The hand book of idiotcy : showing the idiot's condition, the numerous causes of idiotcy, and the most experienced methods of training and educating the idiot, as successfully adopted by continental governments of Europe and America / by James Abbott.

HAND BOOK OF IDIOTCY:

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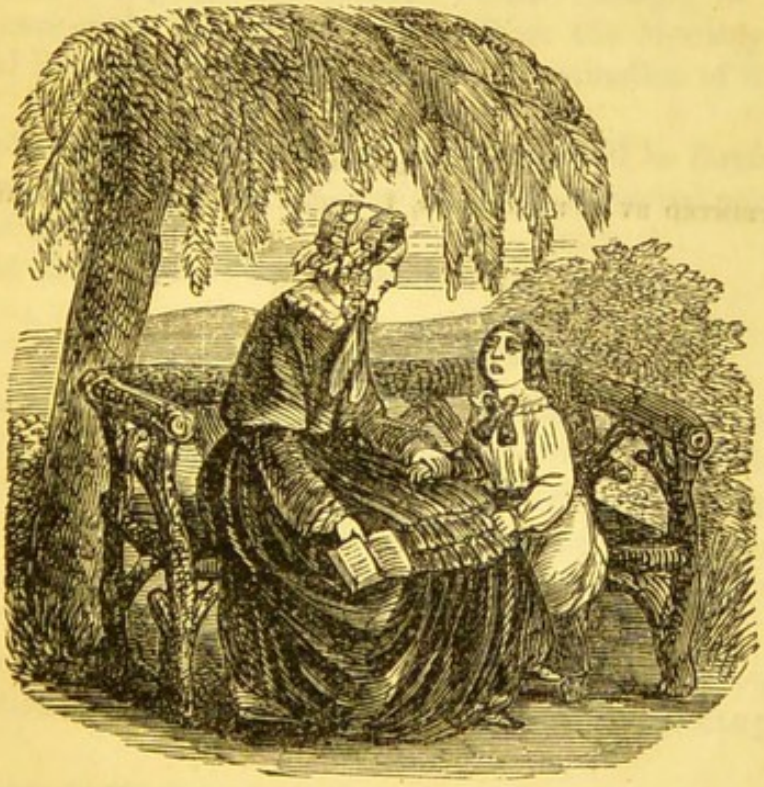
SHOWING

THE IDIOT'S CONDITION, THE NUMEROUS CAUSES OF IDIOTCY;
AND THE MOST EXPERIENCED METHODS OF TRAINING
AND EDUCATING THE IDIOT, AS SUCCESSFULLY ADOPTED BY THE
CONTINENTAL GOVERNMENTS OF EUROPE AND AMERICA.

BY

JAMES ABBOTT, M.A.,

Formerly Fellow Commoner of Queen's College, Cambridge.



LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY W. S. ORR & Co., AMEN CORNER,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

1856.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. F. HODGSON, 1, GOUGH SQUARE, FLEET STREET.

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THE HAND-BOOK OF IDIOTCY.

A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO THE MEMBERS OF BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

My Lords and Gentlemen.

While we enjoy, by the instrumentality of Parliament, the advances made in religious and civil liberty, —the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts,—the emancipation of Catholics,—the abolition of Slavery throughout the British dominions,—the passing the Reform Bill,—the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the establishment of the principles of Free Trade; permit me respectfully to remind you not to forget the debt we owe to common humanity, in the hitherto neglected class of our fellow beings—the Idiots.

If the best and happiest employment of the legislator be an unremitting course of endeavour to leave the world better than he found it, it will afford you no small pleasure to become instrumental in aiming to rescue Nineteen Thousand poor outcasts of our species from their brute-like condition, and seek to give them an elevation to a place upon the platform of humanity.

It may be asked, What is Idiotcy? To enter into an analysis of the description of Idiotcy, its varieties, its physio-

logical and psychological symptoms, its causes, diagnosis, and prognosis, and all the rules for hygiene, would take up too much of your time, and occupy too much space for a Letter.

"The popular notion of an Idiot," says Mr. Charles Dickens, "would probably be found to vary very little, essentially, in different places, however modified by local circumstances. To the traveller in France or Italy the name recalls a vacant creature all in rags, gibbering and blinking in the sun with distorted face, led about as a possession and a stock-in-trade by some phenomenon of filth and ugliness, in the form of an old woman. In association with Switzerland, it suggests a horrible being, seated in a châlet door (perhaps possessing sense enough to lead the way to a neighbouring waterfall), of stunted and misshapen form, with a pendulous excrescence dangling from his throat like a great skin bag with a weight in it. In the Highlands of Scotland, or on the roads of Ireland, he becomes a red-haired Celt, rather more unreasonable than usual, plunging ferociously out of a mud cabin, and casting stones at the stranger's head. As a remembrance of our own childhood in an English country town, he is a shambling, knock-kneed man, who was never a child, with an eager utterance of discordant sounds, which he seemed to keep in his protruding forehead, a tongue too large for his mouth, and a dreadful pair of hands, that wanted to ramble over everything—our own face included. But in all these cases the main idea of an Idiot would be of an hopeless, irreclaimable, unimprovable being. And if he be further recalled as under restraint in a workhouse or lunatic asylum, he will still come upon the imagination as wallowing in the lowest depths of degradation and neglect; a miserable monster, whom nobody may put to death, but whom every one must wish dead, and be distressed to see alive. Until within a few years, it was generally assumed, even by those who were not given to hasty assumptions, that because an Idiot was, either wholly or in part, de-

ficient in certain senses and instincts necessary, in combination with others, to the due performance of the ordinary functions of life—and because those senses and instincts could not be supplied—therefore nothing could be done for him, and he must always remain an object of pitiable isolation. But a closer study of the subject has now demonstrated that the cultivation of such senses and instincts as the Idiot is seen to possess will, besides frequently developing others that are latent within him, but obscured, so brighten those glimmering lights, as immensely to improve his condition both with reference to himself and to society. Consequently there is no greater justification for abandoning him, in his degree, than for abandoning any other human creature."

Mr. Locke observes that the defects in Idiots seem to proceed from want of quickness, activity, and motion in the intellectual faculties, whereby they are deprived of reason; whereas madmen, on the other side, seem to suffer from the other extreme; for they do not seem to have lost the faculties of reasoning, but having joined together some ideas very wrongly, they mistake them for truths, and they err as men do that argue right from wrong principles. For, by the violence of their imaginations, having taken their fancies for realities, they make right deductions from them. Thus we find a distracted man fancying himself a king, with a right inference requiring suitable attendance, respect, and obedience; others, who have thought themselves made of glass, have used the caution necessary to preserve such brittle bodies. Hence it comes to pass, that a man who is very sober, and of a right understanding in all things, may in one particular be as frantic as any of the patients in Bethlem, or the Bicêtre, if, either by any sudden very strong impression, or long fixing his fancy upon one sort of thoughts, incoherent ideas have been cemented together so powerfully as to remain united. But there are degrees of madness as of folly: the disorderly jumbling of

ideas together is in some more, in some less. In short, herein seems to be the difference between Idiots and madmen, that madmen put wrong ideas together, and so make wrong propositions, but argue and reason rightly from them; but Idiots make few or no propositions, and reason scarcely at all. It is true, that madmen, by the violence of their imaginations, take fancies for realities; but it is not generally true, as Dr. Conolly proves, that they make right deductions from them. The judgment is but the result of comparison; comparison is alternate attention; attention is a faculty dependent on the mind through the brain. The truth is, however, that the judgment is always perverted in insanity, although in different degrees, but not so in Idiots. Hence we prove, that one prominent distinction between an Idiot and an Insane person, is, an ability to compare a thing, so that he can form a judgment in choice; for he who has lost the power of transferring his attention from one object to another, is mad, and not till then.

Insanities are the loosing of bonds, which bonds are affections. It is, therefore, of practical importance to discover the leading affection of one of unsound mind, and the means of limiting or unbodying it, and making it, if we may so speak, the fulcrum by which to raise the intellectual character. For there appears to be almost in every mind, some spmpathetic key, which if we can but strike, it will awaken the responsive tone of the whole.

Those who judge of things only as they appear before the senses of the body, conclude that the Idiot in reality is no better than a beast; indeed there are not a few who dream that the only difference between a man and a beast consists in their external figure, and in the former being able to speak, and that the latter expresses itself by sounds; and that, if man lives after death, beasts will do so too; and, on the contrary, that if beasts do not live after death, neither will man.

This dream arises from ignorance with regard to the mind of man; that is, ignorance of the soul, ignorance of what is spiritual, and ignorance of recipient life. The mind has two faculties, the will and the understanding. Man, also, is ignorant of his progressive nature, with regard to degrees of the perfections of life, by the aid of which, as steps for its ascent, the mind of man mounts up to Heaven. A beast has not will and understanding, but only a resemblance of each, which we call an analogous endowment. A man is a man, because his understanding is capable of being elevated above the desires of his will, and thus he can know and see them, and also govern them; but a beast is a beast, because its desires drive it to do whatever it does. It has no *rational thought*, but only a species of *natural thought* wholly obsequious to its natural affection and appetite. A man is a man, because his nature is progressive; and a beast is a beast, because its nature is limited, fixed, and stationary.

