidence."

798. With regard to the question of out-door relief to the blind being given by the guardians, the Medical Commissioner on the Local Government Board for Ireland when asked his opinion said:—

21,134. MacCabe.

"I should like to leave a good deal of discretion to the guardians. Very much depends upon the circumstances of each individual blind person, as to personal character, and as to the members of the family that they might have about them to take care of them—in other words upon local circumstances—so that I would prefer leaving it to the guardians to exercise a certain discretion; because there is no use in disguising the fact, that a great number of the blind in Ireland are people of anything but good character; they go about, and some of them are a very bad lot; and therefore I would rather leave it to the guardians."

#### *Deaf and Dumb.*

799. We have referred in our Report of visits to institutions in Ireland to the less advanced character of the education of the deaf and dumb in that country. The pure oral system has made but little progress, and is at present practised only in the Claremont school, and even there to a very limited extent.

800. As soon as properly qualified teachers for the purpose, can be obtained pupils who have the remains of hearing or speech should be educated apart from those trained on the sign and manual system and in a pure oral school, and every child who is deaf should have full opportunity of being educated on the pure oral system.

801. We are aware that for this purpose further provision is required for obtaining teachers on this system, and that it will be necessary that trained teachers should be provided by the existing denominational institutions.

802. A suggestion, so long since as the year 1871, has been made by the Census Commissioners with which we concur, with regard to the deaf and dumb, that—

"Her Majesty's Government should make it compulsory for poor law guardians (under the provisions of the Poor Law Act, 6 & 7 Vict. c. 92. s. 14) to send all deaf and dumb children in their respective unions dependent on them for support to the institutions for the instruction of that class; or that some State provision should be made for their education, either by instituting special schools in connexion with the National system, or by granting aid to those already in existence.

#### *Schemes for Institutions under the Educational Endowments Act.*

803. The Act for the re-organisation of educational endowments in Ireland (48 & 49 Vict. c. 78) has a wider scope and deals with endowments of more recent date than the corresponding Act in England (32 & 33 Vict. c. 56). The former Act extends to educational endowments down to the date of the passing of the Act—1885.

See Appendix 4.

As in the Scotch recent Act (1882 c. 59), endowments for the payment of apprenticeship fees or for marriage portions, or for the maintenance, nurture or clothing, or otherwise for the benefit of poor children or young persons, may be dealt with as educational endowments.

804. On the other hand, endowments given to charitable uses or in the discretion of the governing body applicable to other than educational purposes, do not come within the reach of the Commissioners, and the Roman Catholic institutions under religious bodies are exempted from the Act.

805. "The Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and Dumb and "the Blind," and also "The Claremont Institution for the Deaf and Dumb Poor of "Ireland," have obtained, under this Act, schemes, framed and signed by the Judicial Commissioners (who are unpaid), and now approved by the Lord Lieutenant in Council. In each of these schemes, which have been finally sanctioned and are now before us, the denominational principle has been adopted, and the framers contemplate that these institutions are to be exclusively Protestant.

*Idiots and Imbeciles.*

806. On this subject we examined Dr. Francis Xavier Frederick MacCabe, Medical Commissioner and late Inspector under the Irish Local Government Board.

21,010-1. MacCabe. See also Reports of visits (Stewart Institution). 807. The only asylum for imbeciles in Ireland is the Stewart Institution, at Palmerston, near Dublin, which we have visited. That asylum is not under the Local Government Board. It is, moreover, a twofold institution. As far as regards a small number of lunatics it is a private asylum, and is under the Inspectors of lunatic asylums. As to the idiotic children it is not subject to any inspection; it certainly is not under the Local Government Board.

21,012. MacCabe. 808. So far as these imbecile children are capable of education and are educated there, they are under no Government inspection whatever.

21,013. MacCabe. 809. Dr. MacCabe thinks it a very deplorable thing, that so far as regards the immense number of imbecile children all through Ireland, they should be under no inspection. In the only institution in Ireland, the number is relatively very small, the average being about 70. He is of opinion that it should be inspected by some competent authority.

