

HV
C758¹²
1856

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
Washington



Founded 1836

U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Public Health Service

REPORT

OF THE

Connecticut

Commissioners on Idiocy, ✓

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CONNECTICUT,

MAY SESSION, 1856.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE LEGISLATURE.

NEW HAVEN:
CARRINGTON & HOTCHKISS, STATE PRINTERS.

1856.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS ON FINANCE

TO THE

HV

C758r

1856

C.1

MAY 1856

Reel: 80-48,3-7

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE LEGISLATURE

NEW YORK:

CALVERTON & HORTON, STATE PRINTERS

1856

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS,	5
APPENDIX.	
A. Table I. Statistics of one hundred cases,	23
Table II. Table of Causes in thirty cases,	31
Table III. Recapitulation of Tables. 1. Age. 2. Con- dition. 3. Capacity. 4. Habits. 5. Causes,	32
B. 1. Idiots and the Efforts for their Improvement. (From Barnard's Journal of Education, for May, 1856,)	37
2. Treatment and Training of Idiots. By Dr. Edward Seguin, of the Pennsylvania Training School. (From Barnard's Journal of Education, for July, 1856,)	55
3. Rev. W. W. Turner's Letter on Idiots in American Asylum,	63
C. Visit to the New York Asylum,	66
D. Plan of Charter for a Corporate Institution,	72
E. Statistics of Idiocy in Ireland,	75
F. Statistics of Cretinism in France and Savoy,	77

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS ON IDIOCY.

*To the Legislature of the State of Connecticut in session at
New Haven, May Session, A. D. 1856.*

THE undersigned, Commissioners appointed by the last Legislature, "to ascertain as accurately as possible the statistics of the Idiotic population of the State, to visit the institutions already organized in adjoining States for the training of Idiots, and ascertain such facts as may enable them to report to the next General Assembly, plans for the organization of a school for Idiots, should they, after due investigation, deem such a measure advisable," would beg leave to report :

The commissioners have found great difficulty in obtaining as full statistics as were desirable in regard to the number and condition of the Idiots in the State.

When they first entered upon the work, it seemed to be the settled conviction of a large majority of the citizens of the commonwealth, that Idiots were a class so utterly hopeless, that it was a waste of time even to collect any statistics concerning them. To remove this impression, was the first task to be accomplished, and it has required no small amount of labor.

Immediately on the rising of the Legislature, we proceeded to take measures for securing the required statistics ; a schedule of questions embracing those regarded as most important for ascertaining the causes of Idiocy, the health, mental and

physical condition, and habits of the Idiot was prepared and forwarded with an appropriate circular to every physician in the State. Copies of the schedule, with accompanying circulars, were also forwarded to most of the clergymen, and appeals were made through the public prints to the philanthropic for information on the subject. Comparatively few returns having been received to these, a second circular was forwarded in November to the same parties, and correspondence opened with many of them. In February, a circular was sent to the first selectman of every town in the State, with special reference to the pauper Idiots. In addition to these missives, which have been thus specially addressed to some of the most prominent individuals in every community in the State, efforts have been made by each of the commissioners, to inform and interest the public mind in the matter, by means of newspaper articles, descriptive of the institutions for this unfortunate class in other states, sketches of the history of the movement, statistics of Idiocy, pamphlets on the subject, reports of the Massachusetts and New York institutions, &c., &c.

We regret to say that notwithstanding all our efforts, our returns are quite incomplete. Of the 155 towns in the State, only 105 have made any report. The towns and cities which have not reported, have a population of 102,423, being more than one-fourth of the whole population of the State.

Seventeen other towns and cities, embracing a population of 81,538, somewhat more than one-fifth of the population of the State, have reported only one case each. Most of these have only reported the paupers, and in many of the others, the reports are only of a single neighborhood or school society. In some towns, the selectmen have reported cases, where the physicians have denied the existence of any. In one large town, the first selectman reported fourteen cases where a physician long resident in the town, had repeatedly declared that there was not a single case.

In other towns, we have reason to believe that information has been withheld from fear of offending friends. In the larger towns and cities it is exceedingly difficult to get at the

facts; very many of the imbeciles are not known to the physicians; and among our foreign population any attempt to ascertain the facts, concerning such as are found, is most studiously baffled. The towns which have made no report have not, in most instances, neglected it because there were no Idiots in their limits, but because of the pre-occupation, apathy or indifference of the parties addressed.

The statistics obtained will be found arranged in tabular form in the Appendix.*

It will be seen from these that deducting the seventeen towns which have reported but one case each, in eighty-eight towns, having a population of 186,831, there are 514 Idiots and imbeciles; and as these towns are located in every county in the State, it is fair to presume that they do not contain more than an average proportion of this class. Indeed, we can not avoid the conviction that even in those towns from which we have the fullest reports, more or less cases of idiocy occurring in young children, have not been reported. Such cases are detected with great difficulty; the parents are seldom willing to acknowledge the imbecility of their child; and if they fear it, the child is kept out of sight, and his existence is often unknown. This is particularly the fact in the larger towns. Assuming, however, the average through the State to be the same as that of the towns which have reported, the whole number in the State would be a little over 1,000. Again, take sixteen towns from which our returns are very full and complete, and evidently made with great care; these towns contain 44,839 inhabitants, and they are located in Litchfield, New Haven, New London, Hartford, Windham, Fairfield, Middlesex and Tolland counties. From these towns 173 Idiots are returned, or one for every 259 inhabitants. Assuming the proportion throughout the State to be the same, we should have 1,428 Idiots and imbeciles.

It is certainly safe to estimate that we have from 1,100 to 1,200 of this helpless class in our State. Of the cases reported, † 135 are under twenty years of age; thirty per cent. of

* See Appendix A.

† In 88 out of 531 cases, the age was not reported.

the whole number whose age is given.* Assuming the same proportion to exist throughout the State, there will be not less than 330 who are of an age to be susceptible of improvement by instruction. Here, then, are at least 330 who need instruction, who are incapable of receiving it in the public or private schools, already established, and for whom no provision has been made.

The doctrine was early taught in our State, and as early reduced to practice, during its colonial history, that it was the duty of the State to require the education of all its children; not to bestow it as a free gift, upon rich and poor alike, for that would be to depreciate its value, but to enforce such laws and render such aid as should secure to every child the blessing of an ordinary education.

This doctrine is now very generally recognized, not only in New England, but in all the Northern States, where New England influence has been felt.

If this be the duty of the State in regard to those to whom all the avenues of intelligence are open, whose senses are quick and their minds active, how much more is it a duty to furnish the means of instruction, and thus of independence, to those who without such aid must pass their days in listless vacuity, or in the indulgence of evil and degrading habits, a burden to their friends, and an incubus upon the community.

This class are now consumers; by instruction they will become producers; the greater number of them are now stupid, brutish and lustful; by careful training, they will become intelligent, manly and chaste; their influence, from their shamelessness and indecency, is in many instances that of a moral pestilence upon the youth with whom they come in contact; by the gentle influences of moral culture, they can be so changed that even the carefully reared child of wealth might take lessons from them in courtesy and propriety.

* The statistics of Idiocy in Ireland, given in Appendix F, show that 37½ per cent. of the whole number of Idiots in that country, are under twenty years of age.

RESULTS DEDUCED FROM THE TABLES.

Over one-fifth of the whole number reported are paupers ; of the others a large number are in indigent circumstances. Seventeen families have been reported in which there were more than one Idiot. In these seventeen families there were fifty-one Idiots, being an average of three to each family. In two cases there were five in one family.

Our statistics of causes, so far as reported, are believed to be reliable ; 310 out of 531 reported an adequate cause. Of these causes, following the order of the tables, we find consanguinity of parents to have been a probable cause in twenty cases ; epilepsy, in seventy-six ; self-abuse, in nineteen ; vicious habits of parents, in ninety-five out of 235 cases reported, and of these intemperance specified in seventy-six, and this existing with both parents in thirty cases ; with the father alone in forty-three cases, and the mother alone in three.

Feeble condition of one or both parents was a probable cause in thirty-three cases of 163 reported. Deficient mental capacity in one or both parents, in sixty-five out of 185 cases reported. Tendencies to consumption, scrofula or eruptive disease, was a possible cause in forty-one cases of 145 reported.

The existence of Idiocy, insanity, epilepsy, blindness or melancholy, on the part of one or both parents, was a probable cause in seventy of 164 cases reported.

The mother was subjected to fright or grief during the period of gestation in fifty-three of 108 cases reported.

There are two or three towns in the State in which there are families of Idiots, in which parents and children are all imbecile. In one instance, where a pauper female Idiot lived in one town, the town authorities hired an Idiot belonging to another town, and not then a pauper, to marry her, and the result has been that the town to which the male Idiot belongs, has for many years had to support the pair, and three Idiot children.

In one instance, where three children had been Idiots, they

had been kept by their unnatural mother, in a close room, in the most filthy condition possible, tied with a short rope around their necks, and never suffered to stand, or to take the fresh air; neighbors and others had remonstrated, but in vain. It is not surprising that under this treatment, two of the three had died. It was surprising that they lived to adult age.

In regard to the physical and mental condition of the Idiots reported, we gather the following facts from the tables.

Of 159 reported, eighty-six were stupid and inactive.

Of 128 reported, forty possessed no sensibility to musical sounds.

Of 252 reported, sixty-six could not dress or undress themselves.

Of 248 reported, forty-one could not feed themselves.

Of 225 reported, ninety-nine could not talk intelligibly.

Of 174 reported, 103 could not frame a regular sentence.

Of 226 reported, 171 could not count above ten.

Of 163 reported, ninety-two were gluttonous.

Of 185 reported, eighty-nine were filthy in their habits.

PRESENT CONDITION OF IDIOTS.

The commissioners have devoted considerable time to an investigation of the present condition of this unfortunate class, whether in almshouses or private families.

In some instances they are shockingly maltreated and abused, and the fact of their continued existence, amid the exposure to cold, to foul air, to the combined influence of filth and starvation, shows a wonderful tenacity of life under circumstances which would have proved fatal to nine-tenths of the community.

These are, however, exceptions to the general rule. In a majority of instances, those of them who are inmates of the almshouses, are allowed a sufficiency of food and clothing; but in very few have they any regular employment. They are usually allowed the same food with the other inmates, and their voracious appetite, (a very common trait of Idiocy,) leads them to gorge themselves with food difficult of diges-

tion,) especially with their indolent habits. In the listless condition thus induced, they indulge very often in the most unseemly and disgusting practices, mainly to pass the time; and while objects of ridicule and scorn to the paupers, whose intellects are superior to their hearts, their entire want of shame and modesty exerts a baneful and demoralizing influence over those with whom they are brought into contact.

In the families of many of the poor, their condition is but little better; it is within the recollection of many citizens of one of our large cities, that an Idiot girl who was suffered to range the streets was the means of corrupting the morals of scores of youth. It is one of the advantages of their wealth that the imbecile children of the rich can be restrained from exercising so pernicious an influence upon community, but even these,^a in many instances, add their full quota to the sum of human depravity.

The conclusion which has forced itself upon our minds is, that in the present condition of Idiots in the State, there is no good reason to hope for their improvement. Not over one in a hundred can be expected, in their present mode of life, to change, except to plunge into deeper degradation.

What then, shall be done to lift these poor wretches from the depths of misery and hopeless debasement in which they are now groveling?

A paper prepared by one of our number which has already been placed in your hands, and which is appended to this Report,^{*} shows what has been done in Europe and in other States in this country, for Idiots,[†] as well as the modes adopted to se-

^{*} See Appendix on "Idiots and the Efforts for their Improvement."

[†] It is worthy of remark that the first efforts for the instruction of Idiots of which there is any known record, were made in the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, at Hartford. In a letter from Rev. W. W. Turner, the present accomplished Principal of that Institution, addressed to one of the Commission, several very interesting facts are stated concerning their instruction of Idiots. It will be seen by a reference to this letter, ^{*} that they first commenced the instruction of Idiotic pupils in 1818, ten years before Ferrus' first effort in Paris, and twenty years before Seguin's first school was opened.

Let it not be said that Connecticut, whose early zeal in this as in almost every other humanitarian enterprise, is deserving of record, has faltered in her course, and suffered her sister States to outstrip her in the race of humanity.

^{*} See Appendix B III., Rev. Mr. Turner's Letter.

cure success in their instruction. The cases related in that paper, demonstrate conclusively, that even the most stupid, degraded and helpless, may by these means, be elevated to a life of intelligence, activity and manliness. We have ourselves witnessed the present appearance of these children, and have had the most convincing testimony as to their former pitiable and unpromising condition. To those who have read these cases, it can hardly be necessary to urge reasons why Idiots should be instructed; but there are some cogent arguments in favor of their instruction which may not have presented themselves to your minds, which it may be well briefly to indicate.

1. Instruction is necessary to reform their degrading and loathsome habits. Many Idiots will eat the most filthy and disgusting garbage they can find; earth, plaster, and even their own excrements; the greater number are extremely gluttonous. All or nearly all, are addicted to constant motions of the head, hands, tongue, or lips; to unmeaning, though distressing cries, to violent and sudden passion, to destructive impulses, or to vicious and malicious practices. These may all be overcome by careful and judicious training.

2. Another object of instruction is, to render them capable of self-support. The English schools have had this object specially in view, and there every child is taught some trade or employment; and many of them become skilful artisans, and command liberal wages after the close of their school course.

The importance of this must be obvious to every thinking mind. The average cost of the care of the 1,000 Idiots in our State, is not less than \$150 each per annum. Here then is \$150,000 annually expended upon the support of this class. But this is not all. Two-thirds of them require the constant attendance of at least one person, who is thus prevented from adding his share to the productive labor of the State. Estimating this labor at only fifty cents a day, we have a sum total of \$250,000* as the annual cost of Idiocy in this State—

* Estimates procured from individuals in different situations in life, and in Massachusetts as well as Connecticut, fully confirm this statement.

67 cents for each inhabitant of the State. There are single towns of less than 2,000 inhabitants, where the tax for the support of Idiot paupers alone, is \$750 per annum.

3. The raising of the now dormant intellect, is also an object to be attained by instruction.

The mental condition of the Idiot is very low. Ordinary teaching has failed to acquaint him with even the simplest rudiments of science. He can not read or write; he can not, perhaps, even speak, so as to be understood. Of number, he has very slight ideas, being unable to count ten; his eye wanders over the objects in the room with a vacant stare, which takes in no distinct impression of the forms which are pictured upon the retina. His ear recognizes no difference between the most discordant sounds and the sweetest melodies;* his senses are all equally undeveloped. These faculties must be cultivated and expanded; they can be, by careful instruction. This helpless, ignorant, stupid child can be taught to read with fluency, to acquire the rudiments of science, and even to attain to considerable skill in some of its departments; to become a fair accountant, to comprehend as fully as most of his fellows, the great questions which agitate the public mind. His eye no longer retains the vacant gaze which once characterized it; beauty of form and color, and fitness as well as beauty, are readily recognized by it. The ear is no longer indifferent to the "concord of sweet sounds." Melody arrests and fixes his attention, and he delights in participating in it. In short, the veil which so long has shut out the light of reason and science from the mind is rent, and there results, as from the rending of the veil of the temple, a new and better life.

4. But there is a still higher result to be attained in the instruction of the Idiot, the improvement of his moral nature. We have already alluded to the utter shamelessness and disregard of the proprieties of life, so common among the imbecile; but there is a deficiency underlying this which causes, to a great extent, this vicious indulgence in depraved

* There are exceptions to this, as some Idiots are more than ordinarily sensitive to musical sounds.

habits; the Idiot has very seldom any idea of moral accountability, and hence, the gratification of his appetite is the ruling principle within him. By suitable instruction, by patience, gentleness and love, he can be taught the being and power of God; he can be led to fear His wrath and to love and obey His precepts. Under such influence, generosity will take the place of selfishness, love, of hatred, gentleness, of violence, and purity and modesty, of shamelessness and lust.

In this connection, it may be well to allude to a fact developed in our investigations, *viz.*, that from this moral weakness and ungoverned passion, Idiots often commit serious crimes, and still oftener, perhaps, become accomplices in the crimes of others, whose superior mental endowments, enable them to use these poor wretches as the means for accomplishing their guilty ends.

In a neighboring State, some years since, an Idiot girl being left alone with an infant, killed it by striking it on the head with a flat-iron. Since that time, that girl has had the advantage of four years instruction in an Asylum for Idiots. She is now nearly sixteen years of age, and a more gentle, kind-hearted creature, does not exist. She has learned the history of the meek and suffering Jesus, and she seeks to imitate His example.

In our own State, a vicious Idiot some years ago, killed a man who was working with him, by striking him on the head with a shovel. Another was guilty of a very heinous crime, the result of his ungoverned lust. Another still, under the influence of experienced and daring villains, aided in a scheme of robbery and murder. These poor imbeciles were unconscious of guilt in the commission of these crimes, but society was none the less the sufferer, and life and person and property were rendered insecure, because these poor outcasts had not been instructed and controlled in their youth.

It is to prevent the commission of such offences in the future, that we seek to establish an institution for the intellectual and moral training of the Idiot, and we feel confident that recognizing the advantage of the prevention of crime

over its punishment, you will grant our petition, and thus be instrumental in changing the vicious and wayward Idiot into an amiable and gentle child.

INSTITUTIONS FOR IDIOTS IN OTHER STATES.

In compliance with the resolution under which they have acted, the Commissioners have visited the Massachusetts' school for Idiotic and feeble-minded youth, at South Boston, the Institution for Idiots and imbeciles at Barre, Mass., and the New York Asylum for Idiots, at Syracuse.

There is one other institution, the Pennsylvania Training School for Idiots at Germantown, which they did not visit, but which they learned from other sources, was similar in character to those already named.

The four institutions, specified above, are the only schools for Idiots in this country. The capacity of all of them is not sufficient for the accommodation of more than three hundred and fifty pupils, while there are from 12,000 to 15,000 Idiots in the country, under twenty years of age.

Of the origin and early history of these institutions, we have given a more full account in the Appendix. It remains to give our impressions of them, and of the results attained in each.

The South Boston school was the one first visited. The location seemed to us an unfavorable one. The European writers have all advocated a high and dry location, as indispensable for the successful treatment of a class suffering so generally from feeble and imperfect physical development. The site of this school, on the contrary, was low, and exposed to the bleak ocean winds which are usually considered so prejudicial to those inheriting any consumptive tendencies.