From this view, it is evident, that the understanding of man, because it receives the inflowing *light* from Heaven, and apprehends and perceives it as its own, and thinks from it analytically, with all variety, altogether as from itself, is alive, and is thence truly understanding; and that the will of man, because it receives the inflowing *love* of Heaven, and acts from it as from itself, is alive, and thence truly will; but that the contrary is the case with beasts, whose will and understanding always cohere; and because their will is blind, being the receptacle of *heat* and not of *light*, it makes their understanding blind also; hence, a beast does not know and understand its own actions, and yet it acts; but it does not think from the understanding what to act, it acts by an inflowing power from the spiritual world, and such action is instinct; the beast is induced to act solely from the natural love which is in it from creation, with the assistance of the senses of its body. The reason that man thinks and speaks is, because his understanding

is capable of being separated from his will, and of being elevated into the *light* of Heaven; and the reason why beasts act according to the laws of order inscribed on their nature, and some beasts in a more moral and rational manner, differently from many men, is, because their understanding is in blind obedience to the desires of their will, and thence they are not able to pervert those desires by depraved reasonings, as men do.

Let us be understood, that when we use the terms will and understanding, in reference to beasts, a certain resemblance of and an endowment analogous to those faculties, are what we mean. Analogous endowments are called by the names of the faculties themselves, on account of the appearance. The life of a beast may be compared with a sleep-walker, who walks and acts by virtue of the will, while the understanding sleeps.*

Idiotcy, Epilepsy, Paralysis, and even Madness itself, have not their seat in the mind, as is commonly supposed. This we will first shew.

The soul is an organized *spiritual* body, and cannot be disordered, as may be seen in Hydrophobia, wherein the mind remains unaffected, until the poison conveyed into the physical system has contaminated the nervous fluid. These diseases arise from some functional deficiency, or organic derange-

* In admitting the hypothetical opinion of Descartes concerning the operation of the soul in the body, we believe in a *spiritual*, as opposed to Aristotle's views of a *physical* influx. Hence, we deduce, by the science of analogy, the nature of life, both in man and beast.

The perfection of the Cartesian philosophy, on this point, beyond any other system, appears to us perfectly clear. It evidently forms the groundwork of Locke's Theory of Perception, as well as of the sceptical conclusions deduced from it by Berkeley and Hume; but it is not the less true that it forms also the groundwork of all that has since been adduced in favour of the substitution, in place of this scepticism, of a more solid fabric of metaphysical science; we are therefore disposed to date the origin of the true Experimental Philosophy of the Human Mind from the *Principia* of Descartes, rather than from the *Organon* of Bacon, or from the *Essay* of Locke.

ment. In congenital Idiotcy, the functional deficiency becomes palpably manifest.

Anatomists have been surprised and perplexed at finding the nerves altogether unaffected, in appearance, in those who have died under the above-named disorders; and we know of no instance in which any defect of a nerve in a paralysed limb has ever been detected. Hence, it is absurd to speak of disease of the mind, since all derangements of the mind arise from disorders of the body.

The great obscurity which hitherto has existed upon this important subject, arises from the extreme ignorance of the nature of Life and the Soul, and of the operation of the soul in the body;—some supposing Life to be a function of natural organization, that is, of the brain; others esteeming Life a *vis insita;* others, again, a formative appetency; and some, an animating principle, having its seat in the head—some say in the heart, others in the blood—some placing it in the viscera, —Descartes placing the Soul in the pineal gland, or conarion, as being single and central;—in short, there are few parts of the body in which Life and the Soul have not been assigned a seat.

Again, by modern writers life and thought are resolved into magnetism, voltaism, galvanism, or some other of the higher forces of nature—a gaseous matter—in fine, often reduced to a metaphysical nonentity, instead of being viewed as an emanation or influence flowing into the recipient soul of man, momentarily, from the Almighty Creator, who is the only Life—comparatively as light and heat from the sun flow into the natural world, giving life to inanimate existences.*

* Dr. Pritchard, in concluding an elaborate essay on Life, says,—"The development of forms according to their generic, specific, and individual diversities, not less in the vegetable than in the animal world, can only be accounted for by ascribing it to the universal energy of the Creator." A verdict that is undoubtedly true in its substantial averment, but still affording us little or no light as to the *rationale* of the process.

Thus, as there is only one life, and this incapable of being created, but is eminently capable of flowing into forms organically adapted for its reception, and imparting to each form a degree and perfection of life, or re-active power, according to the relative perfection or imperfection of the created recipient form, or the uses for which it was made;—all the objects in the created universe, even to the most minute, being such forms; and in man, who is endowed with superior distinct recipient forms of life, or pure and perfect created substances, which can receive the fullest and most perfect degrees of life, and acquire thereby for him the most perfect nature; possessing unequalled and most ample re-active powers, to enable him to perform the noblest and the most exalted uses with which no other being is endowed.

But how Life flows into the Soul, and first operates, are altogether unknown and involuntary to man. But when, and in proportion as the Divine pervading Life, as it descends, and affects, and actuates those forms of the soul which are the rudiments of the faculties called *will* and *understanding*, therein commences man's *voluntary* and *rational* life; and these two faculties, as they become successively developed, constitute the *mind*, which varies in quality with every one according to his education, his choice of good and evil, and his habits of life. Thus, there is a distinctiveness of idea belonging to the soul and mind, although commonly used synonymously; the former, in the general sense, includes the latter, together

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Those desirous to see more on the nature of the soul, can consult Cicero, where he introduces Velleius thinking of God; also Plato's Dialogue called Phædo; Bishop Pearson's Minor Theological Works, Notes, vol. i. p. 47; Dr. Campbell, in his Philosophy of Rhetoric, vol. ii. p. 94; Dr. Clark, vol. ii. p. 539; Dr. M'Caul, Lectures on Prophecy, p. 56; Macarius, Homily iv. p. 47, Orat. 49, p. 719; Methodius, in Cudworth, vol. iv. p. 54, and a host of others, such as St. Hilaire, Bacon, Descartes, Malebranche, Baxter, Reid, Jortin, Magendie, D'Alembert, Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Mind, &c. &c. &c.

with the *involuntary* forms before spoken of, and the Life that actuates the whole.

Thus this activity of Life first flows into the inmost and most pure *spiritual* organized form—the Soul, and from thence into the affections and thoughts, constituting them the mind, and by these into the inmost and most pure *material* forms; for without this *living* operation from God upon the inmost forms of things, the action of the sun upon their outward forms would be of no avail whatever; but by both, as principal and instrumental, all effects are produced.

Now, we know that the most pure *material* organized forms are the brains, interwoven and composed as they are of the cineritious and medullary substances,—together with glands, cavities, and septa; and with *meninges* and *matres* surrounding them all. Here, then, the perceptions and thoughts reside in their first principles, and are developed by speech and action of the body. Here are to be found two distinct parts, the *cerebrum* and the *cerebellum;* and these parts of the brain correspond to the two grand faculties, namely, the understanding and the will,—the *cerebrum* being the more especial receptacle of the understanding and its thoughts, and the *cerebellum*, of the will and its affections. These act as one, like cause and effect. Hence, it appears to man, not only that his mental operations are performed *in* the brain, but also *by* it; therefore those who only think superficially, are apt to conclude that the brain does the whole, and that the brain and the mind are the same thing.

Thus we perceive how mind and matter are, by DIVINE WISDOM, brought into union—the brain and nervous fluid being comparatively to the mind what the wire is to the electric telegraph, a conductor, upon which the mind travels to every organ of sense; and should the mind be impeded in its progress by the derangement of any of those organs, or by disease of the body, the mind, though still sound, cannot develope or manifest its usual activities, on account of the de-

fective condition of its instrument—the brain being, comparatively, as a skilful performer on the flute, who cannot exhibit his usual powers of art when the instrument is seriously damaged; and it would therefore be just as wise to conclude from the latter failure, that the player and his flute are alike made of wood, as from the former, that the mind and the brain are alike material.

Judging then from the *nature of things*, and from analogy, we conclude that the soul must be present in every part of the body—that it is essentially the man, and cannot be affected with disease; and that therefore the mind of the Idiot is not affected, but only impeded in its development by physical obstructions, which it is the duty of the skilful to discover, and to use every endeavour to remove.*

The mind, though differently modified, is an equal gift to the Idiot as well as to the wise; it is developed differently by the brains, the organs of sense as recipients: in some, the mind is obscured by a gross or imperfect organisation; and in others, shining forth with more brilliancy, from a happily refined organisation. It must be then evident, as the mind operates through material or physical instruments, the correctness of its operations must depend upon the health, growth, and perfection of those instruments. And what are those instruments? The brain and nerves. These agents of the mind in the Idiot are diseased, imperfect, or deranged, and consequently unfaithful; so that all the operations of the will and the understanding are perverted, and barely recognised as human. To enjoy the full exercise of the five senses,

* In the foregoing remarks we cannot convey our ideas of the result of all human speculations better than in the language of scriptural truth:—"There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty hath given him understanding." (Job xxxii. 8.)

Let our researches, concerning the development of the mind, be carried but ever so far towards the commencement of its history, in *this* humble confession of human ignorance they must terminate at last.

the most diligent employment of the faculty of attention of these senses, the degrees of which attention form the basis of a retentive memory, a just comparison, and a powerful reflection, with the imaginative faculty, give every intellectual excellence. In fine, the combination of these mental faculties, says Dr. Conolly,—of all that is admirable in mind, and excellent and perfect in the objects of its exercise,—with a power of one faculty in particular, constitute virtually a man of genius —a character enjoyed by few in any age. It is enough, in our fallen condition, to enjoy health and soundness of mind, by which we are enabled to judge well, and to act well, in all the ordinary conditions of life. This constitutes a Christian, a man of talent, and is the product of the harmonious action of all the mental faculties.

Idiotcy, then, may be either congenital,* or accidental,—in both cases it is an organic, or disordered state of the nervous system, owing to which there is no regular power of the mind over all or part of the organs and faculties of the Idiot; who is simply guided by his instincts, and cut off from the moral world.