21,014. MacCabe. 810. As an inspector under the Local Government Board he has visited a very large number of the workhouses in Ireland, in fact, most of the principal workhouses; and there it was part of his duty to see any imbecile children who happened to be contained in them.

21,015. MacCabe. 811. There was no particular provision made for their training.

21,018. MacCabe. 812. The witness has not officially brought it under the notice of the Board, because the feeling of the Board and of the inspectors was well known. The imbecile children are scattered through the 161 workhouses of Ireland. In each workhouse they are in such small numbers that the Board never felt warranted in calling upon the guardians to make any special provision for them in any one workhouse.

21,019. MacCabe. 813. But he thinks it desirable to assemble those children in some well-managed institution where they could be cared for and, if possible, improved.

21,058. MacCabe. 814. The Local Government Board in Ireland neither inspects nor licenses asylums for lunatics or imbeciles, in fact, it has no jurisdiction over such institutions.

21,020. MacCabe. 815. Several of the blind, and deaf and dumb are imbeciles, and the Acts affecting these classes are closely connected.

21,021. MacCabe. "The 41 and 42 Vict. c. 60, is entitled the Poor Afflicted Persons Relief (Ireland) Act, 1878. The 3rd section of that Act removes the restriction as to age prescribed in the 6 and 7 Vict. c. 92, as regards the blind and the deaf and dumb, provided for by the guardians in any special institutions, and while giving the guardians power to pay for such persons, it provides that the weekly payment in each case shall not exceed 5s. That Act makes a further provision which they have availed themselves of to a very small extent. The 4th section of it provides that the guardians of any union may, with the consent of the Local Government Board for Ireland, send any idiotic or imbecile pauper to the workhouse of any other union with the consent of the guardians of such last-mentioned union, or may with the consent of the Board contract for the reception, maintenance, and support of any idiotic or imbecile pauper in any public or licensed asylum or establishment for the reception and relief of idiots or imbeciles, and pay out of the rates the cost of maintenance, clothing, and lodging of such pauper in such workhouse, asylum, or establishment, as well as the cost of his conveyance thereto, or his removal therefrom and the expenses of his

burial when necessary, provided that the amount to be paid by the guardians of such union for the maintenance of every such idiotic or imbecile pauper shall not exceed the sum of 5s. weekly. That provision practically gives power to guardians, either to arrange that some one workhouse shall receive the idiotic and imbecile children of a county, or several counties, or of a province, or that they shall send them to a special establishment. But with regard to the sending of them to a special establishment, the proviso that the cost shall not exceed 5s. weekly, practically makes it impossible to get any institution to take them. Imbecile children constitute a class that require a great deal of care and trouble, and attention; it involves an expensive staff, and a great deal of outlay if they are to be properly looked after, and if they are to be educated in such ordinary matters as personal cleanliness, tidy habits and neatness; and it could not be undertaken at a cost of 5s. per head weekly. The one institution that there is in Ireland for those children is the Stewart Institution for imbecile children. In a return up to the 31st March, which I obtained, although their average number is about 70, they only had 59 inmates; and of those 59 inmates, there were only nine imbecile children from the whole of the workhouses in Ireland."

816. There is this anomaly in the present state of the law. Up to the age of 18 the guardians are not limited to the payment of 5s. per week, but after the child comes to the age of 18, they cannot exceed 5s.

We think that this restriction should be removed.