During our short stay at the school, we saw enough to satisfy us that there had been commendable improvement made by the pupils, and that the teachers were faithful and devoted to their duties.

We could not but be impressed, however, with the belief, to which subsequent inquiry gave additional strength, that

the great want of the Institution was an efficient head, who could dedicate his whole time and energies to it. Dr. Howe has labored nobly in this enterprise, and has, at great personal sacrifice, devoted to it all the time he could spare from the Institution for the Blind, but no one recognizes more fully than himself, the need of a superintendent who can give himself wholly to the service of the Idiot school.

Careful discrimination is practiced in regard to the admission of pupils, but the progress made has thus far been less than that of the other schools we visited.*

The school at Barre was in vacation at the time of our visit, and owing to repairs which were making, the premises were in some confusion, but the exercises we witnessed, and the condition of the pupils, who were called hastily together, by the accomplished lady of the Principal, who was himself absent, showed conclusively, that the whole energies of all parties, teachers and pupils, were devoted to the one purpose of improvement.

The location of the Barre Institution is a delightful one, away from the crowded marts of traffic, apart as yet from the din and bustle of railroad travel, and surrounded by landscapes whose natural beauty is hardly surpassed even in Massachusetts.

We could not but notice, too, the enthusiasm of teachers and taught, and the gentleness and affection manifested by all. This is the oldest school for Idiots in this country, and right worthily does it bear its honors.

In January, we visited the New York Asylum for Idiots, at Syracuse. As this may justly be regarded as the most efficient Institution for the instruction of Idiots and imbeciles in this country, both in its means of instruction and its results, a more full description of its edifice, instructors, and

* The last Legislature of Massachusetts (1855) appropriated \$25,000 for the erection of buildings for the School for Idiots, on condition that \$5,000 were raised by individuals. This sum has been subscribed, and the buildings are now in course of erection at South Boston. They will, of course, be more commodious than the present edifice, but are liable to the same objections in respect to location.

modes of instruction, may be desirable ; we have accordingly appended to this Report, a description of the Asylum, published soon after our visit, by one of our number.

It is only necessary to add here, that whatever has been accomplished by any of the European schools for the training of imbeciles, has been fully equalled in the New York Asylum ; that under the long experience and fertile ingenuity of its able superintendent, new methods of instruction and culture have been adopted, and that its measure of success bids fair to be second to that of no institution of the kind in the world. It was a source of great gratification to us in this visit, that we were permitted to meet Dr. Seguin, the pioneer in this noble cause, the man who, if he did not originate the idea of the instruction of Idiots, was the first to put in successful practice plans for their independent training. We had the pleasure of spending several days in his society, and of gathering from his instructive conversation, much information relative to the philanthropic enterprise which will immortalize his name. His views in regard to the importance of physical training, which he has given at length in his valuable Treatise on Idiocy,* are of great importance, and must ever form the basis of its successful treatment.

NECESSITY OF A SCHOOL FOR IDIOTS IN CONNECTICUT.

The facts already developed in our Report, show conclusively that, having not less than 330 Idiots in the State who are proper subjects of instruction, and who are incapable of receiving instruction in any of our existing institutions, humanity requires that provision should be made at the earliest possible period for their training.

We have already referred to the principle adopted in the very infancy of our colonial existence, that it is the duty of the State to *require* the education of *all* its children ; admit-

* "Hygiene moral, Traitement et Education des Idiots, par Edonard Seguin. Paris : J. B. Bailliere. 1846."

ting this principle, (and it would be difficult to deny it,) and the conclusion follows legitimately, that it is the duty of the State to provide for the training of this unfortunate class, and that in such a way as that all may be able to share alike in its advantages.

Those who have had the care of Idiots, do not need to be told of the difficulty of traveling with them to any considerable distance. It is necessary, therefore, that an Asylum for their training should be so located as to be easily accessible.

Propositions have been made by the Massachusetts School to take pupils from this State. We deem this measure unadvisable, for the following reasons. 1st. The distance from the greater part of the State is too considerable. 2d. The location is objectionable. 3d. The expense would be much greater than that of a home school, in proportion to the number instructed. 4th. But a small part of those needing instruction would or could avail themselves of it. 5th. The management of the school, and the progress of the pupils is unsatisfactory. 6th. Judging from the experience of other States, many of the applicants would be rejected, who could be taught to advantage at home. On one or two of these points we have a few words to say, and first, as to the expense. This would be \$150 per annum, aside from clothing, traveling expenses, and board in vacations. As there must always be an attendant to travel with these children, and their clothing is subjected to very severe wear, one hundred dollars will not more than pay the additional expenses of these items. Of the 330 Idiotic children in the State susceptible of improvement by instruction, fully two-thirds are paupers or in indigent circumstances, so that two hundred, at least, are dependent upon the State for instruction. To educate them at Boston, would cost the State \$50,000 per annum, only one-fifth, to be sure, of the present cost of Idiocy to the State, but a much larger appropriation than any legislature would be willing to make annually to this object. Is it urged that not more than one-half would go? Then the other half would be deprived of their just rights. But, if only one hundred availed themselves of its advant-

ages, the tax to the State would still be \$25,000 per annum, more than three times the amount expended for the insane, although the numbers of the two classes are about equal. As to the location, we would only observe, that our tables show that a large proportion of Idiots and imbeciles, are of scrofulous tendencies, and very often possess diseased lungs. To subject them to the chilling sea-breezes of South Boston, would be to consign many of them to an early grave. In relation to the unsatisfactory character of the instruction of the Massachusetts School, we desire to be understood. The deficiency, in the instruction, is the result not of the want of interest on the part of teachers or taught, but of the want already referred to, of a superintendent who can devote his *whole* time to the improvement and advancement of the school. From this want, modes of teaching found successful elsewhere, have not been adopted, and that measure of enthusiasm which meets difficulties only to conquer them, has not been attained.

Let us not be charged in this connection with underrating, the acknowledged abilities or earnest devotion of Dr. Howe to this work. All that could be accomplished amid his other duties, he has done, and the friends of the Idiot owe him a debt of gratitude for his earnest labor in their behalf.

The New York Asylum would afford better advantages, but it is too distant, and is already nearly filled to its capacity. It has accommodations for only 150 pupils. It is probable that within three years, another Institution will be required in New York.

The Commissioners, after a very careful examination of the subject in all its bearings, have come to the unanimous decision to recommend the erection of an Asylum in this State, at some convenient and suitable locality, capable of accommodating 100 pupils, and so arranged that as more room was demanded, additional wings could be added without injury or material change in the main building. There should be connected with the Institution from 15 to 25 acres of good land. The buildings should consist of a main edifice, containing school-rooms, dormitories for

the pupils, attendants and teachers, and a full suite of rooms for the accommodation of the Superintendent and his family, a wash-house, a gymnasium, barns, &c.

Bathing, in all forms, is so essential a condition for the health and comfort of the Idiot, that ample provision must be made for a plentiful supply of good, soft water upon the premises.

As, in the event of a fire, many of the pupils would be too helpless to make much effort to escape, it is absolutely necessary that all possible precautions should be taken against fire. For this purpose, there should be a plentiful supply of water on each story at command, and it would be better, as well as more economical, to heat the building by steam instead of furnaces, especially, as the steam might be made to render efficient service in both the cooking and washing departments. For the erection of such a building, the Commissioners are of opinion, from careful estimates, that \$30,000 would be sufficient. For its complete furnishing, probably \$5,000 more would be required. These estimates are, of course, exclusive of the cost of site, which would vary materially according to the locality, amount and value of land, &c.

Of this sum, which, for convenience sake, may be put down at \$40,000, it is believed, that \$15,000, including the site, could be obtained from private sources, leaving the appropriation of the Legislature \$25,000, and as a part of this would be for the furniture of the building, probably \$20,000 would be sufficient for the present year.

The Institution once organized could, and would be in part, supported by pay pupils, both from our own and other States; and the annual appropriation required from the State would not probably exceed \$7,000, not one-third of what would be required for supporting the same number of pupils in an Institution out of the State.

In illustration of these views, the Commissioners have prepared plans of suitable buildings, and estimates of expenses, based on the actual expenses of other institutions of

the kind. These plans and estimates will be found in the Appendix.*

MODE OF ORGANIZATION.

Having decided in favor of the establishment of an Asylum, the next point which occupied the attention of the Commissioners, was the mode of its organization. There are serious objections to a *State* institution, that is, one supported entirely by State appropriations. Such an institution would be liable to be affected by party influences; it would require a larger annual appropriation than a corporate institution, and it would be less frequently an object of charitable bequests. The plan which seems to us to unite the advantages of a public and private institution, is one which is in accordance with the previous policy of our State in relation to charitable institutions,—that of the Retreat for the Insane, the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, the Connecticut Hospital, and the Hartford Hospital,—a corporate institution, receiving aid from the State, and in return educating the State pupils.

We have accordingly reported a plan for the charter of such an Institution, embracing the best features of such institutions in other States.†

As the larger portion of the pupils for such an institution would come from the indigent classes, and the motives which would lead to contributions on the part of individuals must be purely benevolent, incited by no hope of gain, or pecuniary reward or benefit, direct or indirect, but solely prompted by a desire to elevate a class who are now helpless, hopeless and degraded, it is obvious that the appropriation made by the Legislature should not, if conditional, be made to depend upon the raising of as large a sum by the corporators, as that donated by the State.

We would recommend an appropriation of \$20,000 by the State, conditioned upon the raising of \$15,000 by indi-

* See Appendix. Description of Plans and Estimates.

† See Appendix. Plan of Charter.

viduals, either in money, or lands suitable for a site for such an institution, or both, and that the offer be left open for competition to the towns and cities of the State, the propositions to be decided upon by the trustees named in the charter, when the \$15,000 shall be subscribed.

We have thus presented the results of our investigations, and, we think, have demonstrated conclusively, the duty of the State to aid in raising up these poor outcasts from the degradation of their present condition. When we consider that they are as numerous as the insane, eight times as numerous as the deaf and dumb, more than twice as many as the blind, that no other means are available for their improvement, and that, under these genial influences, they do attain to intelligence, usefulness and manhood, we feel that we have presented a claim on their behalf which an enlightened and liberal Legislature will not reject.

When, in after years, you meet in society, those who, but for the humane influence of your legislation, would have been brutish, lustful and miserable, burdens to their friends and to the community, and see them capable of filling a respectable place in society, will it not send a thrill of joy through your hearts that you have held forth to them the hand of sympathy and love?

All of which is respectfully submitted.

DANIEL DORCHESTER,
HENRY M. KNIGHT,
LINUS P. BROCKETT, } *Commissioners.*

APPENDIX A.

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY, ONE HUNDRED CASES.

CONDITION.									
Number.	Age.	Is the Idiocy congenital?	Is the health of the Idiot? good.	Is the Idiot subject to Epi- lepsy?	Eye bright or dull?	Hearing quick or sluggish?	Is the head normal or abnor- mal?	Is the Idiot active or slug- gish?	Good tempered or not?
1	31	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Sluggish	No	Sluggish	Yes
2	33	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	No	Stupid	Yes
3	25	Yes	Yes	—	Dull	Sluggish	Yes	Active	Yes
4	21	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	No	Stupid	Yes
5	22	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Yes	Active	No
6	41	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Yes	Active	Yes
7	50	Yes	Yes	No	—	Sluggish	No	Active	Yes
8	34	Yes	Yes	No	—	Quick	No	Sluggish	Yes
9	24	Yes	Yes	No	—	Quick	No	Active	No
10	8	Yes	No	No	—	Quick	No	Active	Yes
11	30	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	No	Sluggish	Yes
12	30	No	No	No	Brig't	Quick	No	—	Yes
13	22	Yes	Yes	No	—	Quick	No	Active	Yes
14	14	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Yes	Active	Yes
15	31	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dull	Quick	Yes	Active	No
16	30	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	No	Sluggish	No
17	40	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Yes	Active	Yes
18	23	Yes	No	No	Brig't	Quick	No	Active	No
19	17	Yes	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	Yes	Active	Yes
20	18	—	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	No	Active	Yes
21	26	—	—	No	Brig't	Quick	No	Active	—
22	20	No	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	—	Active	No
23	55	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dull	Sluggish	Yes	Stupid	Yes
24	12	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dull	Quick	Yes	Stupid	No
25	50	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Yes	Stupid	Yes
26	10	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Yes	Stupid	Yes
27	38	No	Yes	Yes	Dull	Sluggish	Yes	Stupid	Yes
28	50	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	No	Stupid	Yes
29	48	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Sluggish	No	Stupid	Yes
30	40	Yes	No	No	Dull	Quick	No	Stupid	Yes
31	19	No	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	No	Active	No
32	40	No	Yes	—	Brig't	Quick	No	Active	Yes
33	13	No	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	Yes	Active	No
34	28	No	Yes	—	Brig't	Quick	No	—	Yes
35	51	No	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	No	Active	No
36	35	Yes	Yes	No	ugly eye	Quick	Yes	Active	Yes
37	32	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Yes	Stupid	No
38	50	No	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	No	Active	No
39	23	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	—	Active	Yes
40	21	...	Yes	No	Dull	—	Normal	Uneasy	No
41	34	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Normal	Stupid	Yes
42	7	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Sluggish	Large	Active	No
43	18	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	—	Normal	Stupid	Yes
44	40	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	—	Normal	Stupid	No
45	74	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Normal	Stupid	No
46	50	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Sluggish	Normal	Stupid	No
47	9	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	—	Normal	Stupid	No
48	31	Yes	—	No	Dull	—	Normal	Stupid	No
49	12	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dull	Sluggish	Normal	Stupid	Yes
50	46	No	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	No

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY—CONTINUED.

Number.	HABITS.					CAPACITY.							
	Gluttonous or not?	Intemperate or not?	Any craving for improper food?	Neat or filthy?	Is he (or she) given to self-abuse?	Can the Idiot talk? If so, like a child of what age?	Can he (or she) frame a regular sentence?	Can he (or she) count?	Any sensibility to musical sounds?	Can he (or she) dress or undress self?	Can he (or she) feed self?	Can the Idiot do any work?	
1	Yes	No	No	Neat	—	Little	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
2	Yes	No	No	"	—	"	"	"	"	"	"	Little	
3	Yes	No	No	Filthy	No	No	"	"	No	"	"	No	
4	No	No	No	Neat	"	Little	—	Yes	No	Yes	"	Little	
5	No	No	No	"	Yes	4 years	No	No	"	No	"	No	
6	Yes	No	Yes	Filthy	—	No	"	"	"	"	"	"	
7	Yes	No	Yes	"	—	Little	"	"	Yes	Yes	"	Little	
8	Yes	No	No	"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Four	"	"	"	Yes	
9	No	No	No	"	—	"	No	Six	"	"	"	"	
10	No	Yes	No	No	—	No	"	No	"	No	No	No	
11	Yes	Yes	No	Neat	Yes	Yes	"	"	No	Yes	Yes	Little	
12	No	No	No	Filthy	"	"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	"	No	
13	No	No	—	"	—	No	No	No	"	"	"	"	
14	No	No	No	Neat	—	"	"	—	No	"	"	Yes	
15	Yes	No	No	"	Yes	Yes	"	No	Yes	Yes	"	No	
16	Yes	No	No	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Yes	
17	Yes	No	No	"	No	Little	"	Four	"	"	"	No	
18	No	No	No	"	"	"	"	No	"	"	"	Yes	
19	No	No	No	"	"	Vry little	"	"	"	"	"	"	
20	No	No	No	"	"	Yes	Yes	Yes	"	"	"	"	
21	Yes	No	No	"	"	"	"	—	"	"	"	"	
22	No	No	No	Filthy	"	"	No	Ten	"	"	"	No	
23	Yes	No	No	"	—	3 years	"	Ten	No	"	"	Yes	
24	Yes	No	No	"	—	Little	"	No	"	"	"	No	
25	No	No	No	"	—	Yes	Yes	"	Yes	Yes	"	Yes	
26	No	No	No	"	—	"	No	"	"	No	"	No	
27	Yes	No	Yes	"	—	3 years	"	"	"	Yes	"	"	
28	Yes	No	No	Neat	No	Yes	"	"	No	"	"	Yes	
29	Yes	No	No	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
30	No	No	No	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
31	Yes	No	No	"	"	"	Yes	twel'e	Little	"	"	"	
32	No	No	No	"	"	"	"	No	Yes	"	"	"	
33	Yes	No	No	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Yes	
34	No	No	No	Filthy	"	Yes	Yes	"	No	No	No	"	
35	No	No	No	"	—	"	No	"	Yes	"	Yes	No	
36	Yes	Yes	No	Neat	—	"	"	"	"	"	"	Little	
37	No	No	No	Filthy	—	"	"	"	"	Yes	"	Little	
38	No	No	No	"	—	"	"	"	No	"	"	No	
39	—	No	No	—	—	No	"	"	Yes	"	"	"	
40	Yes	No	No	Filthy	Yes	Yes	Yes	—	Yes	No	—	"	
41	No	No	No	Neat	—	"	"	—	"	Yes	Yes	Yes	
42	Yes	No	Yes	Filthy	No	No	No	No	"	"	"	"	
43	Yes	No	No	"	—	Yes	Yes	"	No	No	No	No	
44	Yes	Yes	Yes	"	Yes	Little	"	"	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	
45	Yes	No	No	"	—	Yes	"	"	No	"	"	"	
46	Yes	No	Yes	"	—	No	No	"	"	"	"	"	
47	Yes	No	Yes	—	No	—	—	"	—	No	No	No	
48	Yes	No	—	Neat	—	Yes	Yes	—	Yes	—	—	—	
49	No	No	No	"	No	2 words	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
50	No	No	No	"	"	Yes	Yes	"	"	Yes	"	No	

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY—CONTINUED.