The Law divides insane persons into three classes—*Idiots*, Lunatics, and those who are neither Idiots nor Lunatics, but simply of unsound mind. The Law says, Idiots are those who from their birth have never had the power of reason,—Lunatics are those who have once had the power of reason, and have afterwards lost it, and become mad,—and the third class includes all those who cannot be properly called mad, but who, having once had the power of reason, have afterwards, from old age, from habitual intoxication, or from other causes, become incapable of managing their affairs.

* A variety of causes arising from intermarriages, irregular and intemperate habits, &c., each of which may give rise to congenital idiotcy in the offspring, might here be pointed out, did space permit. We have enlarged upon this subject in our "Institutes of Education," to which we refer our readers.

In criminal cases, therefore, Idiots are not chargeable for their own acts. The word is derived from the Greek ἰδιώτης, which signifies a private citizen—one who takes no interest in the general welfare. The modern meaning, therefore, deviates much from the old one. A person who has understanding enough to measure a yard of cloth, number 20 correctly, tell the days of the week, &c., is not an Idiot in the eyes of the law.

The psychological symptoms of Idiotcy, we will now briefly state.—Though confined in narrow limits, the Idiot still has his sensations, sentiments, and limited perceptions, manifested by his wants, appetites, tastes, inclinations, desires, repugnances, fears, terrors, preferences, wishes,—all expressed in his own way. He gives evidence that he remembers perceptions of his thoughts—that he can look forward, and judge of the future from the past, though this power is very circumscribed. That which is wanting in the Idiot, says Dr. Conolly, is not distinct perception; for, he can distinguish his food; nor internal nor external sensations; nor attention, as he can fix it and his wishes on those things which delight him; nor comparison, nor judgment, as he can choose among many things that which pleases him most; nor understanding, when he submits to the moral influence of mild or severe language; nor foresight of his wants and appetites, for though few, yet he will use great patience and ingenuity to gratify them; nor taste, for although limited to the desire of tearing rags, or licking a piece of crockery, they occupy the mind as completely as the taste for operas, or gaming, occupies higher minds; nor personal affections, nor antipathies; nor even will itself, in the narrow limits of willing, to satisfy his instincts, or to gratify his indolence.

It may be now asked, What, then, does the Idiot need, intellectually, to resemble other persons? The Idiot has not that freedom of power of the will, by which he can, of *himself*, originate intellectual or moral actions; and his case is

greatly aggravated by neglect. All those advantages, without which children well gifted could not have obtained the dignity of manhood, are withheld:—no kind forethought—no enlightened affection—no plan of education—no methodical treatment. Poor or rich, with affectionate or careless mothers, the Idiot is equally doomed to ignorance and inaction; with no assistance, no amusements, no excitements to thought, feeling, or action, until left to his instincts—his inertness—his nervous disorder, and filthy and repulsive habits, he becomes incurable, and growing old, prematurely, dies at thirty; for neglect makes his youth a season of *decrepitude*, which leads him rapidly and painfully to his grave! Upon whom, my Lords and Gentlemen, does this awful responsibility of neglect to the children of our country rest?

The opinion has been too general, that Idiotcy is incurable. This has arisen, first, from the incapacity of medical men to form a judgment on this subject, from not having specially studied it, and from their hasty visits; a rapidity which prevents any attentive study, or any attempt at moral treatment by personal means. Secondly; the unwillingness of parents to vex the Idiot by a change of habit, which, at first, makes him sad, vexed, or produces tears; for the Idiot, though he cannot tell black from white, has always a marvellous intuition as to the degree of ascendancy he exercises over each person. Thirdly; others, after a time, become indifferent. Fourthly; religious prejudices, by which some people regard the Idiot as incapable of sin.

Notwithstanding these impediments, to say that Idiotcy is incurable, is a serious mistake!

Having devoted a great portion of life to the education of youth, and to the investigation of the powers and constitution of the human mind, the Idiot obtained from us some sympathy and consideration. In 1851, we entered upon a correspond-

ence with Dr. Howe of Boston, North America, and with other Continental philanthropists, on the state and means of restoring Idiots. We will now give the result of our correspondence and exertions in their behalf.

In 1846, Dr. T. G. Howe was appointed one of the Commissioners, by the legislature of America, to inquire into the condition of the Idiots in the commonwealth, and to ascertain whether anything could be done in their behalf. We have been furnished by this gentleman with his Report, embracing a full history of the movement for the relief of these unfortunate beings from its first inception, and will give a brief analysis of this Report.

The Report, after stating briefly the end and aim of the labour and expense bestowed upon the Idiot—which is not only to train and develope, as much as possible, his feeble intellectual powers, but also to call out and strengthen the dormant or feeble capacities of every part of his nature,—to impart to him some useful knowledge, and to make him cleanly, decent, temperate, and industrious,—chronicles the success of these human labours.—"I am happy," says the Doctor, "to be able to state that these hopes and expectations have been fulfilled among the children taken and kept under training and instruction; several who were in a state of hopeless Idiotcy have gained some useful knowledge; most of them have become cleanly, decent, docile, and industrious; and all of them are happier and better, in consequence of the efforts made in their behalf."

"The number of pupils received into the school, under the provision of the State appropriation, is seventeen; of these, seven have been discharged, as being improper subjects with whom to test the experiment. Besides the ten remaining State beneficiaries, eight private pupils have been received, five of whom remain. The course of training and instruction pursued has been a plain but plentiful diet, abundant sleep,

cold bathing followed by friction, walking and running in the open air, and gymnastic exercises for giving muscular strength and activity. Special care and attention have been paid also to bring out and train the feeble mental faculties of the pupils by simple exercises adapted to the purpose."

The Report, speaking of the success which has attended this course of instruction, says: "Most of these youths were, three years ago, in an utterly helpless and hopeless condition of idiotcy. Some of them sat or lay in drivelling impotency, unable to do anything but swallow the food that was given them. They were void of speech and understanding. They were filthy in their persons and habits, and given to debasing practices. They were unable to dress themselves, or sit at table and feed themselves. They are gentle, docile, and obedient. They can be governed without a blow or unkind word. THEY BEGIN TO USE SPEECH, and take great delight in repeating the words of simple sentences which they have mastered. They have learned their letters; and some of them, WHO WERE AS SPEECHLESS AS BRUTES, CAN READ EASY SENTENCES AND SHORT STORIES."

Dr. Howe, in view of these facts, adds:—"I consider, therefore, this experiment to have been entirely successful. It has demonstrated, beyond question, that, among these unfortunate human beings who are left to grovel in brutal idiotcy, there are many who can be redeemed and elevated, and made to be comparatively happy and intelligent and useful. Here stand the rescued ones, the living proofs of the power of education."

A few cases illustrative of the Report, are given.

Dr. Howe, in his private communication, informs us, that the project of improving the condition of Idiots, by a systematic course of training, had also been successfully effected both in Berlin and Paris, prior to his experiment; and that

he had visited both establishments on the Continent, and also the joint asylum of Highgate and Colchester, in England, which was established by a few of the leading Dissenters about seven years ago. When we first took up the cause of the Idiot, we were not aware of an establishment in England to ameliorate the condition of the Idiot; but as soon as we understood this, we visited it, and made ourselves acquainted with its character, and were furnished with the first Report, carried over a series of three years, from which we extract the following important fact, against a popular false idea that there were comparatively but few Idiots in this country:—"*It was not then known that a multitude of these cases, from shame or sorrow, were hidden not only from the eye of the world, but from the observation of social intercourse. It is now ascertained, by correct statistics, that the number of Idiots exceeds that of Lunatics.** *In fact, the applications made to the Board, since the establishment of the asylum, have been nearly overwhelming.*"

We will now enter more immediately upon the physical condition of the Idiot.

Perceiving the evident analogy, in many particulars, between Idiotcy and Insanity, it is necessary that he who undertakes the charge of Idiots should be well informed on the pathology of mental diseases. Dr. Webster gives some striking data upon this important subject; and, supported by these data, we may rationally conclude, that the temperature of the weather has its influences on all mental disease; of which, as

* The total number of Lunatics in England, in public asylums and licensed houses, on the 1st of January, 1850, was 15,079—7154 males, and 7925 females. Of these 238 were found lunatic by inquisition, and 264 were criminals. Of the whole number, 1036 were chargeable to counties or boroughs. The private Lunatics were 3774, and the pauper 11,305. The total number is thus apportioned:—In asylums, 7140; in hospitals, 1208; in metropolitan licensed houses, 2945; in provincial, 3786. New Statistics have just been issued, which increase the number of Lunatics in this country to NINETEEN THOUSAND.

the year draws to a close, so may we give a more favourable opinion respecting the progress of all aberration of mind. Seeing, then, that mental affections are in a greater degree prevalent during summer than in winter, every exciting cause, whether physical or moral, ought to be then carefully guarded against. The Doctor gives a report of thirty-six dissections of insane persons, which he performed at Bethlem Hospital; from which we may infer, that some diseased alterations of structure, more or less evident, in the brain and membranes, were observed in all the dissections. In a short abridgment of the pathological changes met with in the brain and membranes of one hundred and eight autopsies reported by Dr. Webster, infiltration of the pia mater was observed in ninety-two cases; turgidity of the blood-vessels existed in eighty-nine; fluid was effused in the ventricles in sixty-seven; effusion had taken place at the base of the brain in thirty-nine; there were thickening and opacity of the arachnoid coat in thirty-two; bloody points were observed on the cut surfaces of the medullary substance in twenty-seven; the colour of the brain appeared changed in nineteen; and in seventeen cases, blood was effused within the cranium. These data indicate unequivocally, that the morbid alterations of structure characteristic of mental aberration will be infiltration of the pia mater, turgidity of the blood vessels, and effusion of fluids in the ventricles.