"Under the present law it is not clear that the unions can combine for lunacy purposes; at least they have not done so. But one of the recent Lunacy Acts gave power to the guardians of a union to come to an arrangement with the governors of a county asylum to take from them harmless and incurable lunatics, with a view of saving the counties from increasing the size of the district asylums for the mere retention of incurables. There is such a power as that between guardians and governors of asylums, and it has been exercised in two cases, but there is no power to combine for the other purposes, although it is very questionable whether under the 7th section of the Irish Poor Relief Further Amendment Act of 1862, it might not be done. That is the section that gives power to guardians to send any inmates for special treatment to extern hospitals. Dr. MacCabe thinks it might be possible under that section for the guardians of a particular workhouse to make special arrangements, for instance, for the training and treatment of blind and imbecile children, or for the matter of that even of deaf mutes, and that then the guardians of other unions might send their cases of that kind to that particular workhouse as to a special institution. The only doubt that he has is whether the guardians of the institution so chosen would have a legal power to receive those cases; but I do not think that is a difficulty that need be insurmountable. The key to the whole position with regard to that would be to give those classes some State aid. That would be a great encouragement to the guardians to combine, in order to make arrangements for them. Both with regard to the deaf mutes and the blind, and particularly with regard to the unfortunate imbecile children, they are scattered all through these unions in such small numbers that it would not pay to make arrangements for them. If they were collected in one house, it would pay; staff could be provided and devote itself to all of them."

817. The witness further desires the law to be altered with regard to the imbecile children. Some of them may be deaf; some of them may be dumb, or deaf and dumb; some of them may be blind. But the principal characteristic of their infirmity is deficient intellectual development; and he thinks that with regard to those children it is very important that they should be treated as *non compos mentis*, and that they should be looked after.

"I think that the provision that was contained in a Bill that was drafted some years ago, called the Lunatic Poor (Ireland) Bill\*, and was read a first time in the House of Lords, ought to be embodied in any enactment with regard to these helpless classes. It was a Bill to amend the law affecting lunacy in Ireland. \* \* \* \* \* It placed upon relieving officers in their districts the duties of looking after any imbecile, or reputed idiots, and reporting to the guardians whether they were well treated at home, and where they were not well treated, it gave the guardians the power to take them into the workhouse. This provision would lead to all the imbeciles being registered, and I think they ought to be periodically visited and classified."

818. At present in Ireland the Lunacy Department is not under the Local Government Board. There are two Inspectors of Lunacy, who are in fact free agents as regards the management of their own department, and who are not connected in any way directly with the Board.

*Major Trench's Commission.*

819. It was contemplated in the report known as Major the Hon. W. Trench's Report\*, and which was published in the year 1879, that in course of time the Lunacy Department and the Local Government Department should be merged in one, and that the Lunacy Department should be made a branch of Local Government management in Ireland.

820. Arising out of this Report there was a Bill introduced in the year 1883, and the machinery which this Bill\* proposed to use for discovering the lunatics and imbeciles throughout Ireland, was the Royal Irish Constabulary, or the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force, or the relieving officers throughout Ireland.

It was recommended in this report that there should be in Ireland a modification, in fact I may say an amalgamation, of the asylums of different kinds; and in general terms what they thought of having was

21,054. MacCabe.

21,093-4. MacCabe.

21,089. MacCabe.

\*No. 85, ordered to be printed June 12, 1883.

21,090. MacCabe.

21,107. MacCabe. 21,108. MacCabe.

21,110. MacCabe Report No. C. 2239 of 1879.

\*21,113. MacCabe. No. 85 of 1883.

21,114. MacCabe.

district hospitals for the insane, intended for the more curable class of insane cases; lunatic asylums for the less curable or chronic class of cases; and auxiliaries to be attached to workhouses in certain parts of Ireland for the treatment of what we may call harmless lunatics, imbeciles, and so on.

21,116. MacCabe. S21. In the opinion of the witness, this would be a very desirable change of the law, and remedy the present evils. It would supply a very manifest want.

21,122. MacCabe. S22. The annual return upon the subject of idiots in workhouses sent out every year to the inspectors of lunatic asylums for their information includes only idiots under 14 years of age, *i.e.*, who are probably capable of education, and have been kept apart from the epileptics. In Ulster there are 24 such; in Munster 26; in Leinster 12; and in Connaught 4, making a total of 66 now in workhouses.