CAUSES

Number.	Were the parents of the Idiot related by blood?	Physical condition of the parents?	Mental ability of parents?	Habits of parents?	Are the parents or near relatives consumptive, scrofulous, or subject to eruptive diseases?	Any cases of Insanity Epilepsy, Idiocy, blindness or deafness or any other mental or bodily infirmity in parents or relatives?
1	No	M'th. feeble	Average	Good	Consumptive	No
2	"	Robust	"	"	No	.....
3	"	"	"	"	"	.....
4	"	"	"	"	"	.....
5	"	"	"	F'th. int'mpr'te	M'th. scroff'l's	No
6	....	....	.....	.....	.....	.....
7	....	....	.....	.....	.....	.....
8	....	....	.....	.....	.....	.....
9	No	....	Average	.....	Consumptive	No
10	"	....	Below Average	.....	Scrofulous	"
11	"	Robust	Average	.....	No.	"
12	"	"	"	F'th. int'mpr'te	Consumptive	Insanity & epilepsy
13	"	"	.....	.....	No	Insane
14	"	"	Average	.....	"	Aunt Insane
15	"	"	Above average	Good	Consumptive	.....
16	....	Feeble	Below Average	Filthy & intem.	.....	.....
17	No	Robust	Average	Good	No	Imbecile Aunt
18	Yes	Feeble	"	"	Consumptive	No
19	"	Robust	"	"	No	"
20	....	"	"	"	"	.....
21	....	"	"	Not Good	"	Idiocy, epilepsy, ins.
22	No	"	Above average	Good	"	Insanity
23	....	....	.....	.....	.....	.....
24	No	Robust	Average	Vicious	No	No
25	....	Feeble	Below Average	Filthy & intem.	"	Mother Imbecile
26	No	Fath. feeble	"	Filthy, unch'ste	"	Imbecility
27	"	Robust	Average	F'th. int'mpr'te	"	No
28	"	"	"	Good	"	"
29	"	"	"	"	"	"
30	"	"	"	"	"	"
31	"	"	Good	"	Consumptive	"
32	"	Feeble	"	"	.....	"
33	"	M'th. feeble	Average	F'th. int'mpr'te	No	"
34	....	....	.....	Moth. intemp.	.....	.....
35	No	Robust	Average	Good	No	No
36	"	"	"	Intemperate	"	"
37	"	Feeble	"	"	Yes	"
38	"	M'th. feeble	"	Good	No	"
39	"	Robust	"	"	"	"
40	....	....	Below Average	.....	Yes	F'th. died of epileps.
41	No	Sensual	Above average	Intemperate	"	M'th. died of apop'y
42	"	Robust	Average	Good	No	No
43	"	Good	"	"	"	"
44	....	....	.....	.....	.....	.....
45	No	Robust	.....	.....	No	One Idiot
46	"	"	.....	.....	"	One Idiot
47	"	"	Below Average	.....	"	No
48	"	"	Average	Good	Scrofulous	Father Insane
49	"	M'th. feeble	"	.....	Consumptive	Father has fits
50	"	Both feeble	Above average	Yes	Both scroful's	No

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY—CONTINUED.

CAUSES—CONTINUED.			
Number.	Health of the Mother during pregnancy?	Was the Mother in pregnancy subject to fright, grief, or bodily injury or disease?	REMARKS.
1	Good	Fright	
2	Feeble	.....
3	Good	Fright	Fontanells closed at birth.
4	"	No	
5	"	Fright	His lower limbs are paralyzed.
6	.....	"	Hisses like a snake.
7	.....	"	Injured by a severe burn at the age of six years.
8	.....	"	Has five illegitimate children.
9	Good	"	
10	Feeble	"	Thievish. Has been in State Prison 3 years for attempt at rape.
11	.....	.....
12	Feeble	Yes	Bright till after puberty, was disappointed in love, indulged in self-abuse and thus became an Idiot.
13	.....	.....
14	Feeble	No	
15	Good	Grief	Remarkable memory.
16	.....	.....	Entirely destitute of affection.
17	Good	No	Destroys his clothing and goes naked—is tall and robust.
18	Feeble	"	Very religious—goes from house to house and will make a prayer when they will let him.
19	had fever	Disease	
20	Good	Fright.	
21	.....	.....
22	Good	No	
23	.....	.....	No memory.
24	Good	No	Without fear and very passionate.
25	"	"	Father intemperate, Mother unchaste.
26	"	"	
27	"	"	
28	"	Fright	
29	"	No	
30	"	"	
31	"	"	Very obstinate.
32	.....	.....
33	Feeble	Fright	
34	.....	.....
35	.....	.....
36	.....	.....
37	.....	.....	Extremely filthy.
38	.....	.....
39	.....	Fright	
40	.....	.....
41	Feeble	.....
42	Good	Yes	Can do plain labor.
43	.....	.....
44	.....	.....
45	.....	.....
46	.....	.....
47	.....	.....	Relatives all foolish.
48	.....	.....	Some think her insane.
49	Feeble	Fright	Father intemperate. Mother an opium eater.
50	Good	No	

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY—CONTINUED.

CONDITION.										
Number.	Age.	Is the Idiocy congenital?	Is the health of the Idiot good?	Is the Idiot subject to Epilepsy?	Eye bright or dull?	Hearing quick or sluggish?	Is the head normal or abnormal?	Is the Idiot active or sluggish?	Good tempered or not?	
51	52	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	—	Yes	
52	36	No	Yes	Yes	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
53	51	No	Yes	Yes	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
54	44	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	No	
55	21	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Abn'rm'l	Active	No	
56	41	No	Yes	Yes	Dull	Quick	Normal	Active	No	
57	55	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Dull	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	Yes	
58	22	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	Yes	
59	28	No	No	No	Dull	Sluggish	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
60	22	No	No	Yes	Rrig't	Sluggish	Normal	Active	No	
61	26	No	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
62	24	No	Yes	has been	Dull	—	Normal	Stupid	No	
63	50	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dull	Quick	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	No	
64	39	No	No	has been	Dull	Sluggish	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	Yes	
65	42	No	Yes	has been	Dull	Quick	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	Yes	
66	58	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
67	47	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
68	45	Yes	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
69	15	No	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
70	14	No	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
71	31	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	No	
72	10	Yes	No	Yes	Dull	Quick	Normal	Active	No	
73	28	No	Yes	Yes	Dull	Sluggish	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	Yes	
74	40	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Sluggish	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
75	21	No	Yes	has been	Dull	Quick	Normal	Active	No	
76	7	Yes	Yes	has been	Brig't	Quick	Abn'rm'l	Active	No	
77	30	Yes	Yes	has been	Dull	Sluggish	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	Yes	
78	19	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
79	10	No	Yes	Yes	Brig't	Quick	Abn'rm'l	Active	Yes	
80	7	Yes	No	No	Brig't	Quick	Small	Active	No	
81	33	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Small	Active	Yes	
82	43	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Normal	Stupid	No	
83	21	No	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
84	50	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Small	Active	Yes	
85	4	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
86	30	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Sluggish	Abn'rm'l	Stupid	Yes	
87	36	Yes	No	No	Dull	Sluggish	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
88	39	Yes	No	No	Dull	Sluggish	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
89	37	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
90	20	No	No	Yes	Dull	Quick	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
91	15	Yes	Yes	No	—	Quick	—	Stupid	Yes	
92	25	Yes	—	No	Brig't	Quick	—	Active	No	
93	14	No	No	Yes	—	Quick	—	Stupid	No	
94	5	No	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	—	Active	No	
95	6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Brig't	Quick	—	Active	No	
96	16	No	Yes	Yes	Brig't	Quick	—	Active	No	
97	30	Yes	No	Yes	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	No	
98	13	Yes	Yes	No	Brig't	Quick	Normal	Active	Yes	
99	14	Yes	Yes	has been	Dull	Quick	Normal	Stupid	Yes	
100	13	Yes	Yes	No	Dull	Quick	Large	Stuoid	Yes	

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY—CONTINUED.

Number.	HABITS.					CAPACITY.							
	Gluttonous or not ?	Intemperate or not ?	Any craving for improper food ?	Neat or filthy ?	Is he (or she) given to self-abuse ?	Can the Idiot talk ? If so, like a child of what age ?	Can he (or she) frame a regular sentence ?	Can he (or she) count ?	Any sensibility to musical sounds ?	Can he (or she) dress or undress self ?	Can he (or she) feed self ?	Can the Idiot do any work ?	
51	Yes	No	No	Filthy	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
52	Yes	No	No	Neat	—	“	“	“	Yes	“	“	“	
53	Yes	No	No	“	—	“	“	“	“	“	“	“	
54	Yes	No	No	Filthy	—	No	No	No	No	“	“	“	
55	No	No	No	“	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	“	“	“	“	
56	Yes	No	No	“	—	No	No	No	“	“	“	“	
57	Yes	No	No	“	—	Yes	“	“	“	“	“	“	
58	Yes	No	No	Neat	—	5 yrs. old	Yes	Little	Yes	“	“	“	
59	Yes	No	No	Filthy	Yes	6 years	No	..	“	“	“	Little	
60	No	No	No	Neat	No	12 years	Yes	Little	....	“	“	Yes
61	No	No	No	“	—	“	“	..	“	“	“	“	
62	No	No	No	“	—	“	“	..	“	“	“	“	
63	Yes	No	No	Filthy	—	“	No	No	....	“	“	Little
64	Yes	No	No	Neat	—	“	Yes	..	....	“	“	Yes
65	Yes	No	Yes	“	—	“	“	..	....	“	“	“
66	No	No	No	“	No	Yes	“	3 or 4	....	“	“	“
67	No	No	No	“	“	“	“	3 or 4	Yes	“	“	“	
68	No	No	No	“	“	“	“	3 or 4	“	“	“	if dir'et'd	
69	No	No	No	“	“	“	“	two	No	“	“	if w'ch'd	
70	Yes	No	No	“	“	“	“	No	Yes	“	“	if w'ch'd	
71	Yes	No	No	“	“	Yes	No	“	“	“	“	Yes	
72	Yes	No	—	Filthy	“	“	Yes	not 10	....	No	“	Little
73	Yes	No	Yes	Neat	“	3 years	“	No	No	“	No	No	
74	Yes	No	—	“	—	10 years	“	..	“	Yes	Yes	Yes	
75	Yes	No	No	“	Yes	Yes	“	Yes	Yes	“	“	“	
76	Yes	No	Yes	Filthy	No	“	No	No	“	No	“	No	
77	Yes	No	Yes	“	“	“	“	“	No	“	“	“	
78	Yes	No	No	Neat	Yes	“	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
79	Yes	—	—	Filthy	—	3 years	No	“	“	“	“	Little	
80	No	No	No	“	—	No	“	No	“	No	No	No	
81	No	No	No	“	No	Yes	“	“	“	Yes	Yes	“	
82	No	No	No	“	“	5 or 6 yrs.	Yes	“	“	“	“	“	
83	Yes	No	No	Neat	“	Yes	“	“	“	“	“	if w'ch'd	
84	—	No	—	“	—	No	No	“	....	....	“	No
85	—	No	—	“	No	“	“	“	....	....	“	“
86	Yes	No	—	“	—	Yes	“	..	....	Yes	“	Yes
87	Yes	No	No	“	No	Little	“	No	Yes	“	“	No	
88	Yes	No	No	“	“	“	“	Yes	“	“	“	Little	
89	No	No	No	“	—	“	“	Little	“	“	“	Little	
90	Yes	No	No	“	No	“	“	“	“	“	“	Little	
91	No	No	No	“	“	8 yrs. old	Yes	Yes	“	“	“	Little	
92	Yes	No	No	—	—	3 yrs. old	No	Ten	No	....	“	Little
93	No	No	No	Filthy	No	“	“	No	Yes	No	“	No	
94	Yes	No	No	Neat	“	“	“	“	No	“	No	“	
95	Yes	No	No	“	“	3 yrs. old	“	“	Yes	“	Yes	“	
96	Yes	No	No	“	“	No	“	Six	No	“	“	Little	
97	No	No	No	“	“	“	“	Little	Yes	Yes	“	Little	
98	No	No	No	“	“	“	“	“	No	No	No	No	
99	No	No	No	“	—	....	“	No	....	Yes	Yes	Little
100	No	No	No	“	—	Little	“	“	Yes	“	“	Little	

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY—CONTINUED.

CAUSES.

Number.	Were the parents of the Idiot related by blood?	Physical condition of the parents?	Mental ability of parents?	Habits of parents?	Are the parents or near relatives consumptive, scrofulous, or subject to eruptive diseases?	Any cases of Insanity Epilepsy, Idiocy, blindness or deafness or any other mental or bodily infirmity in parents or relatives?
51	No	Good	Average	Good	Yes	Mother has fits
52	2 or 3	"	"	"	"	Epilepsy
53	cous.	"	"	"	"	"
54	No	"	M'th. below av.	Bad	"	No
55	"	"	Both below av.	"	"	"
56	"	Robust	Average	Good	No	Yes
57	"	"	Both below av.	"	"	No
58	"	"	Average	"	"	"
59	"	Fath. feeble	Fath. below av.	Bad	.....	.....
60	"	Fath. feeble	"	"	.....	.....
61	"	Fath. feeble	"	"	.....	.....
62	"	Fath. feeble	"	"	.....	.....
63	....	Good	Average	Good	Cancer	.....
64	No	"	"	"	Scrofula	.....
65	....	Fath. feeble	Fath. below av.	"	Scrofula	.....
66	No	Robust	Average	"	No	} Their sister has idiotic children
67	"	"	"	"	"	
68	"	"	"	"	"	No
69	"	"	"	"	Consumptive	"
70	"	"	"	.....	No	"
71	"	"	"	Good	"	"
72	"	M'th. feeble	Below Average	"	"	"
73	"	"	Above average	"	M'th. cons'mp	.....
74	"	"	Average	"	M'th. scrofl's	.....
75	"	"	Above average	"	No	Sister amaurotic
76	"	Robust	Average	"	Scrofula	No
77	"	"	"	"	Scrofula	.....
78	"	"	Below Average	"	No	.....
79	"	"	"	Bad	"	No
80	"	"	"	Good	"	Mother Insane
81	Cous.	"	"	Bad	"	An Idiotic sister
82	....	"	.....	"	Consumptive	Deafness
83	No	"	Above average	Good	No	No
84	"	"	"	"	"	"
85	"	"	"	"	Scrofula	"
86	"	M'th. feeble	Below Average	Bad	"	"
87	Cous.	Good	Average	Good	No	Mother Insane
88	No	"	"	"	"	Uncle & broth. ins.
89	....	Robust	"	Fath. licentious	"	No
90	No	Feeble	Above average	Good	"	"
91	"	Good	Average	"	F'th. cons'mp	Father Insane
92	"	Robust	"	"	No	A Cousin Idiotic
93	"	"	"	"	F'th. scroful's	An Aunt Insane
94	"	Good	"	"	No	No
95	"	Robust	"	Intemperate	M'th. cons'mp	"
96	"	Feeble	Below Average	Filthy	"	"
97	"	Robust	Average	Father Filthy	No	"
98	"	"	M'th. below av.	Good	"	"
99	"	M'th. feeble	Average	"	"	"
100	"	Robust	"	"	"	"

TABLE I. STATISTICS OF IDIOCY—CONTINUED.

CAUSES—CONTINUED.

Number.	Health of the Mother during pregnancy?	Was the Mother in pregnancy subject to fright, grief, or bodily injury or disease?	REMARKS.
51	....	....
52	Good	Grief	Brother and sister.
53	...	"	
54	....	....	Illegitimate.
55	Good	No	
56	"	"	
57	....	....
58	Good	Fright	
59	"	No	} One family } One father and two mothers.
60	"	"	
61	"	"	
62	"	"	
63	....	....
64	....	....
65	....	....
66	Good	No	} Brothers, all of medium size, two are stoutly built.
67	"	"	
68	"	"	
69	"	"	Caused by sickness at seven months old.
70	"	"	Idiocy has existed since seven months old.
71	"	Yes	Does not know one color from another.
72	....	....
73	Good	....	Epilepsy for twenty years. It increases.
74	"	No	Works some on a farm.
75	"	"	
76	"	Grief	
77	"	No	Cannot articulate well.
78	Feeble	....
79	....	....	Caused by Epilepsy. Is apparently cured.
80	Good	No	Mother always very passionate.
81	"	....
82	....	....
83	Good	No	Caused by scarlet fever.
84	"	....
85	....	....
86	....	....
87	Good	No	
88	"	"	
89	"	Grief	
90	"	No	
91	"	gri'f&frig't	
92	"	No	
93	"	"	
94	"	"	
95	"	....
96	"	....
97	"	No	
98	"	"	
99	Feeble	Yes	
100	Good	No	

APPENDIX A. TABLE II. TABLE OF CAUSES, IN THIRTY CASES.