It is hence evident, that although mental maladies demand special attention, the bodily complaints of Idiots frequently become of such importance as to endanger life; when they must be treated according to general principles. On the other hand, however conversant with the pathology and treatment of physical disease, he who takes charge of the Idiot or Insane ought also to study the nature and management of maladies of the mind, in order to be prepared for any contingency which may occur in the exercise of his duty.

Disease produces a variety of modifications of intellectual power and activity, to enumerate which cannot come within the limits of a letter. Physical causes also are ever operating to render the mind unequal; our very sensations are not to-day the same as yesterday. To control these effects is the duty of the wise man, by constantly exercising his freedom of will, by the power of self-government. We often find the more advanced in life lose the ordinary control of the understanding over the will; the will becoming, consequently, more at the mercy of the sensations. The mind vibrates, without danger, to each side,—towards undue vivacity,—towards undue depression; and still reverts to its rational state or equilibrium. It is only when some greater power disturbs it, that it is completely overbalanced.

To prevent feebleness of the mind, and to maintain soundness of intellect, requires, as we said, not only attention to the faculties of attention, comparison, imagination, memory, reflection, and judgment, and to the feelings and emotions, but attention to the bodily health also; a truth too often overlooked in the nature of children, in the education of youth, and in the voluntary pursuit of studies or business in adult age.

It is painful to reflect what havoc disease makes in the peace of the human species. Indigestion may produce melancholy; a neglected state of the bowels may impair all the faculties, lessen the power of attention, decrease the memory, obscure the imagination, stifle reflection, and cloud the judgment. Idiotcy, and even Insanity itself, may take their origin from chronic disease of the digestive organs.

A lively child is allowed to have improper food, or an immoderate quantity of wholesome food; the body is disordered, the breath becomes fœtid, the tongue white, the stomach irritable, the bowels inactive, and the skin hot. With these changes, the mind is powerfully affected; the child neglects

his accustomed play and exercise, is listless and dull, and cannot attend to his lessons; he is fretful and irritable, and either cannot sleep, or is disturbed by alarming dreams, or delirium comes on during the night. But these symptoms happily yield to medicines which act freely on the bowels, and the child may be restored to health; which, if neglected, may terminate in hysteria, epilepsy, apoplexy, palsy, in some fatal disease affecting the structure of the body, and even in Idiotcy, if not Insanity.

Dr. Conolly * justly observes, that paralysis of an arm is a bodily disorder: the nerve of the arm, the medium of sensation and volition, may be impaired in its current or at its origin; and yet we find that nothing aids medical applications more than the efforts of the patient to move his paralysed limb. It is the same with the mind of the Idiot. The organ of its manifestation is impaired; but a careful solicitation and direction of the functions of which it remains capable, and of those which convalescence enlarges to us, may contribute most powerfully to the melioration, if not cure. Certain exercise and employment,—well-timed impressions, sensations, or emotions, cautiously applied at favourable intervals, may renew the ac-

* We are greatly indebted to this gentleman, and to the *British and Foreign Medical Review*. Dr. Conolly, perhaps, in cases of Insanity, has done more in England on a large scale, for suffering humanity, than any single individual from the days of Hippocrates till now. One of the most interesting features of his non-restraint system of treatment of Lunatics at Hanwell is, the celebration of periodical festivals, in which the patients are allowed to participate. Such rational recreation, no doubt, in many instances, induces habitual cheerfulness, and thus proves one of the aids by which the moody sufferer is often restored to reason.

The establishment for the recovery of Ithe nsane at Hanwell is a noble and lasting monument of his talents, of his philanthropy, and of his fame. From its summit is permanently fixed a sun, far more brilliant than that fixed on the Pharos of antiquity, casting forth its beams of irradiating influence, and giving the halo of life to thousands of his country's afflicted sons and daughters. At that sacred shrine, parents, husbands, wives, children, and friends, consecrate to the Divinity his honoured name.

tions upon which mental manifestation depends,—may call the thoughts from what engrosses or misleads them, or extricate the mind from what oppresses it. Medicine, judiciously administered, may also help to remove long-continued constipation and neglect of the bowels; or remove a state of the brain, the existence of which impedes just sensation, or prevents the just exercise of the mental functions. The treatment of the Idiot must be changed as circumstances indicate. An open and free exercise of all the muscles must be brought into activity,—friction and the bath judiciously used,—and, above all, amusements which can be varied to fix the attention of the patient. The nervous system, through which intellectual power is manifested, is liable, like those portions on the integrity of which other functions depend, to impairment—either to direct impairment, or to sympathetic injury—in consequence of the disordered state of the organs: the impairment may be temporary, or it may be permanent, and may in many cases be compared to a partial paralysis, and must be diligently watched and remedied.

It is of the first importance to those who have the charge of the Idiot, that the nervous system be fully comprehended and understood. The centre of this function is the brain and spinal marrow; the latter being a prolongation of the brain, as it were, down the spine. This centre of nervous matter is endowed with two distinct functions: first, that of being able to convey *motor power* to the muscles, by whose agency we are enabled to perform all the ordinary actions of the body—all the movements of our limbs: second, that of sensation; which is of two kinds—common sensation, or that feeling of pain which is produced on the injury of the body; and a special sensation, to which are to be referred the five senses, produced by the perception of the mind—of feeling, of sight, of hearing, of smelling, and of taste. From this mass of matter trunks are sent off to all parts of the human frame,—

ramifying over its structure to such an inconceivable minuteness, that we cannot touch any part of the body without being excited. The great nervous trunk which supplies the lower extremities of man, is equal in thickness to his little finger; divide it, and he loses all power of moving his limb —it is dead, being deprived of its nervous influence. This power of endowing parts with motion and sensation, is situate in two distinct structures, of which the brain and spinal marrow are composed—the *white* and the *grey* matter. In the brain, the *grey* matter for the most part is external, inclosing in its folds the *white* matter; whilst in the spinal marrow it is the reverse. Now, generally speaking, all the nervous trunks of the body, and their branches, with the exception of nerves of special sensation, are composed of fibres derived from the white and grey matter; and these trunks are conductors of that *change* produced in the nervous centre by the influence of the *mind*, which gives rise either to motion or sensation. The change which takes place to give rise to the phenomena of motion, has its origin at the great nervous centre, the source from which the trunks arise; and this change takes place in the *white* matter. The change which gives rise to phenomena of sensation, takes place at the extremities of the nervous trunks,—that is, at their ultimate distribution; and this change takes place in the *grey* matter.

The anatomist, in his dissections, is able to prove the origin of these nervous trunks, and he finds that all those arising from the spinal marrow, and most of those which are said to arise from the brain, do so by two roots, one of which is connected with the *white* matter, and the other with the *grey*. Pinching the root which arises from the *white* matter, gives rise to no sensation; but irritate the root arising from the *grey* matter, and signs of suffering are induced. Let us apply this fact to practice:—A part of the body meets with injury,—a change is immediately effected in the extremities of

the sentient fibres—perception* produces sensation, which is developed, and the change thus induced is conveyed by the sentient fibre to the brain. Through the mysterious agency of the mind, then, the motor power of the great nervous centre is brought into action, and a change is induced; this change is conveyed by the trunks to the muscles supplying the injured parts, or to other muscles, by whose combined action it is removed from further injury. But it is not necessary that an injury should be inflicted that motor influence should be generated, as the mind has the power of inducing it at will. All the movements of our bodies are effected by muscular action, and through the agency of the will. We move not a hand or foot, nor look at an object, without the mind having first willed that it should be done. All actions, then, in the human body, are performed under the influence of the mind, and through the medium of the nervous system, called the *Sympathetic*. It consists of a number of little knot-like bodies, called *ganglia*, which are extended along each side of the vertebral column; the whole of these ganglia being connected together by means of fibres. Each of these ganglia is capable of generating nervous influence independently of the brain; and each may be considered as a distinct nervous centre. The trunk arising from these ganglia is distributed principally to all those organs, the agents on which the health of the body depends, which are employed in secretion and in its nutrition. It is the medium by which all parts of the body are brought into relation with each other, so that

* It is perception which causes sensation, and perception is of the soul and not of the body. What causes the tongue and lips to speak, but the thought? And what causes the hands to work, but the will? Thought and will are of the soul, and not of the body. What causes the eye to see, and the ears to hear, and the other organs to feel, but the soul? Here we embrace the philosophy of Descartes, namely, that inflowing does not flow from the body into the soul, but from the soul into the body; which inflowing is not physical, but spiritual.

no one part shall become diseased or injured without the rest sympathizing with it, and indirectly therefore becoming affected as well.

The influence of the mind over the functions of the body, through the agency of the sympathetic, of the nervous system, is clearly seen by the mouth watering at the sight of any favourite fruit. This is dependent also on the influence of the mind, acting through the medium of the nervous system, supplying the organs secreting the saliva. Tears are also abundantly secreted under the moderate exciting influence of the emotions of joy, grief, or tenderness. Where, however, the existing cause is violent, they are suppressed.