21,123. MacCabe. S23. Besides these there are the unfortunate idiots who are living at home, and are very badly taken care of. In 1883, Lord Spencer, the Lord Lieutenant was very anxious to ascertain the condition of the unregistered lunatics at large; that includes lunatics and idiot children. In Ireland nobody looks after them. So little are they looked after that no Department has even taken the trouble to have them enumerated since the census of 1881, and the latest specific Returns about them were made for Major Trench's Commission already alluded to. It was found that there were then 6,700 of these persons all over the country, a large proportion of them being children. The Lord Lieutenant was anxious to know what was their condition, and witness was asked whether he would undertake to visit them at their own homes. He said that to undertake to visit them all would be impossible unless he were to lay aside his other duties; but that if he were permitted to take two unions as typical of their condition, one an urban union and the other a rural union, he would visit all in those two unions. He accordingly took the South Dublin Union as a type of an urban population, and the Carlow Union, which includes the whole county of Carlow, as a type of a rural population; and he visited all the unregistered lunatics at large. Nothing could be more deplorable than the state of the idiot children, and nothing could more eloquently show the necessity for their being looked after than the appendix attached to his report. Here is an extract giving an account of an idiot child, J. D. :—

"I found that little boy, 14 years of age, an idiot, and he was perfectly naked, lying in a filthy bed, wretchedly neglected, unable from confinement to bear the light, and who ought to have been in an institution. That was a child that was lapsing into blindness from neglect. The next on the list is J. B., aged 16, another pitiable case—a congenital epileptic idiot lying on straw in a wretched room. He was whining and sobbing when I went in to see him. He was alone in the house, and the neighbours all stated that he ought to be looked after. He was lying naked, his limbs were contracted, his body filthy, and chilblains on his feet. That gives an idea of the condition of these unregistered idiots at large.

21,135. MacCabe. There is absolutely nothing done for them. I have found cases in my visitations in those two places where parents when they were obliged to go out to do their day's work, simply locked the imbecile children in. I have found them sometimes in a cabin in company with a pig, or a cat, or sitting over a fireplace without a fire in it in the middle of winter. And if they are able to go outside they are only too often made the object of ridicule by others, by the children about. The result is, that the worst parts of their characters are developed and brought into prominence, and all their gentler attributes are kept in abeyance. Then when you come to girls, who have just passed the age of puberty, even worse results sometimes follow. Imbeciles are not in a position to protect themselves, and instances are known where they have come into the workhouse when they were about to become mothers; and very often the mental defect is hereditary, and the offspring is imbecile also. So that imbeciles more than any other class, I think, want to be looked after."

21,124. MacCabe. S24. The carrying into effect of Major Trench's Report and the Bill (No. 85) drafted in 1883 "To make better provision for the Lunatic Poor, &c. &c. in Ireland," and adding to it a special provision for this unhappy class, would make upon the whole a great improvement and a good working system in Ireland.

21,125. MacCabe. S25. The ordinary idiot who is not educable might be provided for in what are called here the "auxiliaries," and the educable idiots might judiciously be provided for in a certain number of educational institutions, where all of that class could be sent.

21,126. MacCabe. S26. Two educational institutions for the idiot class would be sufficient for Ireland, one in the south for the Roman Catholic imbeciles, and in the north one for the Protestant imbeciles.

Archbp. Walsh's Memo. Question No. 13. S27. On Archbishop Walsh being asked the question "As there is no denominational institution for the education of Roman Catholic imbeciles or idiots, should such institution be started previous to any grant being given from Imperial sources," he replied, "that he did not think it would be unreasonable on the part of the State to require that the institution should be in the first instance established."

S28. He also added—

"I assume that help would be given to the promoters, either in the form of a building grant or of a loan repayable on easy terms.

I have no doubt that in the event of a definite arrangement being made, such as I have now indicated, the institution could be established on a very efficient footing without delay.

As regards buildings, I would suggest that some of the existing workhouses might be made use of for the purposes. Some reconstruction, no doubt, would be necessary to remove the depressing and prison-like aspect of those establishments. But the cost would be trifling compared with that of building new institutions. I understand that many of our existing workhouses can be dispensed with."