Number.	Is the Idiocy Congenital ?	Consanguinity.	One or both parents of feeble health.	Habits of one or both parents bad.	One or both parents below the average as to mental ability.	Parents or relatives consumptive, scrofulous, or subject to eruptive diseases.	Insanity, Idiocy, Epilepsy, Blindness, Deafness, or other mental or physical infirmity, or disease in parents, or relatives.	Health of the mother during pregnancy.	Mother during pregnancy, subject to grief, fright, or bodily, or mental, injury, or disease.	Is the Idiot (or has the Idiot been) subject to Epilepsy?	Is the Idiot given to Self-abuse ?
1	Yes	.....	.....	.....	Belw Aver.	.....	.....	Not good	.....	—	Yes
2	Yes	.....	.....	Both bad.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Yes	—
3	Yes	.....	.....	.....	.....	Scrofulous	.....	.....	Grief.	Yes	—
4	No	.....	Moth. feeble	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Yes	Yes
5	Yes	.....	Moth. feeble	.....	.....	M'th. eruptive.	.....	.....	.....	..	—
6	No	.....	Moth. feeble	.....	.....	Moth. consumptive.	.....	.....	.....	Yes	—
7	No	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Id. relat.	.....	.....	Yes	—
8	Yes	.....	.....	Both Intemperate	below Aver.	.....	.....	.....	Hysteria	..	—
9	Yes	.....	.....	Father intemperate	.....	.....	Idiotic Cousins.	.....	Fright.	..	—
10	Yes	Cousins.	.....	.....	.....	Eruptions.	Idiocy.	.....	.....	Yes	—
11	Yes	.....	.....	.....	below Aver.	Eruptive.	.....	Feeble	Fright.	..	—
12	Yes	.....	.....	.....	.....	Consumptive.	.....	.....	Grief.	Yes	Yes
13	Yes	Cousins.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Dise'd	Yes.	Yes	—
14	Yes	3d Cous.	Both feeble	.....	.....	Consumptive.	.....	Feeble	Yes.	..	—
15	Yes	.....	Both feeble	.....	Both below Aver.	.....	Epilepsy idiocy, & insanity.	.....	.....	..	—
16	Yes	.....	Both feeble	Licentious.	Both below Aver.	.....	.....	.....	.....	..	—
17	Yes	Cousins.	.....	Bad.	.....	.....	An idio'e sister.	.....	.....	..	—
18	Yes	.....	Moth. feeble	.....	.....	Consumption.	.....	.....	Fright'd by an Id.	..	—
19	Yes	.....	.....	Father intemperate	.....	Consumptive.	Insanity.	Feeble	Yes.	..	—
20	Yes	.....	.....	Both intemperate	below Aver.	.....	Father ophthal.	.....	.....	..	—
21	Yes	Cousins.	.....	Father intemperate	Both below Aver.	.....	.....	.....	.....	..	—
22	Yes	.....	feeble	.....	.....	.....	Insanity.	.....	Sm. pox.	..	—
23	No	.....	Fath. feeble	uncleanly	Fath. b. Av.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Yes
24	Yes	.....	Both feeble	Both int.,	.....	Yes.	.....	.....	.....	..	—
25	Yes	.....	Moth. feeble	Moth. opium eater	.....	Moth. consumptive.	Father epileptic	Feeble	Fright.	Yes	—
26	No	.....	Both feeble	.....	.....	Scrofula & consump'n	.....	.....	.....	..	—
27	Yes	Cousins.	.....	.....	.....	.....	M'th.ins.	.....	.....	—	—
28	Yes	.....	.....	.....	.....	Fath. cons.	F'th. ins.	.....	Fright.	—	—
29	No	.....	.....	.....	.....	Father	A mater.	.....	.....	Yes	—
30	Yes	.....	.....	Both int.,	.....	Moth. cons.	.....	.....	.....	Yes	—

APPENDIX A. TABLE III.

RECAPITULATION.

Whole number of cases <i>reported</i> ,	531
The number of cases in which the Idiocy is <i>congenital</i> ,	316
Number of cases in which it is <i>not</i> congenital,	113
Number of cases in which this question is <i>not answered</i> ,	97

I. AGE.

Whole number whose age is reported,	437
Average age of those reported,	33 years.
The number of those who are <i>between</i> 90 and 100 years,	1
“ “ “ “ 80 “ 90 “	5
“ “ “ “ 70 “ 80 “	11
“ “ “ “ 60 “ 70 “	37
“ “ “ “ 50 “ 60 “	46
“ “ “ “ 40 “ 50 “	51
“ “ “ “ 30 “ 40 “	77
“ “ “ “ 20 “ 30 “	73
“ “ “ “ 10 “ 20 “	82
“ “ “ <i>under</i> 10 years,	54
The number <i>under</i> 20 years of age is	135
“ who are 50 years and <i>upward</i> ,	100

II. CONDITION.

1. Is the head *normal* or *abnormal*?
 The question is *answered* in 156 cases.
 Normal, 59. Abnormal, 97.

2. Is the Idiot active or stupid?
 This question is answered in 159 cases.
 Active, 73. Stupid, 86.

3. Is the eye bright or dull?
The question is answered in 154 cases.
Bright, 72. Dull, 82.
4. Is the hearing quick or sluggish?
The question is answered in 137 cases.
Quick, 102. Sluggish, 35.
5. Has the Idiot a sensibility to musical sounds?
The question is answered in 128 cases.
Affirmatively, 88. Negatively, 40.

III. PRESENT CAPACITY.

1. Can the Idiot dress or undress himself or herself?
The question is answered in 252 cases.
Affirmatively, 186. Negatively, 66.
2. Can the Idiot feed himself or herself?
The question is answered in 248 cases.
Affirmatively, 207. Negatively, 41.
3. Can the Idiot talk?
The question is answered in 225 cases.
Affirmatively, 177. Negatively, 48.
Can talk *only like a small child*, 51.
Can not talk well, 99.
4. Can the Idiot frame a regular sentence?
The question is answered in 174 cases.
Affirmatively, 71. Negatively, 103.
5. Can the Idiot count?
The question is answered in 226 cases.
Affirmatively, 99. Negatively, 127.
Can count *only 10 or less*, 44.
Possess no practical knowledge of numbers, 171.

IV. HABITS.

1. Is the Idiot gluttonous or not?
The question is answered in 163 cases.
Affirmatively, 92. Negatively, 71.
2. Is the Idiot filthy or neat?
The question is answered in 185 cases.
Filthy, 89. Not filthy, 96.

V. CAUSES.

The number of cases in which an adequate cause is reported, 310.

1. Consanguinity. Were the parents of the Idiot related by blood?

The question is answered in 160 cases.

Affirmatively, 20.

Children of own cousins, 12.

“ second cousins, 3.

“ third cousins, 1.

“ double cousins, 3.

Great-grandparents own cousins, 1.

2. Epilepsy. Is the Idiot (or has the Idiot been) subject to Epilepsy?

The number of cases in which the question is answered, 257.

Affirmatively, 76.

3. Masturbation. Is the Idiot given to self-abuse?

The question is answered in 84 cases.

Affirmatively, 19.

4. Habits of parents. What were the habits of the parents in regard to temperance, chastity, cleanliness, &c.?

The question is answered in 235 cases.

Habits of both parents good, 140.

“ “ “ bad, 50.

“ of one of the parents, bad, 45.

Total bad, 95.

BAD HABITS CLASSIFIED.

a. Intemperance.

Number of cases of intemperance in parents, 76.

“ “ “ both, 30.

“ “ “ one parent, 46.

Intemperance of father, 43.

“ mother, 3.

b. Licentiousness.

Both parents licentious, 7.

One parent, “ 10—17.

Intemperatè and licentious, 8.

Uncleanly “ “ 1.

c. Filthy, 5.

Filthy and intemperate, 1.

5. Mental ability of parents. Is it above or below the general average?

The question is answered in 185 cases.

Both parents above the average, 14.

“ “ average, 106.

“ “ below the average, 50.

One parent “ “ 15.

6. Physical condition of parents. Health of parents, robust or otherwise?

The question is answered in 163 cases.

Both parents robust, 130.

“ “ feeble, 16.

One parent feeble, 17—33.

7. Diseases in parents and relatives. Are the parents or near relatives consumptive, or scrofulous, or subject to any eruptive disease?

The question is answered in 145 cases.

Answered affirmatively in 41 cases.

Consumptive, 16. Scrofulous, 11. Eruptive diseases, 4. Simple affirmation, 10.

8. Have there been any cases of insanity, idiocy, epilepsy, blindness, deafness, or any infirmity of body or mind in the parents or near relatives of the Idiot?

The question is answered in 164 cases.

Affirmatively in 70 cases.

Idiocy in parents, 10. Insanity in parents, 6.

“ relatives, 6. “ relatives, 8.

Epilepsy in parents or relatives, 8.

Blindness “ “ 2.

Melancholy in father, 1.

One of the above causes but not specified in 11 cases.

Dementia from insanity, 13.

9. Health of the mother during pregnancy?

The question is answered in 105 cases.

Health good, 90. Health feeble, 15.

10. Was the mother during pregnancy subject to fright, grief, or bodily injury, or disease?

The question is answered in 108 cases.

Affirmatively, 53.

One of the above causes, 5.

Mother was subject to fright, 40.

“ “ grief, 6.

“ “ disease, 2.

IDIOTS AND THE EFFORTS FOR THEIR IMPROVEMENT.

It is one of the most cheering indications of the advancement of our race, in civilization and moral elevation, that so much more interest is now felt than in former times, for the down-trodden and suffering classes of humanity. It would seem to herald the near approach of that period, which some of the philosophic historians of the present day have descried in the far off future, when the exclusive reign of the physical and the intellectual forces having terminated, the affections shall in their turn bear sway, and man, no longer a mighty brute, or an incarnation of mere intellect, shall develope his entire nature, and manifest his love for his Creator by his affectionate regard for even the humblest and most abject of his fellows.

We have no disposition to contend with those who claim for the nations of antiquity, superiority in architecture and the fine arts; we will acknowledge that we have no painters like Appelles, no sculptors like Phidias; we will admit that the Grecian styles of architecture remain to this day unsurpassed in beauty and grace; we will allow that in mere physical culture they have had no equals in modern times; but amid all this artistic luxury and splendor, we challenge these votaries of the past, to adduce a single example of public sympathy with the helpless, the suffering, or the ignorant. Where, among the temples and palaces of Athens and Corinth, whose ruins to this day excite the admiration of the world, can be found the crumbling walls of the hospital for the sick or the insane? Was there among the gorgeous obelisks and temples of Luxor, of Karnak, or of Thebes, any edifice dedicated to the instruction of the masses? Had Rome in the days of her imperial splendor, among her patrician palaces and public edifices reared of materials so imperishable that two thousand years have scarcely impaired their beauty, a single building intended as an asylum for the deaf-mute, the blind, or the idiot? Alas! yes, there was one Asylum for these poor innocents; but it was no marble hall, whose gilded dome might reflect the rays of the rising sun; it was the turbid waters of the Tiber, which full oft bore to the depths of the Mediteranean their bodies, cast into its waves by cruel parents, to relieve themselves from the burden of their support. Amid the thousand cities of the Roman empire, abounding as they did in wealth and luxury, amid all the eloquence and professed patriotism of her senate and her forum, no voice was heard to plead the cause of humanity, no hand was stretched forth to aid the poor, the suffering, and the helpless.

Nor did Christianity, in the first few centuries after its advent, grapple with these forms of wretchedness. It did, indeed, with praiseworthy courage, assail and often overthrow gigantic wrongs. At its stern behest, the gladiatorial contests were discontinued, and the fierce thirst for blood which had so long characterized the Roman populace, was no longer gratified with the sight of the death struggles of innocent men, contending, for their amusement, with wild beasts, or brutal savages. Under its more humane sway the sick stranger was no longer left to die in loneliness and agony, for the dews of death were wiped from his brow by the fair hands of woman, now first taught her mission on earth, that of ministering angel; the poor slave no longer clanked his chain in despair, for Christian sympathy had reached him in his low estate, and the wealth of Christian men, and even the endowments of Christian churches were sacrificed without regret, to secure his freedom. But though the due meed of praise should not be withheld, for these acts of Christian philanthropy, the people were too recently emerged from the selfishness and heartlessness of heathenism, to think of succoring those who proffered no claim for aid, save in their vacant countenances and loathsome habits.

And when, in the dark ages, the spirit of philanthropy awakened in the early church, by the teachings of the Apostles and their immediate successors, had subsided into an apathy and indifference, second only to the cold cruelty of paganism, it was not to be expected that those whose claims had failed to move the warm Christian heart, should receive the sympathies of the gross, selfish and sensual monk.

The intense individualism developed by the Reformation, the mental activity aroused by the invention of the art of printing, and the disenfranchisement of the masses from feudal bondage, by the revolutions which followed, all contributed to banish the apathy which had so long prevented the acknowledgement and relief of human suffering.

It is not a little remarkable that a single century, and that one more noted for bloody revolutions, fierce and desolating wars, and extraordinary changes in dynasties and nations, than any other in human history, should have given birth to three public charities, whose objects had existed through all past ages, but up to that period had received little or nothing of human sympathy or attention.

The instruction of deaf-mutes, commenced in 1743, by Pereira, and continued and improved during the latter part of the Eighteenth century, by Heinicke in Germany, the Abbe De L'Epee, and his eminent pupil and successor, the Abbe Sicard, in France, was still farther improved in the earlier part of the present century by the late Dr.

Gallaudet, Laurent Clerc, and their coadjutors; and has opened the portals of knowledge to thousands who but for this noble charity would have been as ignorant and brutish as the beasts that perish.

In 1794, just at the close of the reign of terror, Pinel, on his appointment as director of the Salpetriere, disgusted with the cruelties which had been inflicted upon the insane, up to that period, threw aside the whips, the chains, and the stocks, with which they had hitherto been controlled, and in their stead substituted the power of kindness, gentleness and love.

It was not until the early part of the present century that the condition of the idiot began to attract the attention of the humane. The celebrated surgeon and philosopher, Itard, at Paris, foiled in his attempt to demonstrate his sensational theory by the idiocy of his subject, the famous Savage of Aveyron, was led to consider the possibility of instructing a class hitherto considered hopeless. Being, however, advanced in years, and suffering from the disease which finally terminated his life, Itard felt that his plans must be committed to younger hands for execution; his choice fell upon Dr. Edward Seguin, a favorite pupil of his, and the subsequent history of this noble philanthropic movement has demonstrated the wisdom of that choice. Dr. Seguin possessed an inextinguishable love for his race, indomitable perseverance, a highly cultivated intellect, and a rare degree of executive talent. There were many difficulties to be surmounted, many obstacles to be overcome, ere the first step could be taken; but, before his youthful ardor and enthusiasm, doubts vanished, difficulties disappeared, the thick veil which had enshrouded the mind of the idiot was rent asunder, and these innocent but hapless creatures were rescued from the doom of a life of utter vacuity.

As in other works of philanthropy, so in this, other laborers were ready at once to enter into the harvest. To some of these, undoubtedly, belongs the praise of originating modes of instruction which subsequent experience has proved successful. Among the early pioneers in the cause of the idiot, the names of Belhomme, Ferrus, Falret, Voisin, and Vallee, are deserving of special honor, as having contributed, in various ways, to its success.

Though something had been accomplished in the way of instructing individual cases, it was not till 1838, that a school for idiots was established which could be regarded as successful. In 1842, a portion of the Bicetre, one of the great hospitals for the insane, was set apart for their instruction, and Dr. Seguin was appointed director. He remained in this position for a time; but, subsequently, established a private institution for idiots in Paris.

It was during this period that he prepared his work on Idiocy, "*Traitement moral, hygiène et Education des Idiots*;" a work which entitles its author to rank with the first professional minds of the day. In his definitions, his classification, his diagnosis, and, above all, in his plans for the treatment and instruction of idiots, he exhibits so thorough a mastery of his subject, such philosophical views, and such admirable tact, that his treatise is invaluable as a manual to all who may undertake similar labors. In consequence of the revolution of 1848, in France, Dr. Seguin came to this country, and is now connected with the Pennsylvania School for Idiots, at Germantown.

The success of Dr. Seguin and his co-laborers, at Paris, stimulated the philanthropic in other countries of Europe to attempt similar institutions. Of these, that established at Berlin, in 1842, under the direction of M. Saegert, has been most successful. Our reports of this Institution are not very late, but it is still, we believe, in a prosperous condition. M. Saegert seems to possess, in a very high degree, that genial temper so necessary for the successful training of this unfortunate class.

Contemporaneously with the organization of the school for idiots, at Berlin, the attention of the benevolent was called to a class of imbeciles, hitherto entirely neglected, but whose numbers seemed almost sufficient to paralyze effort in their behalf.

In Savoy, and the departments of Isere, of the High Alps, and the Low Alps in France, as well as in some of the other mountainous districts of Europe and Asia, especially in the narrow and precipitous valleys of these regions, a disease prevails, known as goitre. Its most marked feature is a prodigious enlargement of the glands of the throat, accompanied, in most cases, with general degeneration of the system. It is attributed by medical writers to impurity of air and imperfect ventilation, to want of sufficient light, the sun penetrating these valleys for not more than one or two hours of the day, to impure water, innutritious food, severe labor, and extreme poverty. The children of these persons are, of course, far more diseased than their parents, and are subject to a form of idiocy called Cretinism. Retaining usually the goitre, they also suffer from feeble and swollen limbs, distorted and deformed features, pale, bloodless and tumid skin, and almost entire helplessness. They form, indeed, the lowest grades of idiocy. The number of these poor wretches is almost incredible. In the four departments named above, with a population of 958,000, M. Niepce found, in 1850, 54,000 Cretins, or about five per cent. of the entire population. In several of the cantons, one-third of the whole population were Cretins; and, in some hamlets, as, for instance, in that of

Bozel, in the canton of the same name, out of 1,472 inhabitants, 1,011 were either affected with goitre or cretinism.

The attention of a young physician of Zurich, Dr. Guggenbuhl, was attracted to these unfortunates in 1839; and, after two or three years of experiment had demonstrated the possibility of improving their condition, he resolved to devote himself to their instruction. He accordingly purchased from the eminent agriculturist, Kasthofer, a tract of land, which he had already put under cultivation. It was situated on the Abendberg, above Interlachen, about four thousand feet above the level of the sea, and commanded a view of one of the finest landscapes in Switzerland. To this elevated and healthful location he brought as many cretin children as he had the means of instructing; and, with a philanthropic zeal and patience which none but those who have witnessed his labors can fully appreciate, he has toiled on, (till impaired health compelled him, some three years since, to entrust his cares, for a time, to other hands,) developing intellect where few would have suspected its existence, and carrying joy to many a household which had mourned over the hopeless idiocy of their children. This institution has been the parent of several others for the treatment of cretins on the continent of Europe, particularly in Wurtemberg, Bavaria, Sardinia, Prussia and Saxony.

Dr. Kern, formerly of Eisenach, established, at Leipsic, in 1846, a private institution for the education of idiots or feeble-minded youth. In 1855, a building was erected for this institution in the village of Gohlis, near Leipsic. Children are received without distinction of birth-place, religion, or sex, their friends or charitable persons paying the necessary charges.