It is impossible, in a single Letter, where brevity is the object, to take a comprehensive view of all the causes that may lead to Idiotcy. Local disease,—obstructions, &c. acting upon and irritating the nerves,—derangement of the mental organs, arising from the numberless incidents of life, exciting the passions, and thus leading to irritation of the brain,—a disturbed and unequal circulation of the blood, congenital or accidental, with fever or without,—all inflammations,—in fine, any mental disturbance, may lead to depraved sensations and propensities, and to all the shades and modifications of Idiotcy. In paralysis this depraved sensation appears, or is altogether in one part of the body. In chorea, a disorder of the nervous system, or even in a trifling catarrh, sensation is greatly impaired. In various diseases of the brain and spinal marrow, the surface of the body becomes extremely sensitive to touch,—a current of cold air will produce pain, and the touch of any cold subject will occasion coughing. An increased sensibility may be produced by innumerable circumstances. Exhalation, spectrum, mental excitement, and high spirits, often precede the paroxysms of epilepsy. This grievous malady may be promoted by too much exercise of the faculties of very susceptible youth,—by exertions which necessarily produce an injurious excitement of the brain. Sometimes the mind is excited with-

out febrile action, by a large circulation of the blood through the brain, in the determination to the vessels of the head, producing apoplexy and paralysis. Symptoms of these evils are headache, noises in the ears, vertigo, &c.

When the vascular irregularity productive of deceptious excitement, has produced apoplexy or paralysis, and the patient survives the attack, we often witness the idiotic state in the impairment of the faculties of the mind,—imbecility of attention and imagination, and almost an obliteration of the memory. Emotions may now make undue impressions; anger, tears, laughter, each in turn readily excited; the judgment and the will become nearly powerless. The most amiable becomes irritable and petulant; imbecility advances with age, and happiness by disease is completely wrecked.

We are told by Parry, in his "Elements of Pathology," p. 670, that even more sudden changes may be produced by violent commotion of the cerebral substance. An accidental blow on the head has been known to produce Idiotcy; and also to pervert all the best principles of the human mind, and to change a pious Christian to a drunkard and abandoned felon.

Broussais remarks, that our wills, as well as our perceptions and our ideas, are impeded, forced, vanquished, obscured, *denaturated*, in the strongest manner, by the stimulation which our viscera (more especially those of the digestive and generative organs, exerted in various modes,) communicate to the brain. So soon as an excitation more acute than that which prevails in the normal state, is experienced in the tissue of our viscera, so soon do we begin to lose some portion of our freedom; we are first deprived of the freedom of our actions, and we subsequently lose that of our powers of thought. (De l'Irritation, chap. iv. sect. iv.)

A statesman whose letter now lies before us, in which he tells us he is too ill to attend to business, no doubt has been suffering under this insidious malady of the brain and its membranes, having been harassed with the exciting throes of an

election. Many such instances of disease there are, commencing and going on unsuspected, until it becomes inconsistent with the performance of the duties of life, and often leading to results the most melancholy and dreadful. It is well when the medical attendant perceives the symptoms of fretfulness, impatience, irritability, interruption of digestion, irregularity in the action of the bowels, feelings of tightness, of heat, perhaps slight occasional pain in the head, with other symptoms connected with the state of the breath, tongue, stomach, skin, pulse, and general appearance, and can apply the remedy of medicine and regimen in time.

These symptoms and results arise from an inflammation of the fine membranes of the brain; and especially from the arachnoid membrane, indicated by a loss of transparency, with an increased thickness, or with effusion, both productive of that irritation, or pressure, of which the brain is not tolerant, and accompanied with turgescence of the blood-vessels of the other membranes and of the brain. There is probably, first, a disturbance of the cerebral functions, an irritation, attended with a fulness of the vessels, but not inflammation; and the inflammatory action may supervene upon it, after it has continued for a certain time. The treatment of such cases involves so many important considerations, as to demand the attention of the most skilful and talented practitioner, whose great object ought to be, to *prevent* the effects of disordered actions, which might terminate in Idiotcy.

The slightest irregularity,—the most trifling uneasiness,—the most minute imperfection in the performance of a bodily function, is in itself disease; and the least deviation from sound mind is, in the common acceptation of the expression, disorder or disease of the mind. Disease produces a variety of modifications of intellectual power and activity, to enumerate which cannot come within our present limits. We should endeavour to comprehend the movements or actions on

which mental manifestations depend, and seek to know how impressions are received, and changes effected, as well as understand the phenomena which result from these movements, from these impressions and changes.

Numerous impairments of sensation accompany febrile and other diseases, producing powerful hallucinations, antipathy, &c. The case of Nicolai is full of interest upon this point, related in Nicholson's Journal of Natural Philosophy.* Eccentricity, weaknesses, and many human infirmities, may affect the mental faculties, without producing Idiotcy or Insanity; but if either of the organs of sense be impaired, we lose our connection with society, and suffer a loss of a portion of our earthly existence. Mankind learn to use their senses, as well as to learn to reason and compare what they present; and if impaired, and the faculty of comparison be lost, it must necessarily produce a fallacious judgment, which leads to irrational actions: the brain is irritated, and morbidly performs its functions; for whenever the attention is defective, comparison and memory must lose their power, and the judgment become weakened or totally destroyed.

We often find, when our mind has been absorbed on one subject, what fatigue and exhaustion we suffer, and how necessary it is that our attention be roused from its torpid state to a new and sudden activity, to prevent any dangerous association arising from our engrossment, and the further weakening of our faculties, producing, as Dr. Conolly observes, a kind of mental paralysis, and thus becoming marked as *the absent man;* for if one subject makes deep impressions, the memory and imagination will necessarily suffer. This will direct us in our treatment of the Idiot; for, as we before observed, there appears to be, in almost every mind, some sympathetic key, which if we can but strike, will awaken the responsive tone

* Chemistry and the Arts, vol. vi. p. 161. See also Dr. Bostock's System of Physiology, vol. iii. p. 204.

of the whole. How necessary, then, to use every means to rouse and awaken the attention of the Idiot, that his memory, comparison, and judgment be exercised. His incapacity frequently arises from the languid performance of various physical functions : digestion,—the skin,—the uterus, and other causes ; and in some cases of Idiotcy, the brain is brought into a state, in which the ordinary stimulus of external circumstances, and of the circulating blood, fails to excite its proper action. We must also seek to establish habit in the Idiot ; for we see that habit has so much, and reason so little, to do, generally, with men's everyday actions, that the control exercised by habit over the circumstances in which men live, becomes so weakened, that habit is almost unperceived by them.

The imbecile condition of mind developed by the Idiot, is susceptibility. This erythismal state is often the result of original organization ; and in others, produced by various accidental causes :—an engrossing passion,—a disturbed digestion,—an irregular circulation in the brain, may each produce it. It may be seen united with great mental activity,—in those disposed to hydrocephalus, to paralysis, to apoplexy, to epilepsy, to mania,—and is sometimes the product, often the precursor, of these dreadful maladies. The direction of such a mind is most important ; for every stimulus acts upon it,—every passion excites it ;—whilst in one they lead to generosity and valour, in another they urge to wild ferocity and crime. In the same person, at different periods or in different circumstances, is thus produced conduct apparently inconsistent, but naturally arising out of a general susceptibility to every feeling. *Varium et mutabile semper*, as observed by Dr. Conolly.

Every one is interested in the subject of Idiotcy ; for no one can confidently reckon on the continuance of his perfect reason. Disease, paralysis, epilepsy, &c. may weaken, accident may disturb, anxiety may impair it. Whether we contem-

plate the Idiots under the care of Dr. Howe, at Boston, in the United States of America; or those under Dr. Guggenbühl, in Switzerland; or those receiving the unwearied devotion of M. Saegert and M. Sach at Berlin, and M. Séguin at Paris; or visit those in our own country, at Reigate in Surrey—we shall perceive all of them labouring under diseases, or deranged organic structure or functions, interfering with and modifying the manifestation of mind; with degrees and shades of affection variable and almost infinite, the treatment of which must be equally various.

We now hasten to give a brief recital of the brilliant and successful exertions of M. Séguin, in Paris, and an outline of the appliances to be used for the recovery of Idiots.

M. Séguin studied Idiotcy ten years; and though he was encouraged by Itard and Esquirol,—the former who failed to educate the savage of Aveyron, who was an Idiot—was compelled to find his resources (to treat the Idiots under his charge) in himself. In his investigations, he was necessarily obliged to enquire, as we have done, into all the plans of training and education, both physical and intellectual, adopted by others, and to weigh their merits by applying them to practice. M. Séguin, like ourselves, was not a physician, but a teacher; and he carried out his plan with the most laborious painstaking and success. The training and education of beings so imperfect in body, taught him, in language not to be mistaken, that the due performance of the healthy bodily functions is essential to the action of the mind; and that every complete system of training embraces physical as well as intellectual education.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION OF IDIOTS.

In the education of the Blind, and of the Deaf and Dumb, one sense is substituted for another: the touch instead of the sight, in the Blind; and the sight instead of the ear, in the Deaf and Dumb. Idiots have senses, but they are dormant. In the congenital Idiot there are, indeed, gleams of sense; but they exhibit themselves chiefly in the affections and in the feelings of the heart. The diviner mind appears to have left the body to return but seldom, like a guest dissatisfied with its lodging. They hear, and do not understand; see, and do not perceive. They are thus disconnected from the outer world, and the principle involved in their education is to awaken their attention. Their organs of sense must be roused, so as to convey impressions; and this must be done by a system of sensorial gymnastics, and their brain must be stimulated so as to receive and to react on these impressions by intellectual gymnastics, both being combined with hygienic regimen. The result is, that an Idiot, inferior in capacity and intelligence to domestic animals, becomes, if not restored to society, at least restored to his family—his bad habits are *corrected*—he is more obedient—more active—in better health, and affectionate to those who have given him their affection and support; whilst others have been enabled to read, write, draw, speak, and employ themselves readily in many manual occupations.

All the faculties of the mind, and all the functions of the body, must be exercised and developed.