Archbp. Walsh's Memo. Answer No. 13.

S29. With regard to a grant from the State in addition to the contribution from the guardians, the witness thinks that the grant should be given to the guardians and not to the institutions, for the reason that deaf-mutism, blindness, imbecility, and epilepsy are all very frequently congenitally associated, and it is very difficult to say with regard to a deaf and dumb child whether it is suitable for an institution till it is sent there.

21,048. MacCabe.

S30. If the grant were given into the guardians' hands, they might either send a child to an institution, or if one were not available, they might take steps under the Local Government Board to set apart some one among the workhouses of Ireland for an institution, as has been already alluded to.

21,048. MacCabe.

S31. Sir P. Keenan would apply the same proportion of grant to the imbeciles as he does to the deaf and dumb, *viz.*, one-fourth from the guardians and three-fourths from the Imperial Exchequer.

21,003. Keenan.

*Recommendations as to the Blind, Deaf and Dumb, and Imbeciles in Ireland.*

S32. We consider that the general principles which underlie the conclusions, at which we have arrived with regard to these classes, in the rest of the United Kingdom should be adhered to in Ireland. We are convinced, however, that there are important local differences to which we have already alluded, which make it essential that in some matters of detail, the question of the education of the blind, deaf and dumb, and educable class of idiots should receive special treatment in Ireland.

S33. With regard to these classes, we think the true solution of the educational problem lies in giving every facility for sending such children to some properly certified institution.

We recommend—

1. That a grant should be given from the Imperial Exchequer of three-fourths of the sum necessary for education and maintenance, and that one-fourth should be provided from the local or union rates.
2. That there should be Government inspection in all cases where a grant of public money is given, whether through the Education Department, the Local Government Board, or any other channel.
3. That it should be compulsory on the guardians, on the application of the parent, to contribute to the maintenance of any child of these classes in a suitable institution.
4. That the education in institutions where the pupils reside should be denominational, and that the guardians (especially in the case of imbeciles), should have the power of establishing suitable institutions where deemed necessary.
5. That the recommendations embodied in the report of Major Trench's Commission (No. C. 2239 of 1879) should be carried out by legislation in the direction of the Bill\* of 1883, respecting the lunatic poor (Ireland), that the Lunacy Department be made a branch of local government management in Ireland, and that the educable class of idiots be registered, visited, and inspected by Inspectors under the Local Government Board.

\*No. 85, ordered to be printed 12th June 1883.

On the following points we would emphatically repeat the recommendations made in our report on England and Wales:—

6. That every institution for the education of the blind receiving aid from the State should be required as a condition of the grant to keep a correct register of former pupils, and to establish aid and supervision on the Saxon system as soon as funds can be obtained for that purpose.

7. That aged and infirm blind persons of good character should be entitled to out-door relief in order to enable them to live with their friends, or be maintained in an asylum or home at the cost of their union, and that there should be no legal disqualification imposed on them in consequence of such out-door relief.
8. That as soon as properly qualified teachers of the deaf for the purpose can be obtained, pupils who have the remains of hearing or speech should be educated apart from those trained on the sign and manual system and in a pure oral school, and that every child who is deaf should have full opportunity of being educated on the pure oral system. We are aware that for this purpose further provision is required for obtaining teachers on this system, and that it will be necessary that trained teachers should be provided by the existing denominational institutions.
9. It must be understood that our suggestions are not intended to be applicable to all children now under instruction, and that the recommendations indicated will, by their very nature, have to be carried out according as circumstances permit.

ISLE OF MAN.

Extract from letter from H.E. Lieut-Governor of Isle of Man, dated 4th July 1888.

834. According to the Census of 1881 there were 66 blind persons in the Isle of Man, six of these only being of school age.

835. Among the adult blind are a pianoforte tuner, a basket maker, and a member of the Insular Legislature (since dead).

836. Some of the adult blind have lost their sight through accidents in mining. Most of these belong to benefit societies.