The translation and publication of some reports of the school on the Abendberg by Dr. Twining, and Dr. Conolly's account of the labors of Dr. Seguin and his coadjutors, led to the establishment of a school for idiots at Bath, England, in 1846. Others were organized soon after at Brighton and Lancaster. In the autumn of 1847, an effort was made to establish an institution on a large scale, capable of accommodating the increasing numbers who sought for instruction. In this movement, Rev. Dr. Andrew Reed (whose visit to this country will be remembered with pleasure by many,) was the leader, and to his labors and those of Dr. John Conolly, whose life-long devotion to the cause of the insane have made him known wherever the English tongue is spoken, the success of the enterprise is mainly due. While making preparations for the erection of a magnificent hospital for idiots, the patrons of this institution deemed it desirable to commence, at once, the work of instruction, and accordingly, a school was com-

menced at the Park House, Highgate, (formerly a nobleman's residence,) on the 27th of April, 1848. This becoming full in less than two years, the committee accepted the liberal offer of Sir S. M. Peto, to devote Essex Hall, Colchester, to their service. This, also, was soon filled and a third building obtained. Meantime, the friends of the idiot were indefatigable in their efforts to procure funds for the erection of their new asylum. In June, 1853, the corner-stone of the new edifice, at Earlswood, near Reigate, Surrey, was laid by Prince Albert. It is intended to contain accommodations for 400 pupils, and is now nearly or quite completed. Its estimated cost is \$175,000, aside from the price of the estate, which contains about one hundred acres. It is intended to elevate Essex Hall into an independent asylum, on the completion of the edifice at Earlswood. Measures have also been recently adopted for the establishment of an Asylum for idiots in the vicinity of Edinburgh, and at several other points in the United Kingdoms.

The movement in this country appears to have been contemporaneous with that in England. On the 13th of January, 1846, Hon. F. F. Backus, of Rochester, New York, at that time a member of the Senate of that State, moved a reference of that portion of the State Census referring to idiots, to the committee on Medical Societies, of which he was chairman, and on the 15th of the same month read a report on the subject, prepared with great care, and embodying the results of inquiries made the previous Autumn, urging the necessity of an institution for idiots, in the State of New York, and narrating the success of similar institutions in Europe. On the 25th of March following, Dr. Backus reported a bill for the purchase of a site and the erection of suitable buildings, for an Asylum for Idiots. His bill passed the Senate, and was at first concurred in by the House, but subsequently rejected, on the ground that the party who were then in power had pledged themselves to retrenchment of the expenses of the State. A similar bill passed the Senate the succeeding year but was lost in the house.

On the 22nd of January, 1846, Hon. Horatio Byington, (in whose recent death Massachusetts has lost an eminent citizen, and humanity a benefactor,) offered a resolution in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, for the appointment of a commission to investigate the condition of idiots, in that State. Judge Byington's attention had been called to the subject, according to his own statement, by a letter from Dr. S. B. Woodward, the eminent philanthropist, with whom Dr. Backus had held correspondence previous to his own action, in the New York legislature.

The resolution of Judge Byington passed both houses, and Dr. S.

G. Howe, so well known for his labors in behalf of the blind, Judge Byington and Gilman Kimball, Esq., were appointed Commissioners. Their reports were very full and able, and conclusively demonstrated the necessity of providing for the instruction of the unfortunate class whose condition they had investigated. For the purpose of testing the capacity of idiots for instruction, however, an experimental school was established at South Boston, under Dr. Howe's personal supervision. This resulted in the establishment, in 1851, of the "Massachusetts school for idiotic and feeble-minded youth," at South Boston, of which Dr. Howe has a general oversight.

It is not to be understood, however, that idiots had not been instructed, in this country, previous to the Autumn of 1848, the period when the experimental school, at South Boston, was organized. Indeed, there is reason to believe that their instruction had been attempted, with success here, prior to the first efforts in Europe. As early as 1818, an idiot girl was admitted into the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, at Hartford, Conn., and remained under instruction till 1824. Others were received during nearly every subsequent year, and some of them made very considerable progress. In all, thirty-four idiots have been pupils at that institution, and the success which has followed the efforts for the instruction of several of the cases, of which we have a detailed narrative, would do no discredit to any Asylum for Idiots, either in Europe or this country.

In 1839, an idiot boy was received into the New York Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, and remained for three years, under the instruction of Prof. Morris, with very favorable results.

The same year, Dr. S. G. Howe commenced the instruction of an idiotic blind child, at the Perkins Institution for the Blind, in South Boston.

In July, 1848, Dr. H. B. Wilbur, of Barre, Mass., who had for several years taken a deep interest in the condition of idiots, opened a private institution for their instruction, which, both under his administration and that of his successor, Dr. Geo. Brown, has met with the most gratifying success.

Other gentlemen in Massachusetts devoted a large measure of zeal and energy to the promotion of this good work. Among these it may not be invidious to name Mr. George Sumner, whose eloquent letters from Europe, describing the school at Bicetre, rendered efficient aid to the incipient organization of the Massachusetts School for Idiots, and Dr. Edward Jarvis, whose valuable statistics on the subject of insanity and idiocy, recently published, have laid the country under obligation.

The Legislature of New York, though before any other in taking cognizance of the subject of idiocy, was more tardy in its action than that of Massachusetts, and it was not till 1851 that an experimental school was established at Albany, and Dr. Wilbur, who had already had three years experience in the instruction of imbeciles, at Barre, was elected its Superintendent. In 1854, the corner-stone of the State Asylum for Idiots, was laid at Syracuse, and in August, 1855, the school at Albany, already permanently established, was removed to the new edifice. The Asylum occupies a commanding site, to the southwest of the city of Syracuse, and while its architectural beauty renders it an ornament to the enterprising city whose liberality secured its location, and to the State whose munificence provided such ample accommodations for this hitherto neglected class, its internal arrangements are so admirable as to make it a desirable model for institutions of the kind.

With an edifice so well arranged, a superintendent in whom are combined, in a remarkable degree, those traits of character which mark the successful instructor, and a corps of teachers of extraordinary efficiency, it is not surprising that the results attained by the Asylum, even at this early period of its history, surpass those of any institution of the kind in this country or Europe.

Pennsylvania has also established a school for the training of idiots, at Germantown, now in its third year of successful progress under the care of Mr. J. B. Richards, who was connected with the Massachusetts experimental school during the first two or three years of its history. The recent accession of Dr. Seguin to the corps of instructors in this school, can not fail to increase, very greatly, its reputation.

During the past year, Connecticut and Kentucky have taken the first steps toward the establishment of similar institutions.

Having thus hastily sketched the history of this humanitarian movement, it remains for us to discuss the objects proposed in the treatment of Idiots, the means by which these objects are accomplished, and the results thus far attained in the most successful schools.

It may be well, as a preliminary step, to answer two or three questions which meet us at the threshold of our investigations. And first, what constitutes idiocy? "The type of an idiot," says Dr. Seguin, "is an individual who knows nothing, can do nothing, and wishes nothing; and every idiot approaches more or less to this maximum of incapacity." Of the many definitions which writers on this subject have essayed, no one appears entirely free from objection; and though we can hardly hope to escape falling into the same condemnation, we

are disposed to offer one which shall, at least, possess the merit of brevity. We should define idiocy, then, *as the result of an infirmity of the body which prevents, to a greater or less extent, the development of the physical, moral and intellectual powers.*

What is the proportion of idiots to the population? The data we yet possess do not seem to be sufficient to answer this question accurately, in regard to our own country, though approximations have been made towards a census of this class, in several States. In the mountainous districts of Europe the number of cretins, as already stated, is very great. In the Alpine districts they constitute from 5 to 10 per cent. of the population; in Great Britain, according to recent returns, there are over 50,000, a little more than one-half of one per cent.; in France, nearly or quite one-third of one per cent.; in this country, Connecticut has fully one-fifth of one per cent.; Massachusetts, according to Dr. Jarvis' late report, has about one-ninth of one per cent.; but this is undoubtedly far below the truth, for it is almost impossible to obtain, even with tolerable accuracy, the statistics of large cities; thus, in Dr. J.'s report, Boston, with 170,000 inhabitants, reports only 21 idiots, while Barnstable, with only 5,000, reports 25!

What are the causes of idiocy? Few questions are more difficult of full and satisfactory solution than this. We have already enumerated the alledged causes of cretinism, but we are satisfied that M. Niepce has not given sufficient prominence to one cause to which he refers incidentally, the *bad brandy*, ("mauvaise eau-de-vie,") which they drink in such quantities as to produce the most brutish intoxication.

In England and this country, intemperance on the part of one or both parents, is certainly the most prolific cause of fatuity, and when poverty, filth, recklessness, and intemperance are united, and the half starved inebriate, maddened with woe, drinks that he may forget his wretchedness, we have a combination of circumstances which can hardly fail to produce idiocy in his offspring.

There are cases, however, and the number is quite considerable, in which we must look for other causes than intemperance or extreme poverty. For some of these the inter-marriage of near relatives, for one or two generations, is a satisfactory reason; for others, hereditary tendency to insanity, to scrofula, or to consumption; in others still, indulgence in licentious habits, or the attempt to destroy the life of the unborn babe, a practice which is fearfully increasing in our country, must be assigned as the cause; ignorance, selfishness, and avarice, must be reckoned, also, among the sources of this fearful infirmity. It has often occurred that when one or both parents were so fully possessed with the greed of gain, that intellectual and moral culture

were wholly neglected, and in their furious pursuit of wealth they paused not for the rest of the Sabbath, thought not of the future, and heeded not the appeals of the poor, the sick, or the dying for sympathy or succor, their offspring have been idiots of the very lowest class.

In short, humiliating as the thought may be, we are driven to the conclusion that the vast amount of idiocy, in our world, is the direct result of violation of the physical and moral laws which govern our being; that oft times the sins of the fathers are thus visited upon their children; and that the parent, for the sake of a momentary gratification of his depraved appetite, inflicts upon his hapless offspring a life of utter vacuity.

We shall come to a better understanding of the objects to be attained in the treatment of idiocy, if we consider first the condition of the idiot before he has been instructed. When first brought to the Asylum, he is generally feeble, wanting in muscular development, often partially paralyzed, sluggish, and inactive; the circulation of the blood is very imperfect, especially in the extremities; there is a general unhealthy look; the nervous system is frequently deranged; the gait and voluntary movements generally awkward and irregular; he is usually addicted to slavering and automatic motion of the head, hands, lips, or tongue; the senses are undeveloped; the eye is perfectly formed, but the retina communicates to the brain no definite idea of form, color, or size; the ear is without defect, yet often the sweetest notes of music and the most hideous and discordant sounds pass alike unheeded; the organs of speech are as perfect as those of Webster or Clay, but he is either entirely dumb, or utters only guttural sounds which convey no idea to others; his appetite, tastes, and habits are more gross than those of most animals; he often exhibits the voracity of the wolf, and the uncleanness of the swine. His mind is as much degraded as his physical nature—only his instincts of hunger, thirst, fear, rage, and resistance have been developed. It is needless to add, that while in such a condition moral emotion is impossible. Such is the condition of very many of those who are brought to these institutions for training. It would be difficult to conceive of cases apparently more hopeless.

The object of training is to change this torpid, sluggish, inert condition, to health, vigor, and activity; to send the healthy red blood coursing through the veins and arteries; to overcome the automatic movements, and subject the nervous system to the control of the will; to substitute for the vacant gaze of the idiot, the intelligent, speaking eye, which recognizes the hues of beauty in the rainbow, and reads in the countenance of friendship, the look of reproof or the glance of

love ; to accustom the inattentive ear to recognize the stern tones of rebuke, or the gentle accents of affection ; to notice and enjoy the melodies of the songsters of the grove, or the more expressive songs warbled by human voices ; to accustom those lips which have hitherto uttered only unmeaning and discordant sounds, to speak, if not with all the graces of oratory, at least with distinctness and fluency.

A further object of training is to overcome the filthy and degrading habits in which the idiot has hitherto indulged ; to transform this gluttonous, beastly creature, into a man, capable of observing all the proprieties of life, no longer greedy, selfish, voracious, and quarrelsome, but temperate, quiet, courteous, and thoughtful of the interest of others ; to rouse the hitherto dormant intellect, to induce mental activity, and stimulate thought and study ; and above all, to awaken the consciousness of his responsibility to God, and of his duties toward his fellow man.

Do you say that the attainment of these objects is beyond the power of humanity ? We answer that this result has been accomplished, and is now in the process of accomplishment, in every school for idiots in this country and Europe. It requires, indeed, patience, intelligence, and love, all in active exercise ; but these qualities have not yet deserted our earth, and there yet live men and women whose names should be held in everlasting remembrance, for that moral heroism which has led them to devote the best years of their lives to the elevation of these, the lowest and humblest of our race.

The means adopted to accomplish such wonderful results are, of course, varied. Among these the apparatus of the gymnasium holds a high rank. By means of the ladders, swings, steps, dumb bells, &c., the muscular system is developed and invigorated ; automatic movement overcome ; the eye, the ear, and the muscles brought under the control of the will ; concert of action and obedience to commands enforced ; and the perceptions quickened and elevated.

The cultivation of the faculty of speech is a work of great difficulty, often requiring one or two years of patient labor before the enunciation of the first word. Instruction in this, as in every thing else where idiots are the pupils, must be of the most elementary character. It is necessary, for instance, in teaching the compound sounds, such as *ch*, *th*, *gr*, *br*, *cr*, to resolve them into their original elements, and teach the child each constituent, at first, separately, and afterwards in combination. The attention is attracted and the perceptive faculties cultivated by lessons in objects ; form and size are taught by blocks of different sizes and forms, which the pupil is required to insert into corresponding cavities in a board ; color by

wooden figures of the same form but of different hues. Practice in working with crewels, and picture lessons have also proved of great advantage.

Words are next taught, not letters, for a *word* can be associated with an object, in the mind of a pupil, while letters can not; next, the ideas of form and size, already acquired, are put in practice by writing and drawing; Geography is taught by outline maps, and the elementary principles of grammar by exercises dictated by the teacher.

The idea of number is, perhaps, the most difficult of acquisition for the idiot. Very few can count beyond three or four when brought to the Asylum. This incapacity is overcome by patient and repeated exercises, until, step by step, the mysteries of numeration, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division have been unravelled. The process is slow and painful, but it is at last crowned with success.

In the development of the moral nature, great difficulties are encountered. The comprehension of an abstract idea is far beyond an idiot's capacity; his conception of goodness must be derived from the manifestation of it in his teachers and friends; of sin, from his own misconduct or that of others; hence, with him, love must be the key note of all progress, and under its genial influence, his stubborn and refractory nature will yield like wax before the fire; his vicious and hurtful propensities become subject to control; and learning to love "his brother whom he hath seen," he soon attains to some knowledge and love for "God whom he hath not seen," and his humble, childlike faith should put to the blush many, who with more exalted intellects are wandering in the mazes of unbelief.

Not far from one-fourth of all the idiots in any State or country, are susceptible of improvement by the treatment we have described. In the countries where cretinism prevails, pupils over seven years of age are not considered as capable of successful instruction, but in other countries idiots are received up to the age of fifteen or sixteen, and in the English schools up to twenty-five or thirty, even. There is, however, far less hope of material progress in adults than in children—and it is hardly desirable that those beyond fourteen or fifteen should be placed under instruction. Epilepsy, a not infrequent concomitant of idiocy, is a serious bar to improvement, and where severe, entirely precludes the idea of any considerable success.

That the schools already established have been successful, in improving the condition of idiots, beyond what their most sanguine friends dared hope, is a fact admitting of no question; that they are not yet perfect, none will more readily acknowledge than those who have labored longest in them; further experience will undoubtedly add to

the resources of the teacher, and may render his labors less arduous, while it insures him a greater measure of success. What has already been accomplished may, perhaps, be more satisfactorily demonstrated by the narrative of a few cases, than by any other method.

The following case is from the report of the English Asylum for Idiots, at Highgate, for 1854 :

"B. T., a boy aged 15 years. Admitted, *Oct.*, 1852. Was the sport of all the boys of the village ; was afraid of strangers ; would not speak to any one, even to his friends ; he appeared quite hopeless. *April*, 1854. He did not speak for four months after admission ; was constantly moping ; he has now found that he is with friends, and is gaining courage ; can speak well ; will repeat the creed, commandments, and church prayers accurately ; is very attentive to the religious services at home, and is anxious to go to church every Sunday ; can read and write well ; and is a basket maker."

The following is from Dr. Guggenbuhl's report, for 1852 :

"Marie was received into the Institution of the Abendberg, at the age of seven and a half years. She was in a state of atrophy ; her skin was cold, hung loose like a sack, and was covered with an eruption ; she could not walk ; her joints were soft and unable to support her weight ; she could not speak a word, but would make a howling noise for hours together ; ate any thing that came in her way ; destroyed all that could be broken, and gave no attention to any thing that passed before her ; at times she would beat and even bite herself ; during several months she never slept at night. After six months she was able to stand alone, and at the end of a year could walk very well ; her voracious appetite is overcome, and she now eats properly ; the nervous excitement is subdued ; she is obedient and friendly ; converses very well ; plays with flowers and animals, calls them by name, and enjoys the blessing of sleep of which she had long been deprived."

Dr. Brown, the Superintendent of the Institution at Barre, Mass., gives the following case in his report for 1853 :

"A young man of 18 years of age, who, from infancy, had been always peculiar and deficient in his mental manifestations, and was entirely dumb. From want of proper culture and direction of the vocal organs, he could make only the guttural sound of the Trachea ; did not move the lips when attempting to utter sounds ; was extremely filthy and brutish in his habits, disobedient and sluggish in the extreme.

His physical health was perfect, his muscles were largely and well developed. His perception was good, and he understood what was said to him but could not apply his knowledge ; his hearing was perfect. Having been left unrestrained from childhood, and having

attained to an age when the evil habits he had acquired had become fixed, and his animal appetites being his only source of enjoyment, I received him with great reluctance, expecting that he would make very little improvement.

He has now been with me a little more than a year. It was nearly three months before I succeeded in inducing him to utter a correct vocal sound. I moulded his lips with my fingers; put blocks and rings of various sizes and shapes into his mouth; taught him general and special imitation; and finally succeeded in concentrating sufficient nervous energy on the muscles of the lips and vocal organs to enable him to master all the vowels, and by dint of perseverance, patience, and drilling, he finally acquired the ability to pronounce the consonants and many of their combinations. By a rigid course of discipline his filthy habits were overcome.

He now reads in Webb's First Reader, and is rapidly learning to speak the names of surrounding objects. His ideas of form, of color, and of numbers, are now very good, and he is acquiring a general knowledge of Geography, Arithmetic, and Natural Philosophy. He can write well from a copy, can draw very creditably and is apt at almost any kind of labor. No one would imagine that this well behaved young man, could have led such a mere animal life one year since. He will be capable, under proper superintendence, of being highly useful in any department of labor, and had he been under suitable training when young, he would have been, I think, entirely cured of all his deficiencies.