Muscular System.—The simplest apparatus is alone necessary. A table, a balance, a ladder, and dumb-bells. Exercises demanding sudden and strong exertions are not required, but rather the constant exertion of force during a fixed time. There are no Idiots who are well balanced—all have either a preponderance of nervous excitability or of muscular force, or they are in a state of complete atony. The education of the nervous system must therefore go hand in hand with that of the muscular, and be regulated according to the idiosyncrasy of the patient. Idiots are deficient in muscular sense. Prehension precedes standing in all children. When the Idiot cannot use his hands, he should be put on, and in front of the ladder, held by his belt, and his hands and feet directed to mount and descend. If his hand refuse to hold the rounds, let him fall into the attendant's arms, and be again replaced. If this be not sufficient, M. Séguin makes the child mount the ladder behind, whilst he mounts the front, holding its hands, every step being made slowly and surely. In descending, he disengages one of the feet of the Idiot, and clasps the step with his own foot, with which he guides the child's foot to the next step. He disengages one hand, which, by an instinct of preservation, rapidly clasps the step below. By these means, the inert muscles contract energetically, and support a weight and shocks which no voluntary exercise can accomplish. The same exercise may be repeated on this reversed ladder. As soon as the muscles of the hands have been taught, by this instinct of preservation, to contract, they must be applied to taking food,—to useful purposes, such as handling stones, bricks, spades, wheelbarrows,—dumb-bells can then be used, and the balance (which is a bar of wood with wooden knobs at each end) in order to make the child stand still and walk steadily. When the abdominal muscles are so weak as

to prevent standing, the child may sit with his feet on a spring board, to be moved up and down. Some cannot even sit, and must be taught first to do so without any support. Before any regular action of the limbs can be obtained, the child must be taught to stand still. To do this, he may first amuse his hands with dumb-bells, and fix his feet either in boxes, or (which he often prefers) in a round or square space drawn with chalk on the floor. By whatever means necessary, this power of standing still must be obtained, as it is an essential step in rendering the motions obedient to the mind. When the powers of motion are much impaired, neither the capability of standing, nor of ascending or descending, can be acquired without great practice, varied according to the individual. All should be habituated to those uses of the fingers necessary to daily life,—to dress, to button their clothes, to tie, to fold, to carry, to arrange, to wash, to comb, &c.; and, subsequently, to be able to cut, to saw, to plane, to draw, to sow, plant, water, &c. The aim is not to make muscular prodigies, but to employ the muscles usefully; and for this purpose, a simple system of gymnastics, and a master patient in little things, are wanted. It must be remembered, that there are three kinds of defects of motion which may be met with, —one, in which the muscular power is deficient; the second, in which the power of the will is wanting; the third, defects of structure, as contraction or retraction. For the first, purely muscular exertions, with or without the will; for the second, voluntary efforts, duly regulated; and the third, an orthopedic treatment, adapted to the maimed limb.

Imitation is a powerful means of instruction. It is *personal*, when its object is to modify the individual's own acts and habits; *impersonal* when it relates to his action on outward things.

Personal imitation.—Those who have the faculty, and in whom it is not directed, contract grimaces and tricks of ex-

pression. Such must be got rid of; the first step being to enforce muscular repose. This is done by the double operation of imitation and authority.

A— H— was (says M. Séguin) indomitably petulant; clambering like a cat, escaping like a monkey: he could not be kept standing still for three seconds. I put him in a chair, sitting opposite him, holding his feet and knees between mine; fixing his hands on his knees with one of my hands, and with the other bringing incessantly before me his moveable face. We remained thus *for five weeks*, meal and bedtime excepted, after which he began to stand, and almost immoveably.

When immobility is obtained, the exercises of imitation may be begun. The first lessons are to teach the idiot, by gestures and word, the parts of his own body, and their common uses: then the difference between right and left. The next exercises are to make him move his limbs at the will of the teacher, and by simple imitation, singly and then together; to close and open his fingers; to bend the index finger whilst the others are stretched out, &c. This personal imitation is more quickly taught in classes.

Impersonal Imitation.—There are three kinds of exercises.

1. The Idiot is to repeat exactly the movements he sees his teacher execute, who places objects in use in very different positions. The teacher takes a plate and places it on the table, indicating to or telling the child to do the same with another. He then returns the plate, and the child imitates this; next he places it vertically, &c., and puts it in numerous positions; and the same with a glass, a brush, a hat, and other objects in common use.

2. Place the objects of no use in certain forms, such as wooden bricks, squares, triangles, &c., to be imitated by the child.

3. Make a vertical line on the board with chalk, which

the child must imitate, first, by moving his arm in the direction and then marking. Next, a similar line from below, upwards; then from right to left, and from left to right. All Idiots prefer their left hand.

EDUCATION OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM, AND OF THE OTHER SENSES.

The senses are to be educated in the following order: Touch, Sight, Hearing, Taste, and Smell; that is, in the order in which they are awakened in the healthy child.

Education of the Touch.—The most injurious effects of the disordered direction of this sense is in that habit to which Idiots are often much addicted, namely, themselves discovering the gratification derived from it, and not by imitating others. Some Idiots have no consciousness of the sensation produced by touch; whilst others have neither the consciousness nor the sensation. In the former, it is only necessary to awake the consciousness; whilst in the latter the sensation itself must be provoked before attention of the mind can be given. In the first case, it is important to associate hearing and sight with touch; in the last, this is useless, but the touch must be roused by energetic and varied shocks, by agents whose actions are opposite, such as heat and cold.

To educate the touch of Idiots, it is often sufficient to give him things to handle, and to distinguish without using his other senses. The exercises are:—1st, with hot and iced liquids; 2nd, astringent, emollient, oily fluids; 3rd, resisting, or elastic bodies; 4th, bodies which are rough, smooth, woolly, cottony, or silky; 5th, heavy and light bodies; 6th, bodies of the same form, but of different size; 7th, of varied form. They should be taught to discover slight differences in heat.

The Education of the Taste and Smell.—Children often abandon their senses to all the vagaries of their curiosity: nothing is too strong, or acrid, or fetid, or astringent, for their uncultivated tastes and smells. Although these senses have no direct connection with the intellect, there can be no doubt that the harmony and due development of all functions is important. As a rule, stimulants should be avoided; but if necessary, cayenne pepper, mint lozenges, or very small doses of colocynth may be used to stimulate the languid sense, and when it has produced its effect it may be withdrawn. From these strong tastes the scale may be gradually descended to delicate ones. It is sometimes necessary to rouse the smell by long and frequent applications of ammonia, or otto of roses; but, in general, the stronger smells are perceived.

The Education of the Ear.—Very few are deaf; many, however, never listen; but, in general, the Idiot loves, and readily seizes rhythms; for the musical faculty is one of the gifts of Idiots. M. Séguin has never seen Idiots (except those absolutely paralyzed) that did not express the liveliest pleasure at music; and he has known a great number who sang correctly, though they spoke badly and with difficulty. One chanted all the vespers, though he could not pronounce two words in succession. Another came out of a deep torpor during music. Another, generally torpid, experienced great pleasure in a concert; he smiled, his face became animated, his hair stood up, his fingers contracted themselves and were agitated, and his forehead and hands covered with perspiration; after the last note he sank into his usual inanity. Another repeated difficult tunes after once hearing them, whose only articulate sound was "papa," which he said with difficulty, imperfectly, and inappropriately.

Idiots are more alive to rapid and gay tunes, than to slow and grave ones; also to instrumental music than to vocal.

The remedial influence of music has not yet been sufficiently studied to enable us to lay down rules for its application.

There are three kinds of exercises for the ear :—

1. On sounds in general. The child must be taught to hear the sound of bodies falling, or of the contact of one sonorous body with another.

2. The gamut. He must be taught the differences in musical notes.

3. The voice, as indicating the feelings. He should be made familiar with the expression of joy, fear, and pain: in these exercises it may be necessary that the ear alone should be addressed, the action of the other senses being for the time suspended.

Education of Speech.—Some Idiots are dumb from paralysis, perforated palates, and deafness; but in general, their muteness does not depend on want of voice, for the voice is strong; nor on the inability to articulate, as they can pronounce distinctly some words; but it consists in the few syllables or words they can pronounce not being spoken apropos, nor voluntarily, nor intentionally, and these accidental sounds having no sense, the Idiot is said to be unable to speak, because he is unable to express his wants or sensations in words. This inability depends principally on two causes,—an incapacity to move at will and with ease his organs of speech, and that want of will, that repugnance to perform any spontaneous act, which is the characteristic of Idiotcy. The organs of voice should be carefully examined, as their structure is often anomalous,—such as defect of action in the muscles of the cheeks and lips, contraction or great width of jaws, atrophy, hypertrophy, immobility of the tongue, and great elevation or depression of the arch of the palate.

First Exercise.—When the child has been taught to imitate, his attention should be directed to his mouth. The index-

finger should be put across his lips, then horizontally, then between them, and then two or three fingers introduced into his mouth. Let him hold a ruler between his lips; if they do not contract, increase its weight; if they are too far apart, gradually diminish its size. Make him masticate hard food; next make him simply imitate the motions of the lips in speaking. If there be a want of proportion between the tongue and the palate, as the latter cannot be improved, the tongue must be rendered more agile by a system of tongue gymnastics. He should be taught to move his tongue out of his mouth, up and down and sideways, keeping it some time in each position. If this cannot be done by imitation or direction, the tongue should be directed with a wooden or ivory knife.