Payment of for poor, or blind, or deaf and dumb children.

837. Special provision is made for the education of the blind and the deaf by the following section (3.) of the (Isle of Man) Elementary Education Act of 1884:—

3. . . . The school committee may, if they think fit, from time to time, for a renewable period, not exceeding six months, pay the whole or any part of the school fees payable at any public elementary school (whether within their district or not) by any child resident in their district whose parent is, in their opinion, unable from poverty to pay the same; but no such payment shall be made or refused on condition of the child attending any public elementary school other than such as may be selected by the parent; and the school committee may also, if they think fit, from time to time, for a renewable period, not exceeding one year, make a contribution towards the payment, in whole or in part, of the expenses of the education of a child who is blind, or who is a deaf-mute, at a school or institution (whether within this Isle or not) for the instruction of the blind or of deaf-mutes (as the case may be) the parent of which child is resident within their district, and is, in their opinion, unable from poverty to pay such expenses, such school or institution being one to which the parent may wish or consent that the child be sent.

Extract from letter from H.E. Lieut-Governor of the Isle of Man, dated 14th July 1888.

838. There were, according to the Census of 1881, 35 persons in the island deaf and dumb. Of these, 12 were of school age. Nine (or three-fourths of these) were in three families, containing respectively four, three, and two deaf-mutes. These children have all been since sent off the island for training in institutions, 11 by voluntary agency, and one by voluntary agency assisted by the provisions of the Insular Education Act.

839. Among the deaf and dumb adults are an officer of the post office and a carter in regular agricultural employment.

CHANNEL ISLANDS.

Letter from Under Secretary of State for Home Affairs (A. 29673), dated 8th April 1889.

840. There were, according to the Census of 1881, 81 blind and 35 deaf and dumb persons in Jersey, and 48 blind and 18 deaf and dumb in Guernsey. In these islands there are neither laws nor public institutions relating to these classes, but in Jersey there exists a small private society for the benefit of the blind, started in 1886 by Professor D'Odiardi. Its objects are to educate the young blind and to assist the adult blind to help themselves by visiting them at their own homes, and by reading to them, and affording them instruction in knitting, sewing, or any branch of industry for which they may show an aptitude. Thirty blind persons were visited by the society at their own homes in 1887. There are four children boarded out with

private families, and receiving, under the auspices of the society, instruction in English, French, German, reading and writing in the Braille system, arithmetic, history, geography, and music.

841. We think that the insular authorities of the Isle of Man and of the Channel Islands should pass such enactments as will carry out (as far as the local circumstances permit) the general recommendations which we make in respect of the classes referred to.

All which we humbly submit to Your Majesty's consideration.

(L.S.)	(Signed)	EGERTON OF TATTON, Chairman.
(L.S.)	( " )	F. LONDIN.
(L.S.)	( " )	LYON PLAYFAIR.
(L.S.)	( " )	A. J. MUNDELLA.
(L.S.)	( " )	HENRY JOHN SELWIN-IBBETSON.
(L.S.)	( " )	EDWARD SOUTHWELL SOTHEBY.
(L.S.)	( " )	TINDAL ROBERTSON.
(L.S.)	( " )	*B. ST. JOHN ACKERS.
(L.S.)	( " )	*T. R. ARMITAGE.
(L.S.)	( " )	WM. A. ARROL.
(L.S.)	( " )	*F. J. CAMPBELL.
(L.S.)	( " )	*EDMUND C. JOHNSON.
(L.S.)	( " )	WILLIAM WOODALL.
(L.S.)	( " )	*W. BLOMEFIELD SLEIGHT.
(L.S.)	( " )	*CHARLES MANSFIELD OWEN.
(L.S.)	( " )	*LIONEL VAN OVEN.

CHARLES EDWARD DRUMMOND BLACK,  
Secretary.

\* These Commissioners sign, subject to the reservation or reservations which bear their signatures.