Dr. Howe, in his report for 1851, describes the following case:

"S. J. W., six years old when admitted in Oct., 1848. He was a pitiful sight to behold. He could not stand or even sit erect. He had no command of his limbs, not even so much as an infant of three months, for it can work its arms and kick its legs vigorously; this poor boy, however, could do neither, but lay almost like a jelly-fish, as though his body were a mass of flesh without any bones in it. He could not even chew solid food, but subsisted on milk, of which he drank large quantities. The utmost he could do, in the way of motion, was to prop up his head with one hand, and move the other feebly about. He seemed to hear, but his eyes were dull and his other senses quite inactive. He drivelled at the mouth, and his habits were, in all respects, like those of an infant. He was speechless, neither using nor understanding language, though he made several sounds which seemed to be a feeble imitation of words.

The mode of treatment adopted was this: he was bathed daily in cold water; his limbs were rubbed; he was dragged about in the open air, in a little wagon, by the other boys; his muscles were exer

cised ; he was made to grasp with his hands, and gradually to raise himself up by them ; he was held up and made to bear a little weight on his lower limbs ; then a little more, until, at last, to his great delight, he was able to go about alone, by holding on the wall, or to one's finger ; even to go up stairs, by clinging to the balusters. During the second year he has continued to improve. He is now decent in all his habits, and tidy in his appearance ; his countenance is bright and pleasing ; he can sit at the table and feed himself with knife and fork ; and though he does not venture to go alone, his limbs not being quite strong enough, he can almost do it, and he walks about by holding on to one's finger ; all his senses have improved greatly, and he is so changed, generally, that he could hardly be recognized as the same being who, two years ago, incapable of sitting at a desk, used to lie upon a mattress in the school-room."

Mr. James B. Richards, of Germantown, gives the following account of the remarkable improvement of a boy under his training.

"A case of congenital idiocy—one of the most hopeless and degraded creatures that could be found ; presenting to the bodily eye extremely feeble claims to being called a human being. He had not learned to creep, nor had he even strength sufficient to roll himself upon the floor when laid upon it. Owing to a paralysis of the lower limbs, they were insensible to pain. Mastication was, with him entirely out of the question. His mother told me that she used to feed him almost exclusively on milk, purchasing for him, as she said, a gallon per day. Although five and a half years of age, he had not apparently any more knowledge of things, their names and uses, than a new born infant.

This being the lowest case that could be found, to test the feasibility of the plan to develop and educate idiotic and imbecile children, it was thought best to undertake his training, although it seemed more like a work of creation than of education. The most sanguine friends of the cause threw discouragements in the way. Yet by a patient and persevering system of well directed effort, he has been so far developed that, at the present time, he walks about the house or yard without any assistance ; takes care of himself ; attends to his own immediate wants ; sits at the table with the family, and feeds himself as well as children ordinarily do ; talks perfectly well, and is acquainted with the things around him. In short, *he has learned to read*, and does not differ in his habits from a boy four years of age, unless it be that he is more sluggish in his movements."

A recent visitor at the New York Asylum for Idiots, narrates the following cases :

'Nattie and Willie, now 11 and 12 years of age, were taken from the Idiot house on Randall's Island, by Dr. Wilbur, in Dec., 1851. Their appearance, as described by persons who saw them at that time, must have been painful and disgusting in the extreme. Both had been idiots from birth, both were partially paralyzed, and both entirely dumb, and not capable of understanding more than a dozen words. So hopeless was their condition that the physician at Randall's Island, who was absent when Dr. Wilbur selected them, on his return, wrote to Dr. W., expressing his regret at his selection, as he feared that it would only bring disgrace upon the effort to instruct idiots, to attempt the instruction of those who were so evidently beyond the reach of improvement.

Both now exhibit as much intelligence as ordinary children of their age. Neither speaks very fluently, in consequence of some paralysis still existing, but both are improving rapidly in this respect. Both write well on the blackboard. In thorough knowledge of Grammar and Geography, very few children, of their age, are their equals. In a very severe and protracted examination in Geography, embracing minute details in regard to the topography of most of the countries on the globe, and many particulars in regard to physical Geography, and drawing maps upon the blackboard, neither they nor the other members of a class of six or seven missed a single question. In Grammar, both supplied adjectives, nouns, verbs, or adverbs, to given verbs and nouns, with remarkable promptness and to an extent which would have severely tasked my vocabulary. In Arithmetic, both exhibited perfect familiarity with the ground rules, and Nattie gave at once, any and all multiples of numbers as high as 132, and added, multiplied, and divided fractions with great readiness.

In Bible History, they related, partly in pantomime, but in a most graphic way, any required Bible incident. The extremely amiable and affectionate manners of these two interesting children, and the intense activity of their newly developed intellects, render them particularly attractive to the visitor.

J. C., a girl of 15 years of age, has been under Dr. Wilbur's care a little more than four years. When received, she was mischievous and vicious, very nervous, and could not speak distinctly. She could not be left alone with other children, from a propensity to injure them. She knew some of her letters, but could not be taught to read or write by any ordinary methods.

She now reads well, writes a handsome hand, is remarkably proficient in Geography and Grammar, and has made good progress in addition and subtraction. She sews very neatly, and is very capable

as an assistant in household matters. Her nervousness is no longer troublesome, her waywardness has entirely disappeared. In respect to moral training, she seems more advanced than most of the other pupils. She manifests a remarkable familiarity with Bible History, and with the events in the life of our Saviour. When requested to repeat the Lord's Prayer, she did so with a reverence, an impressiveness, and an evident understanding of its petitions, which exhibited in a very favorable light, her intelligence and thoughtfulness; and as I listened to this once vicious and wayward idiot, thus uttering, in our Saviour's own words, her petitions to the throne of heavenly grace, I was more deeply impressed than ever before, with the adaptation of that sublime prayer to every human want."

Such are the results attained in the very short period since these schools have been established. That all idiots will not make as great improvement as some of these, is undoubtedly true; but all of suitable age and health will improve, and that sufficiently to satisfy the most exacting.

Nor does the history of the past condition of this hapless class afford us any ground for hope that they can be materially elevated from their present condition, by any other means. Nearly, or quite, one-half of the whole number are tenants of our alms houses or houses of correction. Full one-half of the remainder are children of parents who are steeped to the lips in poverty; for these, whether in the alms house or out of it, there can be no improvement, except by removal from their present associations. Fed with improper or innutritious food, often allowed the use of intoxicating drinks, generally idle, often made the sport of thoughtless children and adults, without shame or sense of decency, filthy and degraded, they are pests in community, often exerting a depraving influence over the young, which no subsequent instruction can remove. Nor are the imbecile children of the wealthy generally benefited by their parents' wealth, if allowed to remain at home. The sluggish, inactive temperament, and gluttonous appetite, which are the greatest obstacles to success in their treatment at Asylums, are pampered and indulged at home,—and it often occurs that the worst pupils, in an Institution for Idiots, are the children of the rich. In the present condition of society we see no alternative. These helpless and degraded fellow creatures are on our hands, and we must provide for their instruction and improvement; if we can remove, in part, the blighting, withering results of violated physical laws, let us do so; for they are the victims, not the offenders.

There is, indeed, a great work for the philanthropist and moral reformer to accomplish, to remove the causes of idiocy, insanity, pau-

perism, and crime. God has granted to our day and generation, a clearer insight into the sources whence spring these gigantic evils, than to our fathers, and he has imposed upon us a corresponding obligation to use our best endeavors for their removal. Every arrival from Europe brings hither a host of the lower classes of European Society, often ignorant, degraded, and vicious. These, if suffered to congregate in our large cities, taint the whole community, as with a moral pestilence. They must be scattered over the vast prairies of the west, where profitable labor is possible, where their influence will not be felt, and where, with the prospects of a life of comfort before them, they may become good citizens.

The evils of intemperance must be stayed; we care not whether it be accomplished by a prohibitory law or by any other effective means; but the middle and higher classes owe it to themselves as well as to the suffering poor, to stop the swelling tide of human woe which this vice daily produces; to accomplish this it is not sufficient to close the dram shops,—the use of alcoholic drinks must be abandoned at the tables of the rich, as well as in the hovels of the poor.

A great reform is also needed in the homes of the poor. Model lodging houses and tenements must be erected, not in low, dank, miasmatic localities, but in healthy situations, where light and ventilation, frequent bathing, economy in warmth and cooking, and the privacy of home can be attained; the renting of cellars as tenements and the occupation of tenant houses, such as our public prints have recently exposed, must be prohibited under the severest penalties. Measures must also be adopted for the instruction of the masses, not only in those physiological laws which appertain to their health and well being, but in those branches of intellectual culture which will improve their social condition, and those questions of morals and religion which concern their eternal welfare.

We are firm believers in “the good time coming;” we are satisfied that the race is making progress, that as an eminent statesman has well said, “the frightful number of those unfortunates, whose ranks encumber the march of humanity,—the insane, the idiots, the blind, the deaf, the drunkards, the criminals, the paupers will dwindle away, as the light of knowledge makes clear the laws which govern our existence.” But in the words of the same eloquent writer, “in the meantime, let none of them be lost; let none of them be uncared for; but, whenever the signal is given of a man in distress, no matter how deformed, how vicious, how loathsome, even, he may be, let it be regarded as a call to help a brother.”

ORIGIN OF THE TREATMENT AND TRAINING OF IDIOTS.

BY EDWARD SEGUIN.

NONE but God can do anything of himself alone. Hence, the question of priority in human discovery is always contested. If the truthful history of any invention were written, we should find concerned in it the thinker, who dreams, without reaching the means of putting his imaginings in practice; the mathematician, who estimates justly the forces at command, in their relation to each other, but who forgets to proportion them to the resistance to be encountered; and, so on, through the thousand intermediates between the dream and the perfect idea, till one comes who combines the result of the labors of all his predecessors, and gives to the invention new life, and with it his name.

But, in good faith, this man is but the expression,—honorable and often honored,—of human fraternity. And, it is only from this point of view that the full benefit of the discovery is seen: being the common property of mankind, it gives us wider and deeper feelings of mutual dependence or solidarity. A short notice of the origin of the treatment and training of the unfortunate idiots will be an illustration of this law of mutual dependence.

In the year 1801, the citizen M. Bonnaterre discovered, in the forest of Aveyron, France, a wild boy. This naked boy was marked with numerous scars; he was nimble as a deer, subsisting on roots and nuts, which he cracked like a monkey, laughing at the falling snow, and rolling himself with delight in this white blanket. He seemed to be about 17 years of age. Bonnaterre permitted this wild boy to escape, but afterwards retook him and sent him, at his own expense, to the abbé Sicard, director of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, at Paris.

Sicard had just succeeded the illustrious abbé L'Épée; and, Bonnaterre thought him to be the most suitable man to perform the miracle of which he dreamed,—the education of this creature, the most inferior that had ever been seen under the form of humanity; but, he was mistaken. Sicard exhibited, for some days, to the learned and curious, the being, who was constantly throwing away his clothes and endeavoring to escape, even by the windows, and then left him to wander, neglected, under the immense roofs of the school for deaf mutes.

But, the wild boy of Aveyron had been seen by all Paris. If the crowd of visitors had found him a subject of disgust, he excited in the mind of the thinkers and philosophers a livelier interest. Some of those who had held conversation with Franklin on the liberty of the world, were still living, and by them the subject was brought before the Academy of Sciences, where it produced interesting and fruitful discussions.

Two men were particularly conspicuous for their interest in the wild boy of Aveyron, viz.: Pinel, physician-in-chief for the insane, author of the *Nosographie Philosophique*, who declared the child *idiotic*,—the sequel proved him correct; and Itard, physician-in-chief of the deaf and dumb, who asserted that the subject was simply *entirely untaught*. Itard did more; he named him VICTOR, doubtless as a sign of the victory which education should achieve in him over brute nature. But, he did more yet; he received him into his own house, employed a governess for him, and devoted to him a portion of his time, otherwise so fully occupied, for six years.

This devotion of Itard to this child and to science, is the more worthy of praise as, based upon a metaphysical error, his efforts were constantly met by disappointment; and yet, he never yielded to the feelings of discouragement. His errors were these: He obstinately saw in the *idiot* the savage; and, resting in his studies, as well as in his faith, on the materialistic doctrines of Locke and Condillac, his teachings sometimes reached the senses of his pupil, but never penetrated to his mind and soul. He gave to his senses certain notions of things, he even excited in him a physical sensibility to the caresses bestowed upon him; but, he left him destitute of ideas and of social or moral feelings, incapable of labor, and, consequently, of independence. He was, in the end of that painful and fruitless trial, immured in a hospital, where he passed the remainder of his life.

But, if these six years were almost lost to the wild boy of Aveyron, they bore their fruit in the mind of Itard. Although closely occupied in his investigations of the diseases of the ear, he often thought of the experiment of his youth, and sometimes he regretted the renown which attached itself to his name as a surgeon,—a renown that sent him patients from all parts of Europe, but left him no leisure for his philanthropic study and experiment.

It was in this state of mind that Itard, in 1837, was consulted by the celebrated Guersant, principal of the children's hospital of Paris, in the case of a young idiot. "If I was younger," cried Itard, "I would charge myself with his care; but, send me a suitable man, and

I will direct his efforts." Guersant spoke to him of myself. Itard was a fellow student in medicine of my father. "If Seguin will accept," Itard did me the honor of saying, "I will answer for the result." From this sketch, it will be seen that three men took the lead in the grand enterprise of the amelioration of the condition of idiots: Bonnaterre, the generous and enthusiastic protector of the boy of Aveyron; Pinel, whose discriminating diagnosis has so much illumined the subject of idiocy; and, Itard, whose devotion, patience, and sagacity opened up the method of amelioration.

When Guersant offered me the perilous honor of continuing the unfinished labor of Itard, I was just recovering from an illness, thought at one time to be mortal. However, the desire of sending my name to the ears of one whom I expected never to see again, gave me strength to attempt the enterprise. Itard communicated to me the details of what he had done with his first pupils, and I studied all that had been attempted or performed after him.

Gall, giving a strong impulse to the investigation of the functions of the brain, had called up the question of the cause of idiocy: a skillful theorist, he thought he had discovered in idiots proofs of the truth of his system of phrenology. The authors who succeeded him, Georget, Esquirol, Lelut, Foville, Calmeil, Leuret, Pritchard, seem, on the contrary, to have studied idiocy only to use its phenomena for the destruction of the system of Gall, but not for the benefit of the poor idiots, whom they declared incurable. With their single polemical object in view, they spent thirty years in measuring and weighing the heads of living and dead idiots, and they arrived at the following conclusions:—

1. No constant relation exists between the general development of the cranium and the degree of intelligence.
2. The dimensions of the anterior part of the cranium, and especially of the forehead, are, at least, as great among idiots as among others.
3. Three-fifths of idiots have larger heads than men of ordinary intelligence.
4. There is no constant relation between the degree of intelligence and the weight of the brain.
5. The different degrees of idiocy are not measurable by the weight of the brain.
6. A cranium, perfectly formed, often encloses a brain imperfectly formed, irregular, &c.
7. Sometimes the brain of idiots presents no deviation in form, color, and density from the normal standard; it is, in fact, perfectly normal.

All these anatomo-psychological facts they professed to have established;* but, of the education and treatment of idiots, not a new word was uttered during thirty-five years. At the end of that time my first labors were performed in the studio of Itard, where he bestowed on me the most valuable gift an old man can offer to a young one,—the practical result of his experience.

Itard was often sublime during these interviews, when a prey to horrible sufferings, symptoms of his fatal malady, he discussed with me the highest questions. His features would contract, and his body writhe in his anguish, but his mind never lost his clearness and precision for a moment. I there learned the secret of his influence over the idiots, as I did that of his weakness in philosophy, till the time when he died at Passy, in 1838.

The desire of knowing if *mental medicine* had no better remedies than his writings, for my first patients, induced me to conduct them to Esquirol, to whom we went every week. Esquirol, the oracle of the mental medicine, had nothing to teach me; but, he was a man of exquisite tact, and he gave me most excellent counsels upon the application of the processes which I suggested to him. His approbation encouraged me in my efforts, while I was maturing in my mind the theory which he never knew.

This theory, my only superiority over my predecessors, is no more separated from the men of our times, than were my early experiments from the men of the preceding generation.

The “new Christianity,” by St. Simon, the oral and written lessons of his now lamented disciple, Olinde Rodrigue; the “philosophy of history,” by president Buchez; the “encyclopædic review,” by Carnot and Charton; the “popular encyclopædia” of Pierre Leroux and Jean Reynaud,—my familiarity with all these, except the first,—such are the living springs whence I drew the elements of my initiation to the mysteries of the laws of philosophical medicine.

The bases of these laws are these: unity of God, manifested in his three principal attributes; unity of man in his three manifestations of being; the idiot, like other men, a likeness of God, infirm in the modes of expression of his trinity. 1st. Infirm in his mobility and sensibility. 2d. Infirm in his perception and his reasoning. 3d. Infirm in his affections and will. One and triple infirmity, reparable in the individual, as it was in the human race, for the idiot by a proper training, for mankind under the sweet, but terrible lessons which history records.

* See compendium of practical medicine, by Monneret et Fleury.

Is it not worthy of the spirit of the nineteenth century, thus to make the idiot,—this creature which, up to the present time, has been looked upon with disgust,—serve to enlighten the science of anthropology, to prove that the true theory of man's nature is derived from a better knowledge of the Divinity, and thus to withdraw one of those veils spread between us and our Creator, called mysteries now, but which the future generations will recognize as truths.

But, it is not sufficient to have discovered the true philosophical principle; it is necessary to apply it. In this application, pure practical work, tested only by experience and comparison, all that was not historically and chronologically in its place, was recognized as false, useless, and impossible. After such an elimination of every arbitrary means of instruction and progress, the treatment of the idiot then followed the same march which the education of the human race had been pursuing during the lapse of ages. So, the first necessity of a people and of an individual, is that of an active and sensitive force, by which man is enabled to go, act, combat, and triumph. This necessity caused, for the primitive races, the introduction of athletic sports and exercises; traces of which we find even on the monuments of Thebes and Luxor. Upon these gymnastics of the primitive peoples, was founded the first steps in the education of idiots.