The next step is the development of the voice. The principle M. Séguin follows, is to observe the natural course of this development, and to pursue the same. Thus children begin with sounds like pa, ma, dada, bo-bo, mi-mi,—not with a vowel, but with *a labial consonant followed by a vowel;* and they love to repeat the syllable. Such sounds, as they are much easier than vowels alone, or than consonants preceded by a vowel, should form the first lessons. Even this plan must be modified according to circumstances. Some cannot make a long and pure vocal sound, and might be taught by imitation to do this, before they can articulate; and in some whose lips do not contract, it may be necessary to begin with linguals before labials, as the difficulty of the latter will discourage them. Two cases are given by M. Séguin to show the method more clearly than rules.

A—T—, a hydrocephalic child, with a high, deeply-grooved palate, talked constantly, but could not articulate. The letters he could pronounce were N, as non, which he repeated many thousand times a day, M, as ma, and P, simply. He could remember and sing tunes. As he could pronounce

labials, he was made to practise them, to distinguish PA from PO, and MA from MU. From P and M he was led to B, through BO and BU. V and F were next attained by placing his upper lip beneath his upper incisor teeth, and this led to the sibilants, S, C, H, Z, J. By elevating the tongue anteriorly, LA was pronounced; and next the labials T and D, and thence to the gutturals. He completely acquired speech.

The second instance given by M. Séguin, is of a child of thirteen, with a small circular head, whose faculties were seriously impaired, but whose voice was good. He could imitate any syllable of two letters only, but could not unite two unless they were the same repeated. Thus, he could say "mama," but not "maman." M. Séguin first made him repeat A, following it with a syllable of two letters, as A-TA next A, O, which after some time he accomplished, and seizing a moment of excitement, his teacher added T, so as to make it A-TO, a double articulation previously impossible; then A-DO, A-LO, &c.; then the labials; next two syllables, keeping the first syllable and second vowel constant, and only changing the second vowel, as TA-BO, TA-VO; then changing the first only—then changing the vowels only. For syllables of three letters, which were next attempted, the two first were kept as consonants, the last changed. The task was long and painful, but the child spoke distinctly at last.

As this part of education is the slowest and most difficult, it should not be begun until some power of imitation has been attained; and all the exercises must be practised a long time; analogous syllables must be first united, then different ones, then whole words, until those of the most difficult pronunciation are articulated. Stammering often hinders progress. Its remedy must depend on the circumstances of the case, and on this adaptation to the individual case M. Séguin attributes the benefits which have followed his means.

The Education of the Sight requires great and methodical attention, from the difficulty of acting on the eye, which is an active organ, so situated as not to admit of being mechanically diverted. The first point is to fix the vacant, wandering eye. These exercises may be practised: 1st, Shut the child in a dark room, in which is a luminous point that can be moved, so that the eye may follow it; 2nd, Throw the balance from one to another, so as to attract the eye to follow it; 3rd, Place the child before you, and follow his wandering eye with a firm and obstinate look, which will provoke attention: the intelligent and animated eye follows the inactive eye, arrests it, fixes it, and then directs it. But this most important exercise is often very difficult to execute. The child avoids your look, and perhaps closes his eyes. M. Séguin attempted in vain, for four months, to attract the look of one child. The first time the child's eye met his own, it uttered a cry; the next day, instead of mechanically following him, it looked at him as something new; and day after day renewed this scrutiny with intelligence, until its curiosity was satisfied, and it saw without astonishment. By speaking to the child at the moment its sight was roused, it looked at him afterwards when spoken to, and thus its hearing improved. M. Séguin has found that this progress of the Idiot is not so appreciable during the education of one faculty, as during the transition from one exercise to another.

Direction of the eye being obtained, even although imperfectly, it must be taught to distinguish colours and forms. Square or octagonal cards of different colours should be used, and square cards of two colours, say orange and blue, being placed on the table, two octagonal cards of the same colours should be given to the child, who should be directed and commanded to place each on the square card of the same colour, and the colours should then be named. To give a notion of length and size, many pieces of wood of different

lengths and sizes should be procured, and when placed together, the child should be made to point out the longest and shortest, and the biggest and least, beginning with those whose differences are very apparent. For forms, it is at first necessary to have holes corresponding in size to the circle, square, or triangular model, into which he may fit it; afterwards he must be taught to place one movable shape on others merely painted, or drawn on paper.

Arrangement may be taught by pieces of board or wooden bricks. Give one to the pupil, and taking another yourself, place it in various positions, making him place his in the same; proceeding to two, three, four. Build bridges, houses, &c., with wooden bricks. To understand *plans* is an important step. The simplest forms, as the circle and square, should be the first attempted; and the child taught to carry his finger round their edges, and to put it, following the teacher's, on each of the angles. Next, the teacher, placing his finger on one square of a chess board, must direct the pupil to place his on the corresponding square. The same may be done with figures of houses, animals, soldiers. Thus the child is taught to direct his hand to certain given points.

Images are useful, but they should be at first representations of simple and common objects,—lines, figures, houses, carriages, animals, and finally, groups. As soon as an Idiot takes pleasure in these representations, they should be multiplied, and his taste cultivated by seeing good pictures and statues in museums; and he should afterwards be led to give an account of what he has seen. Those of M. Séguin's pupils who have made most progress, are those whose intellects have been most trained by this examination of works of art.

Drawing.—In order to draw, he must previously have been taught to distinguish the topography of a place,—to know what is above, what is below,—the left from the right, and to be able to place his hand or finger on any given point, and

to direct it; for he is unable, unless taught, to do any of these things. To draw a line in a given direction is the first step in writing, as well as in drawing. Children acquire these notions generally by intuition, but every step must be carefully taught to an Idiot. Having mastered these principles, the first step in drawing is to draw a vertical line between two points; but as the hands of some descend to the right or left, or wander about the paper, it is often necessary to draw as guides two parallel lines, one to the left, and the other to the right of the points, or, besides this, to fix two vertical rules so as to prevent the hand from deviating. Gradually these helps are to be withdrawn, until the child can draw the line even without the points. The same method must be followed for horizontal lines; curves are to be first drawn on these lines. Having made a vertical line, draw a curve, beginning at its summit and ending at its base; the child sitting at your left, and the curve drawn from left to right, by which means the hand does not hide the course of the line. A similar curve is to be drawn on a horizontal line, joining the lower end of the vertical. Four such curves form a circle. In uniting lines to form figures, M. Séguin has found that the Idiot experienced great difficulty in drawing a square; but made a triangle more readily. He therefore begins with a right-angled triangle, joining his vertical and horizontal by an oblique line. Four such triangles make a square; the inner lines may be effaced, and afterwards the squares drawn simply. Curves on each side make a circle. From these simple steps the Idiot learns to make the most complicated figures: but the process is a laborious one for both parties. M. Séguin incidentally mentions a fortnight being required to teach one child to make a straight line. When the motion of the hand is irregular and jerking, it may be necessary to make him draw thousands of circles from right to left and left to right. Sometimes, by drawing

a white circle on a black board, he follows the mark; or one circle within another, and between which he draws his own circle; in others, two projecting circles are necessary to guide his hand.

From drawing these geometrical figures, the Idiot passes to forming letters. Thus, D is only a half-circle resting on a vertical line; A, two oblique lines, united at their summits, and divided by a horizontal line. Having learned to draw he can write. The letters must then be traced according to contrasts and analogies—O next to I, B to P, T to L, &c.

Reading.—The exercises in plan, colour, arrangement, size, and form, are necessary steps to the understanding of letters, and the notions of which they are the signs. A frame is constructed, in which is placed each letter of the alphabet painted on a card; to each of which a metal letter exactly corresponds. Two or three metal letters are placed before the child, and he is directed to place one at a time on the corresponding letter in the frame, the teacher naming them. Subsequently, a letter being shown to him, he is told to name it;—if at first he was told to name it as well as to place it, he would be puzzled. He then connects a name with a figure, and a figure with a name. The order in which the letters should be taught to be pronounced is,—labials, labio-dentals, dentals, linguals, gutturals. Letters being understood, syllables are to be mastered, or the relation between the sound and many signs, and also the relation of many signs with many successive articulations. Here the previous exercises assist. The Idiot who has placed two bricks to form one figure, is led to comprehend how two letters can form one sound.

Words.—The next step is from mechanical to intelligent reading. To connect words with objects and ideas. For this purpose the card letters forming the words bread, knife, should be placed on the object; then the object should be given to the child, who should find its name among several names

placed before it. The child, at first, should never read a word without understanding it, and therefore it should be the name of an object of sense; thus all the persons and things about him should be named, and alternately written and pronounced.

Notions and Ideas.—M. Séguin has carefully distinguished between these two words as the basis of his plan of education. He explains the different sense which he intends to convey, by an example. A child, when he can distinguish a key from a table or a hammer, has the *notion* of a key; but he has the *idea* of a key only when he knows the relation between the key and the lock. The *idea* is the result of the mind's operation on two notions, key and lock. It embodies their relations, the reasons of these, and their consequences. By the *notion* of the key, the child distinguishes the key from other keys and other things; by the *idea*, he understands its use. By *notion*, he means to convey merely the knowledge gained by the senses; by *idea*, the result of reflection on these impressions. The first appreciates the physical condition of bodies through the senses only; the second, their relations through the intellect. *Notion* is passive, *idea* active; *notion* is acquired by the senses, *idea* by the reason, through deduction and induction. It follows that education must commence by notions which embrace all phenomena which are objects of the senses; once acquired, there will be materials for *thought*, which, however, cannot be taught. You may give the child notions, but his ideas must spring *proprio motu*.