For those individuals who are destitute of spontaneous action, imitation was found one of the most powerful means of progress. The excitation of the imitative powers ought, then, to hold a prominent place in all the treatment, physiological, psychological, and moral. The sequel of this observation was as follows. In the physiological order, imitation, applied to gestures and gymnastics, gives to idiots attention and aptitude of the body; while, imitation, transferred from unmeaning gestures to those gestures that have a private or social object, prompt to voluntary, regular action, which can produce *work* at any time, however it may be, simple or complex; the ability to labor is thus conquered.

It is one of the characteristics of idiocy, that it is constantly represented, in an individual, by one or more than one anomalies, in the functions of the senses, viz.: deprivation, imperfection, dullness, or exaltation. These sensorial symptoms of idiocy, so variable in their manifestations, since they affect sometimes the touch, sometimes the taste, sometimes the sense of smell, sometimes the ear, and oftener still the sight, served so well to corroborate the doctrines of the materialists of the 18th century, that Itard considered them all as constituting idiocy. In consequence, his treatment was wholly directed to the aim of repairing the disorder of the senses. The dogma of the

19th century teaches us, on the contrary, that the senses are not the mind, far less the soul; that the sensorial development is produced in the race, as it comes out in the individual, immediately after the muscular development; and that, these being accomplished, the mind and soul, the intellectual and the moral principle remain untouched. Immense revelation! since that which was regarded by the materialists as the end, is nothing more than the end of the first phase of the human trinity, and, in consequence, as the prolegomena of the treatment of idiots.

Thus it appears that the men who have given the formulas for the treatment of idiots are no less than the leading minds of the 19th century, they are those men who have rescued the science of anthropology, taking it up at the point where the *Bible* leaves it, making man, says the *Book*, "in our image after our likeness."

The senses, being in man, the doors through which the mind issues and enters, we have treated them in idiots, as in the material world, entrances oblique, too narrow, or defective in any way are treated, i. e., we have straightened or enlarged them. We have also profited, by these openings, to introduce, besides the material notions of the physical properties of bodies, a few simple ideas relating to simple and useful, or agreeable objects. These first ideas have embraced two classes of phenomena.—1st, the class of the *wants*, which attaches an idea of usefulness to each object; a class of unlimited extent, which gradually leads a man from the want of an artificial sole for his foot, to the research of some propulsive agency swifter than steam. 2d, the class of *wonders*, which offers pleasure and discovery, food to the fancy, to every one, to the savage as well as to the civilized, to the idiot as well as to the sage. Michael Montaigne calls curiosity, "that charming fury which urges us all to the incessant search after some *new* novelty." Idiots do not seem to possess that natural curiosity,—mother of the beautiful and of all progress—but the teacher can excite it in him.

In order to accomplish this, the idiot should receive a course of treatment similar to that which developed the primitive nations. The glorious effulgence of the light, the gloomy shadows of the darkness, the striking contrasts of colors, the infinite variety of form, the smoothness or hardness of substances, the sounds and the pauses of music, the eloquent harmonies of human gesture, look and speech, these are the powerful agents of their transition from physiological to mental education.

Away, then, with books! Give us the Assyrian and Jewish mode of instruction. The representative signs of thought where painted,

engraved, sculptured in deepness or in relief, sensible to the eye and to the touch ; the tables of the mosaic laws appear in the midst of thunder and of the lightning's flash ; in the same way, the symbols, under which is concealed the modern mind, should appear to the idiot, under these historic and powerful forms, so that seeing and feeling all at once, he will understand.

In most cases, speech does not exist among idiots. To teach them to speak, it is necessary to bear in mind,—1st, that the primitive languages are monosyllabic ; 2d, that they have a rhythm like music ; 3d, that they represent first the wants heightened to the pitch of the acutest feelings. When the idiot can speak, read, or count, to some extent, he has acquired the instruments, by the aid of which the education of the mind, already begun, is possible. Let us go on, then, in this second period of the teaching, till the heavens and earth fail to furnish us with the means of progress. The intelligence of every man has its limits ; that of the mind of the idiot will be more restricted. In the foregoing task, there has been a period to teach the idiot to walk, to hold himself erect, to grasp with the hands, to carry, to act, to look, to hear, to speak, to read, and all these follow each other without confusion, like points of different perspective in a landscape ; but one principle has accompanied and controlled all these successive steps—the principle of *moral training*.

That which most essentially constitutes idiocy, is the absence of *moral volition*, superseded by a *negative will* ; that in which the treatment of an idiot essentially consist is, in changing his *negative will* into an affirmative one, his *will* of loneliness into a will of sociability and usefulness ; such is the object of the *moral training*.

The idiot wishes for nothing, he wishes only to remain in his vacuity. To treat successfully this ill will, the physician wills that the idiot should act, and think himself, of himself, and finally by himself. The incessant volition of the moral physician urges incessantly the idiot out of his idiocy into the sphere of activity, of thinking, of labor, of duty and of affectionate feelings ; such is the moral treatment. The negative will of the idiot being overcome, scope and encouragement being given to his first indications of active volition, the immoral tendencies of this new power being repressed, his mixing with the busy and living world is to be urged on at every opportunity. This moral part of the training is not something separate, but is the necessary attendant and super-addition upon all the other parts of the training, whether we teach him to read, whether we play with him the childish game, let our will govern his, if we will enough for himself, he shall become willing too.

The importance of this, the *moral treatment*, has led to inquire into its origin. Long before the physician had conceived the plan of correcting the false ideas and feelings of a lunatic by purgatives, or the cranial depressions of an idiot by bleeding, Spain had produced several generations of monks, who treated, with the greatest success, all kinds of mental diseases, without drugs, by moral training alone. Certain regular labors, the performance of simple and assiduous duties, an enlightened and sovereign volition, watching constantly over the patients—such were the only remedies employed. “We cure almost all of our lunatics,” said the good fathers, “except the nobles, who would think themselves dishonored by working with their hands.” Last and fatal word of an expiring aristocracy,—“Idleness or death,” cried she, even in her insanity, and soon the people answered, “Die, then, for those alone who labor have a right to Life and Liberty.”

Is it not a strange thing to contemplate!—These men, withdrawn from the world and from human science, without other knowledge than that of the Christian charity,—but in the fullness of their only and holy duty, giving to the insane, calmness in the place of fury, attention in the place of dementia, useful labor in the place of impulse to destruction; thus, in fact, driving out the demons from these wandering souls. They knew nothing, these poor monks who said to their patients—“In the name of God the creator and orderer, control thy actions.—In the name of God, the great thinker of the universe, control thy thoughts.—In the name of God, the great lover, control thy passions.” These poor monks knew only to act in virtue of their faith, and we—who have with the sublime but blind faith, the reason for its exercise, we do no better than they did, only we know why and how we do it, when we apply their treatment to the idiot.

Thus, thanks to the idiots, that which was, in the hands of the monks of Spain, a divine mystery, is become a fundamental principle of anthropological science. Such is the origin, partly divine and partly human, of the treatment and education of idiots, though we can clearly see that God is at the bottom of this and of all our great discoveries.

APPENDIX B. III.

AMERICAN ASYLUM,
HARTFORD, March 3, 1856.

L. P. BROCKETT, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR: In yours of the 11th ult., you refer to an article in the American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb, describing the cases of two Idiot children who had been under instruction in this Institution, and request me to give the date of their instruction. The first of them entered in 1844, and remained with us a year and four months. We knew that he could hear, and that mental imbecility was the reason of his not speaking; still, we gave him regular instruction, principally by signs; and his improvement was as described in the article alluded to, considerable. The other was received in 1846, and sent home after a trial of three months. These cases were selected from quite a number of a similar kind, not because there was anything peculiar in the result of efforts made for their improvement, but because they came under my immediate care after attention had been directed to this class of persons by some experiments made in Europe, and because I knew them to be Idiots and not deaf mutes, at the time I commenced teaching them. The conclusion I came to, then, was, that the condition of Idiots might be much improved, and that their feeble minds might be strengthened and developed to a much greater extent than had generally been supposed.

You wish me to communicate such particulars as I may choose, in regard to early efforts in this department of Christian philanthropy in our Institution. On this point, I would say that Idiots have been brought to us for instruction nearly every year since the Asylum was opened in 1817. It is very generally supposed that every child unable to speak, whether from want of hearing, or of intellect, is a proper subject for instruction in a school for the deaf and dumb. In conformity with this opinion, we have generally received mute children, when we knew that they had perfect hearing, unwilling to deprive their friends of the last remaining hope of their improvement, without giving them a fair trial. We have admitted in all, thirty-four mute

children, some of whom could hear perfectly and others partially, who, after remaining with us from a month to two years, were sent home for incapacity. Not that we considered them incapable of making any improvement under favorable circumstances; for many of them did learn the alphabet, the names of a few common objects, and their own names, with the ability to form letters with a crayon; but we found them unable to acquire a knowledge of written language in the way, and by the methods adopted and pursued with intelligent deaf-mutes.

The first feeble-minded youth taken as a pupil, which was in 1818, was kept here until her death in 1824. She attended school regularly, but never learnt more than a dozen words, and could not construct a perfect sentence. She was permitted to remain to accommodate friends who could afford to pay for the care taken of her, without expecting any further mental improvement. With merely alluding to the case of seven others previously received, most of whom made some improvement under our instruction, I will mention a few particulars of a lad received in the summer of 1837. He was fourteen years of age, could hear perfectly, and could speak single words so well as to be understood. He had not at home, been brought under any control, or been taught to do anything useful. He spent his time in roaming about the neighborhood, sitting listlessly in the sun or sleeping in the shade. We very soon cured him of his wandering habits, and trained him to useful employments. He learned to scour knives, to wipe dishes, to bring in wood and water and to do various kinds of light work in the kitchen, to which he became very much attached, and where he was inclined to spend most of his leisure time. He attended school regularly for a year. He learned the hand-alphabet, and the names of many things with which he was conversant, improved somewhat in his articulation, and was fitted by his short stay with us, to be a comfort, comparatively, instead of a source of constant anxiety, to his parents, who had three or four other children in the same condition.

From the above statement, you will see that from the year 1818, onward to the present time, we have had children deficient in intellect under regular instruction, and that the conclusion we came to in most cases was, that they were susceptible of improvement under a course of training and discipline adapted to their capacity. In fact, this conclusion was forced upon us by the result of experiment, in nearly every case. It is a little remarkable that some of these children with perfect hearing, learned to use signs in communicating with

others, who could not or did not, with all the pains taken at home and at school, make use of articulation for that purpose.

In conclusion, let me assure you that I feel deeply interested in the enterprise in which you are engaged, and I trust that you will so present the subject to our next Legislature, as that prompt and efficient action shall be had for the relief of the unfortunate Idiots of our State.

Very respectfully and truly,

Your friend and obedient servant,

WM. W. TURNER.

APPENDIX C.

THE INSTRUCTION OF IDIOTS—A VISIT TO THE NEW YORK ASYLUM FOR IDIOTS AT SYRACUSE—METHODS OF INSTRUCTION—RESULTS OF SYSTEM ADOPTED.

An eminent statesman of our day has well observed that “nothing more truly tests the degree of progress which a people has made in true civilization, than the respect which it shows to humanity by raising up and tenderly caring for those who in the earlier and ruder march of society, are trampled under foot or left behind to perish.” Judged by this standard, the present age is certainly one marked by material advancement. The last fifty years have witnessed a wonderful amelioration of the condition of the insane, the opening of the gates of knowledge to the deaf, the dumb, and the blind, the elevation of the condition of the laboring classes, and latest but not least, the raising of the veil which had enshrouded the mind of the poor Idiot. The man who first conceived and put in practice the idea of instructing this unfortunate, hapless class, of raising them from a condition far below the brute, to a life of intelligence, of physical and mental activity and moral accountability, still lives, and is yet in the prime of manly vigor; and though his first triumphs in this new field of benevolent effort were achieved in France, he has come to devote the autumn of his days to the same noble cause in a land where despotism does not crush out freedom of thought and action. The name of Edward Seguin may be, and probably is new to most of your readers, but in that “good time coming,” when *humanity* as well as *war*, shall have its “Arc de Triomphe” on which the names of its heroes shall be recorded, his name shall occupy no inconspicuous place in the list of the benefactors of the race. It is not, however, my present purpose to give you a biography of Dr. Seguin, or a history of the humanitarian movement which he initiated, further than to say that the results of his labors in Paris, soon awakened the attention of American philanthropists, and ultimately led to the establishment of schools for the instruction of Idiots in

Massachusetts, in New York, and in Pennsylvania. I had purposed, rather, to present to your readers a hasty sketch of the Asylum for Idiots, erected and endowed by the State of New York. The Asylum stands upon a lofty eminence overlooking the city of Syracuse and the beautiful Onondaga lake and valley. Of ample dimensions for the accommodation of these unfortunate children of the State, artistic in its design, and thoroughly provided with every accommodation for the comfort and convenience of its inmates—the Institution is an ornament to the thriving city whose liberality secured its location.

It is under the superintendence of Dr. H. B. Wilbur, who commenced in 1848, the first school for Idiots in the country, at Barre, Mass., and in the autumn of 1851, took charge of the Experimental School for Idiots at Albany, at its organization. Few men possess the qualifications for such a post, with which Dr. Wilbur is endowed. Of the most prepossessing manners and address, amiable and genial in his disposition, yet with the necessary firmness and decision to enable him to preside over his large household with dignity, with a fondness for children and an enthusiasm as a teacher which I have never seen equalled, it would be next to impossible to find his superior for the situation. His excellent lady too, in her sphere, is evidently as well qualified for her duties as her husband, and as zealous and conscientious in their performance. And such teachers! why, if we could have a corps of such faithful, patient, earnest, enthusiastic teachers in our public schools for one year, those schools would become models for the whole country.

It is, however, to the pupils of the Asylum and to the methods pursued for their instruction, that our attention was particularly directed. The present edifice has been occupied by the school only since August last, their previous location having been at Albany, where their accommodations were much less extensive and pleasant. About forty-five of the Albany pupils were brought to Syracuse; the whole number is now about ninety, and is rapidly increasing. None are admitted who are more than sixteen years of age.

When first brought to the Institution, a record of their condition is made. They are in many cases, pitiable objects, often unable to walk or speak, slaving constantly, uttering the peculiar moan of the Idiot, or breaking out in that loud unmeaning laughter which not less certainly marks the vacant mind—frequently malicious, violent, destructive and filthy in their habits, it would seem that they were beyond the reach of human aid—monuments of God's anger at the

violation of physical laws he has established. But this is not the view which the Superintendent and the teachers of the Asylum take of their condition. Past experience has convinced them that these poor groveling Idiots may be taught to walk erect with all the dignity and grace of the most favored specimens of humanity; that these beclouded intellects, into which the first ray of reason has not yet shone, may be enlightened and made to exhibit mental powers which shall shame those reared under happier auspices—that these brutal natures may yet offer, from humble and loving hearts, their petitions for pardon and their orisons of praise to Jehovah. Particular attention is paid to physical training, not only for the purpose of invigorating the health and developing the muscles, but as a means of fixing the attention and subjecting the muscular and nervous systems to the control of the will. For this purpose, they are subjected, under Dr. Seguin's direction, to several hours' exercise each day, in running, jumping, climbing, placing the hands and feet in different positions, the use of the dumb-bells, &c., &c.

This is done, when practicable, in classes, that the stimulus of concerted action may produce its effect. It is regarded as desirable to induce a sufficient fatigue to make them sleep soundly. Those who are incapable of participating in these exercises, have yet other modes of exercise under the care of the attendants.

The training in the gymnasium and elsewhere having induced to some extent a habit of attention, this habit is still further cultivated in the school-room. The pupils are taught to string buttons upon a thread; to distinguish varieties of form, by blocks of different shapes made to fit corresponding cavities in a board; colors by painted wooden figures, and objects by means of pictures. They are next exercised in articulation and in singing. It is often two or three years before they can be taught to articulate a single word distinctly.

They are taught to read by the *word* method, so successfully introduced into this country by Dr. Gallaudet; next, drawing and writing upon the blackboard are introduced, and the eye and hand are practiced by working patterns with crewel upon perforated paper; spelling and grammar are taught by exercises upon the blackboard; geography, by outline maps and oral instruction; arithmetic, in a majority of cases the most difficult of all, by careful and patient exercises, by objects and by the blackboard.

Very few Idiots can count ten. In a class of about twenty pupils, Dr. Wilbur informed the writer that only three could count three when received.

Gluttony, a very general fault of Idiots, and accompanied often by a voracious, wolf-like manner of eating, requires and receives the careful attention of the attendants. The best behaved are seated at tables by themselves, to which the others are promoted when they merit it. All are required to wait till each one at the table is helped. They are allowed when capable, to wait upon each other, and any exhibition of gluttony is punished by enforced abstinence. Under this discipline, the behavior of nineteen-twentieths of these Idiots at the table is vastly superior to that of most children at boarding schools, or to that of gentlemen (?) at second-rate hotels in New York. Moral training is secured in a variety of ways. Affection for their teachers, for each other, and for the brute creation, is carefully cultivated. Love is the key-note of all instruction in the Asylum. Good conduct receives the commendation of the teachers, and as soon as possible, the idea of God and of responsibility to him for all our actions is conveyed in the simplest possible form to their minds; oral instruction is given in Bible history, and all who are sufficiently advanced, are taught to repeat the Lord's Prayer, and some simple hymns, and the meaning of each explained. It is a rule of the Institution that there must be no *mere* memorizing; whatever is committed to memory must be understood, whether the pupil requires a day or a year to comprehend it.

Such is a brief sketch of the course pursued in the instruction of the Idiots at the Asylum. It should be remarked, in addition, that the girls are taught sewing and housework, both of which many of them perform very neatly, and the boys do some work on the farm connected with the Institution.

Having thus stated the general plan of instruction pursued, permit me to narrate a few cases as illustrations of the beneficent results which have followed the labors of the teachers.

Nattie and Willie, now 11 and 12 years of age, were taken from the Idiot house on Randall's Island, by Dr. Wilbur, in December, 1851. Their appearance, as described by persons who saw them at that time, must have been painful and disgusting in the extreme. Both had been Idiots from birth, both were partially paralyzed, and both entirely dumb, and not capable of understanding more than a dozen words. So hopeless was their condition that the physician at Randall's Island, who was absent when Dr. Wilbur selected them, on his return, wrote to Dr. W., expressing his regret at his selection, as he feared that it would only bring disgrace upon the efforts to

instruct Idiots, to attempt the instruction of those who were so evidently beyond the reach of improvement.

Both now exhibit as much intelligence as ordinary children of their age. Neither speaks very fluently, in consequence of some paralysis still existing, but both are improving rapidly in this respect. Both write well on the blackboard. In thorough knowledge of grammar and geography, very few children of their age, are their equals. In a very severe and protracted examination in geography, embracing minute details in regard to the topography of most of the countries on the globe, and many particulars in regard to physical geography, drawing maps upon the blackboard, neither they nor the other members of a class of six or seven, missed a single question. In grammar, both supplied adjectives, nouns, verbs or adverbs, to given verbs and nouns, with remarkable promptness, and to an extent which would have severely tasked my vocabulary. In arithmetic, both exhibited perfect familiarity with the ground rules, and Nattie gave at once, any and all multiples of numbers as high as 132, and added, multiplied and divided fractions with great readiness.

In Bible history, they related, partly in pantomime, but in a most graphic way, any required Bible incident. The extremely amiable and affectionate manners of these two interesting children, and the intense activity of their newly-developed intellects, rendered them particularly attractive to the visitor.

J. C., a girl of 15 years of age, has been under Dr. Wilbur's care a little more than four years. When received, she was mischievous and vicious, very nervous, and could not speak distinctly. She could not be left alone with other children, from a propensity to injure them. She knew some of her letters, but could not be taught to read or write by any ordinary methods.

She now reads well, writes a handsome hand, is remarkably proficient in geography and grammar, and has made good progress in addition and subtraction. She sews very neatly, and is quite capable as an assistant in household matters. Her nervousness is no longer troublesome, her waywardness has entirely disappeared. In respect to moral training, she seems more advanced than most of the other pupils. She manifests a remarkable familiarity with Bible history, and with the events in the life of our Saviour. When requested to repeat the Lord's Prayer, she did so with a reverence, an impressiveness, and an evident understanding of its petitions, which exhibited in a very favorable light, her intelligence and thoughtfulness. As I listened to this once vicious and wayward Idiot, thus uttering, in our

Saviour's own words, her petitions to the throne of heavenly grace, I was more deeply impressed than ever before, with the adaptation of that sublime prayer to every human want.

E. D., now about 15, has been under instruction about four years; could not be taught to read, write, count, or distinguish colors by any ordinary mode of instruction, was mischievous in his propensities, and inactive in his habits. He is now a manly, well-behaved boy, reads, writes and draws well, and possesses as much practical knowledge, and full as much talent, as boys of his age, generally.

I might go on with these descriptions of cases where children brought to the Asylum, in the lowest and most abject forms of Idiocy, have, under the training of these skillful and patient teachers, become intelligent and capable of self-support and intellectual culture; but the cases already related, will serve to show that this hitherto neglected class are susceptible of a very high degree of improvement, and though all may not exhibit as marked a change as the first cases narrated, yet the improvement in every case under instruction, (except those where organic disease prohibits progress,) is sufficient to reward the toil it has cost. I can not but hope that ere long, we shall add to the benevolent Institutions of our State, already so efficient and so justly celebrated, one for these unfortunate children of our common Father, these "innocents," as the Germans so appropriately call them, where such of the seven or eight hundred Idiots of our own State as are susceptible of instruction and improvement, shall find as kind care and as skillful instruction as that now imparted to the pupils of the New York Asylum. B.

APPENDIX D.

PLAN OF A CHARTER FOR AN ASYLUM FOR IDIOTS.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, }
IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MAY SESSION, 1856. }

Title. AN ACT TO INCORPORATE THE CONNECTICUT ASYLUM FOR
IDIOTIC AND IMBECILE YOUTH.

Preamble. *Whereas*, It appears by the Report of the Commissioners on
Idiocy, that there are in the State of Connecticut more
than three hundred Idiotic and Imbecile children, who
are not susceptible of improvement in the public or
private schools now existing in our State, and who must
unless some provision is made for their improvement, be
ignorant, helpless and degraded, burdensome to their
friends and to the State; and whereas it has been satis-
factorily demonstrated to us, that by the modes and pro-
cesses of instruction, adopted in schools for Idiots in other
States, and countries, they are greatly improved in health,
habits, and morals, and are enabled to support themselves;
and whereas we regard it as the duty of the State to re-
quire that all of its children shall have the opportunity of
mental culture, the weak as well as the strong, the dull
and backward as well as the active and intelligent, the
Idiotic as well as the gifted;

Therefore, in order to aid in the elevation of this hitherto
neglected class,

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives in General Assembly convened:*

Who con-
stitute the
corpora-
tion.

SECTION 1. His Excellency the Governor, His Honor
the Lieutenant-Governor, Alexander H. Holley, of Salis-
bury, James E. English, of New Haven, John T. Adams,
of Norwich, Edwin Johnson, of Middletown, Erasmus E.

Hamilton, of Somers, Alfred A. Burnham, of Windham, and Linus P. Brockett, of Hartford, be, and they are hereby appointed Trustees of the corporation hereinafter created, and shall have power to act as a body corporate and politic, under the name and style of "The Connecticut Asylum for Idiotic and Imbecile Youth,"—and by that name and style shall have perpetual succession; be capable of suing and being sued, pleading and being impleaded, answering and being answered unto, defending and being defended against, to final judgment and execution, in all courts of law and equity; and may have and use a common seal, to be by them devised, altered, and renewed at their pleasure.

Name of the Asylum.

SEC. 2. The said corporation may take, receive, hold, purchase, and possess real and personal estate, in trust, to be used and improved for the erection, support, and maintenance of an Asylum for the instruction of Idiotic and Imbecile youth, and for carrying into full effect the charitable and humane intentions of the State and the corporation; *Provided*, That the income of its real and personal estate together, do not in any one year exceed the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars; and the property and estate of said corporation, both real and personal, shall not at any time be liable to be assessed in the apportionment of any State or town tax.

Corporation may hold property not exceeding \$25,000 income

Said property not to be taxed.

SEC. 3. The aforementioned Trustees, on receiving evidence that the sum required by the act of this Legislature, passed on the _____ day of _____ A. D. 1856, to wit: _____ thousand dollars,—(on the raising of which, a conditional grant of _____ thousand dollars was made, for the erection of an Asylum for Idiotic and Imbecile Youth,) has been subscribed; shall proceed to locate the Asylum in such place as shall, in their judgment, be best suited for the promotion of its welfare; they shall, by vote, receive into the corporation, all persons who have contributed to its funds, to the amount of _____ dollars or more, and from these they, together with the newly elected corporators, shall elect eight additional trustees, to serve till the first Wednesday of July, 1857; and the Legislature at its next session shall appoint six Trustees on the part of the State, of whom the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor for the time being shall be two, and the corporators on their part shall elect nine Trustees, to commence their term of service on the first _____

Location of Asylum.

Organization of corporation.

Eight other Trustees to be appointed.

Subsequent elections of trustees.

Wednesday of July aforesaid; *Provided*, That one-third of said Trustees, both those elected by the corporators, and those appointed by the State, shall go out of office each year, but may be eligible to re-election.

Corporation has power to regulate its own internal affairs

SEC. 4. The said corporation shall ordain, institute, establish, and put in execution such rules, regulations and by-laws as may be deemed expedient for the internal government and economy of the Institution, and for the well ordering, managing and conducting all the affairs thereof, and of all officers, agents and persons, appointed or employed by them in and about the Asylum or elsewhere, and may alter or amend them at pleasure, provided the same are not repugnant to the laws of this State, or the United States; and may generally do and transact all other matters and things fit and proper for bodies corporate to do and transact.

Corporation to choose its own officers.

SEC. 5. The said corporation may at their first or any subsequent meeting, choose a Superintendent, and all other necessary and convenient officers, who shall have such power and authority, as the said corporation may think proper to prescribe and grant to them, and who shall be elected in such manner, and for such period of time, as the by-laws of the said corporation may provide.

May change its name.

SEC. 6. It shall be lawful for the corporation, at any general meeting of the members thereof, to alter or change the name of said corporation, either by substituting, or inserting the name of any prominent benefactor or patron for the name given to said corporation by this act; and upon such change, so as aforesaid made, the said corporation shall, upon depositing a copy of the resolution effecting such change in the office of the Secretary of State, have a right to assume and take such name, and have, hold, and enjoy all the powers and privileges given by this act, notwithstanding such alteration and change.

Must make an annual report.

SEC. 7. The corporation shall, through its Trustees, make an annual report at each session of the Legislature, of all its doings for the year previous.

How the first meeting shall be called.

SEC. 8. The Trustees named in the first section of this act, may hold their first meeting on the call of any three of their number, notification of time and place of said meeting being made two weeks previous, by writing, and publication in one or more newspapers printed in Hartford or New Haven.

APPENDIX E.

STATISTICS OF IDIOCY IN IRELAND.

PROVINCES AND COUNTIES.	Area sq. m.	Popula'n in 1851.	Idiots Cen's to 1851.	Proportion to Popula-tion.	Prop. Lunatics to Pop.	Remarks.
<i>Leinster.</i>						
Carlow,	346	68,075	40	1 in 1,702	1 in 1,031	
Dublin,	354	404,992	204	1 in 1,985	1 in 460	City of Dublin.
Kildare,	654	95,724	118	1 in 811	1 in 1,126	
Kilkenny,	796	158,746	118	1 in 1,345	1 in 926	City of Kilkenny.
King's,	772	112,080	99	1 in 1,132	1 in 1,167	
Longford,	421	82,350	84	1 in 980	1 in 1,248	
Louth,	315	107,657	114	1 in 797	1 in 1,465	
Meath,	906	140,750	151	1 in 932	1 in 1,436	
Queen's,	664	111,623	115	1 in 971	1 in 1,151	
Westmeath,	709	111,409	112	1 in 995	1 in 1,041	
Wexford,	901	179,790	218	1 in 826	1 in 985	
Wicklow,	781	98,978	98	1 in 1,010	1 in 1,302	
<i>Munster.</i>						
Clare,	1,294	212,428	138	1 in 1,539	1 in 1,597	
Cork,	2,885	648,902	306	1 in 2,120	1 in 1,277	City of Cork.
Kerry,	1,853	238,239	134	1 in 1,778	1 in 1,791	
Limerick,	1,064	262,136	183	1 in 1,432	1 in 1,228	
Tipperary,	1,659	331,487	268	1 in 1,237	1 in 1,348	
Waterford,	721	164,051	120	1 in 1,367	1 in 989	
<i>Ulster.</i>						
Antrim,	1,164	352,264	164	1 in 1,533	1 in 1,170	City of Belfast.
Armagh,	512	196,085	185	1 in 1,060	1 in 1,189	
Cavan,	746	174,071	189	1 in 921	1 in 2,176	
Donegal,	1,865	255,160	215	1 in 1,187	1 in 1,309	
Down,	957	328,754	266	1 in 1,206	1 in 1,426	
Fermanagh,	714	116,007	124	1 in 936	1 in 1,934	
Londonderry,	810	191,868	180	1 in 1,067	1 in 1,477	
Monaghan,	500	141,758	155	1 in 915	1 in 1,842	
Tyrone,	1,260	255,819	275	1 in 929	1 in 1,908	
<i>Connaught.</i>						
Galway,	2,447	322,212	152	1 in 2,120	1 in 2,301	City of Galway.
Leitrim,	613	111,915	79	1 in 1,416	1 in 2,152	
Mayo,	2,131	274,830	118	1 in 2,326	1 in 2,307	
Roscommon,	950	174,492	96	1 in 1,807	1 in 2,312	
Sligo,	722	128,510	86	1 in 1,494	1 in 1,801	
Total,	32,513	6,553,163	4,906	1 in 1,336	1 in 1,291	

Of these Idiots 1,846 are under 20 years of age—37½ per cent.

“ “ 182 are married.

“ “ 562 have had some education.

“ “ 303 have malformation of the head.

Proportion of both Lunatics and Idiots to the population, 1 in 657.
Whole number of Lunatics, 5,074.

The above Statistics of Idiocy in Ireland, are principally of value as indicating the comparative number of Idiots in the different counties, and the ages of those reported.

No census taken on the principle of the British or United States census, gives anything like full returns of this class, particularly of the younger Imbeciles and Idiots. There is no reason to believe Idiocy less frequent in Ireland than in other countries of Europe or the United States.

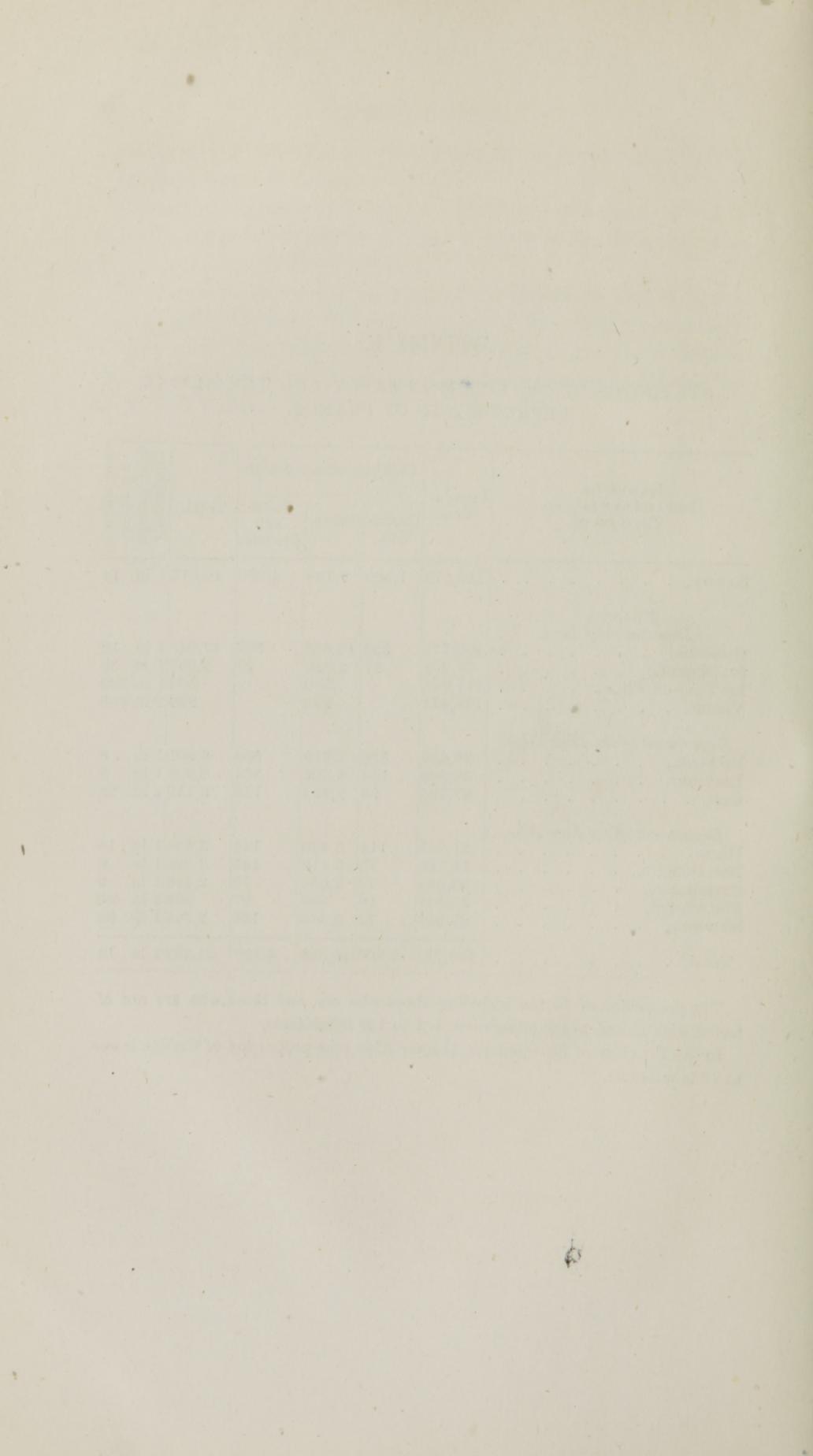
APPENDIX F.

STATISTICS OF CRETINISM IN SAVOY AND THE ALPINE DEPARTMENTS OF FRANCE.

NAMES OF DEPARTMENTS AND PROVINCES.	Popula- tion.	Children affected with			Total.	Proportion affected with Goitre &c., to inhabitants.
		Cretin- ism.	Goitre.	Goitre and Cre'ism.		
SAVOY,	148,011	1,420	9,144	1,953	10,517	1 in 14
FRANCE.						
<i>Department of Isere.</i>						
Grenoble,	202,775	555	15,658	835	17,048	1 in 12
St. Marcelin,	73,292	27	2,343	13	2,383	1 in 30
La Tour-du-Pin,	111,988		503		503	1 in 222
Vienne,	138,474		296		296	1 in 468
<i>Department of the High Alps.</i>						
Briançon,	29,636	396	2,619	586	3,601	1 in 8
Embrun,	38,828	164	3,200	334	3,698	1 in 8
Gap,	67,785	99	2,857	156	3,112	1 in 22
<i>Department of the Low Alps.</i>						
Digne,	51,975	114	3,400	144	3,658	1 in 14
Barcelonette,	18,785	73	3,110	143	3,326	1 in 6
Castellanne,	23,099	70	2,294	79	2,443	1 in 9
Forcalquier,	35,849	16	860	27	903	1 in 40
Sisteron,	26,228	72	2,542	130	2,744	1 in 9½
Total,	958,721	3,006	46,826	4,400	54,232	1 in 18

The proportion of *Cretins* including those who are, and those who are not affected with goitre, to the population, is 1 to 129 inhabitants.

In the Province of Barcelonette, (Lower Alps,) the proportion of *Cretins* is one to 87 inhabitants.



REPORT

OF THE

Commissioners on Idiocy, ✓

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CONNECTICUT,

MAY SESSION, 1856.

57

★ ★ ARMY ★ ★
MEDICAL LIBRARY
Cleveland Branch

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE



NLM 03203828 3

ARMY
MEDICAL LIBRARY