Practical Grammar.—The mode in which substantives are to be learned has been stated; the next step is the expression of their properties by *adjectives*. The child should be placed before a table, and taught that it is brown, round, a square, on two or four legs, so as to establish the differences between it and other tables. At first, the object itself should always be shewn to the child, and the words expressing its properties written. Subsequently, names, with their qualities, (as a

white horse, a sharp knife,) should be written, and the child induced to point out one object among many, and so on. Action is expressed by the *verb*, which should be shewn by sensible images. At first, read or write the verb expressing some of the instinctive actions, as eating, and interpret the act of eating to impress it; next, having written, "to strike the table," the master should point out the verb, and imitate the motion, and *vice versâ*. As to the tenses, their order must depend on the language and the rules, as French will not wholly apply to English. M. Séguin begins with the infinitive, then the imperative, the conditional, the present, and the future. The preposition comes next: having written, "Put the bottle *upon* the table," the child does it; then, "*under* the table," he obeys, &c.

Memory.—In the education of Idiots, no words should be taught which they do not understand. The first exercises should relate to sensible things: the Idiot should be requested to bring some object from a distance; then two, then three, then more, which he should choose from many others; next he should receive the same orders for things in another room; and next, for a time at some little distance, as for five minutes, half an hour, a day. Afterwards, he should be ordered to perform personal acts: to wash his hands at a certain hour before his meals; to remember the time of rising or going to bed; to say at noon what he has done in the morning; and in the evening, what he has done during the day. From notions he may pass to ideas; but he should never be taught to repeat what he does not understand.

In those who have no memory, the following plan may be tried. After the Idiot has seen his food, remove it, and ask him what it was; after some trials this will succeed. Afterwards, let him name the food he has eaten. From thence pass to what he has seen, heard, &c. The real use of the memory should always be remembered. It is to furnish the mind with materials from the past to enlighten the future.

Its final use is for foresight, and it therefore leads to a taste for useful labour, and to that positive knowledge which is of practical utility.

Provision and Foresight.—The most trifling occurrences of the day afford lessons in these important acts of life. The child wakes and he has no shoes, for he has forgotten overnight to order them, which was his fault. He has not got what he likes for breakfast, as he had not ordered it before: this was his fault. He has no money in his walk to buy refreshment, as he forgot to bring it: it is his fault, always his fault. This part of his education is most important; for without foresight, he is the victim of slight circumstances and of all his wants.

Arithmetic.—Numbers must be taught by objects; any will answer. M. Séguin makes use also of balls like billiard balls, numbered, with holes for them having similar numbers. To learn the numbers is an affair of practice and memory; some little help may be given by rules. *Calculation* requires thought. M. Séguin takes *two* as the basis. He makes the child take off his shoes. "How many shoes have you?" "Two." "How many pairs is that?" "One." And so on with 2, 3, 4, 5, and 10 pairs, and the odd numbers; varying the objects at each lesson, and applying the numbers to quantities, weights, dimensions, size, distances, capacities, and at last to value: teaching by things and not by abstractions, and thus educating by means of the senses. In some Idiots there is a natural faculty for calculation; but as this is useless alone, it should not be cultivated at the expense of the other and more useful powers. The principal application of calculation necessary for Idiots, is to understand the use of money. They must be first taught the difference between the different coins, their form, colour, weight, substance, and name; next, their use. This can only be taught by practice. They must see others pay for goods at shops, and be taught to purchase themselves by first buying some sweetmeats. M. Séguin gives the details of his management in shops with his pupils; for

this, which is a simple arrangement for other children, is a study for an Idiot. He has among his pupils Idiots whom he has taught to count, keep and spend their money, to go to market, to the butcher, &c., and for whom their mother's care becomes every day less necessary. For such, he has attained his full object in teaching them calculation.

Natural History.—The Idiot should be taught the names, differences in form, colour, and the use of animals, and also to take care of them, to feed them regularly, and to clean them. This gives him foresight, address, and neatness. Horses, sheep, cows, and such animals, are all lessons for him; and he should also be taken to see wild animals. Vegetables are means of instruction; he should learn to distinguish one flower from another, by their colours, form, and smell. He should be taught to sow, plant, water, and gather. To teach him *Cosmography* by maps, would be impossible at first; but his teacher, with a rule always in his pocket, should constantly instruct him in distances and in sizes; the longer and shorter, the less and the greater. He next should compare those which are separated; as the length of a room with its breadth, or the size of one piece of furniture with another; next, the relative length of the garden, and the garden and the court, and their relative position to the house, and the house to the street. One village is the end of a short walk, another of a long walk; in what direction are they? From this actual topography of the town and neighbourhood, the teacher passes to maps of the country, making the town the centre, and teaching the pupil to trace his journeys to certain places and back again. Their astronomy consists in learning that the sun rises before such a window, and sets before another, &c.: the great art in his education consisting in limiting him to positive and not speculative information; to facts such as can be presented to his senses, and not abstractions, which to him are mere senseless words.

Education applied.—The object of this training is not only to develope the faculties of the Idiot, but to apply them to the common actions of life.

1. *Decency.* 2. *Bodily Habits.*—All tricks and unseemly bodily movements should be carefully eradicated. How necessary even such training is in ordinary children! 3. *Attitudes.*—The Idiot lies in bed like a ball, or throws off any clothing, turns his head from side to side for hours: all such habits should be overcome, sometimes with mildness, sometimes with energy. He rarely sits well, and this becomes a cause of deformity. He should be made always to sit on a stool, without a back or arms, to the height of his knees. His bed should be hard, he should not lie long in it, nor sit much. Standing still is the cure for many of his ungraceful motions when erect. 4. *Walking.*—He walks with the gait of a drunkard, and requires careful drilling. This unsteadiness prevents him from going up and down stairs with any ease. He is obliged to bring both feet on the same step before he moves one; and he always moves the same foot first, and with fear and trembling. Much practice, on a light staircase, with low steps, is necessary. The gymnastic belt, furnished with two rings, one in front and the other behind, assists the teacher. 5. *Dressing.*—The Idiot should first know every part of himself, and be taught next to name every article of his dress, and to shew to what part of himself it belongs; next, the order in which they are to be put on; and, finally, the manner of putting them on. These explanations require long efforts; and the complexity of the common operations of lacing stays and putting on braces, is seen by the difficulty. The teacher requires great skill, as well as patience. 6. *Eating.*—He should be taught to eat alone, and neatly, masticating well. When he has given signs of appetite, the attendant should eat before him, slowly and deliberately, performing each step in the process; chewing vigorously, and placing his mouth so

near as to shew the food between the teeth. His attention being thus attracted, the attendant should eat sitting opposite to him at a narrow table, putting a spoon, or fork, or knife, in his hand; if he be slow, be slow with him, making him take every spoonful, and mouthful, and draught in imitation. When his appetite is satisfied, play with him, and induce him to speak and act freely, when he will often declare his tastes and habits. Hard and stale bread, which he must masticate to swallow, is an exercise tending to strengthen his organs of speech. M. Séguin doubts whether he has sufficiently insisted on the importance of proper habits, as bad habits in Idiots are so numerous, from their idleness and their infirmities. Patience and resources are necessary in the teacher, who should always seek the simplest and most natural remedies. Almost all manual exercises are useful. 7. *Useful Tastes.*—Constancy in quiet, agreeable, and useful tastes, renders the Idiot bearable to others. Such habits are the fruit of education alone. The kind of tastes must depend on the station of the child. The manners and gestures should be taught to approach, as near as possible, to those among whom the Idiot lives, so as not to disgust; and to render their tastes useful, they should be taught to work. 8. *Useful Work.*—This is most essential, as the neglect and brutality with which the poor are treated often arise from their expense and uselessness. But, besides this, work is essential to health and morality. It is the fulfilment of duty. "Wherever I have gone," says M. Séguin, "my object has been to organise work. In public institutions, field and labouring work, and joinery; at home, needlework and household work for girls, and trades for boys; simple and useful work, on which their health and morality depend."

FIFTH PART.—MORAL TREATMENT.

M. Séguin confines his observations to morality as embracing the relations of a human being to others and to himself, and not including those relations with his Maker,—which, he thinks, belong to the higher department of the clergy. In many cases the teacher may assist, and must. M. Séguin shows his own religious feelings by giving short prayers, which he makes the Idiots of the Bicêtre repeat before their meals and their exercises, praying for God's blessing on them. Morality, then, as including the regulation of the actions, intellect, and passions, is essential to any education. The child's will must be subjugated to the authority of another's will, as the first step.

Authority and Obedience.—Idiots are less deficient in the power of commanding others, than in obeying them. Obedience irritates them, authority fatigues them. Some employ the best-devised artifices to bind another's will to theirs; others use ten times more skill in escaping an order than it would have required intelligence to have obeyed it. Another would obey a man passively, though it would enslave a woman, highly intelligent, but without authority.

"Miss——," says M. Séguin, "at eight years old was intrusted to me; she had subjected all her family to her orders. Though an Idiot and mute, she saw at once that her relatives were changed, and she obeyed. A year afterwards her mother visited her, and she began tormenting her, and disobeying me in her presence. I made the mother retire, so as to see unobserved the implicit obedience of the child to myself. Here the cure was not complete. Subsequently she became obedient to all the family."

An Idiot, as well as children generally, perceives sooner than an adult the degree of authority to which they must yield, or which they can overcome: they do not struggle in vain, but know even by a gesture the will that can overcome

them. In obedience to a well-regulated command, their physical health depends: the child badly governed, sometimes with feebleness, at other times with force, or with indulgence, does not fear such versatile authority. He infringes, or eludes orders—becomes cunning, irritable and violent, and these mental irregularities bring indigestion, interrupted sleep, and nervous disorders.

That the Idiot should obey, his teacher must know how to command, and be able to apply all means of authority, from the most rigorous to the most insinuating. Obedience is not a simple affair; a child who, for fifteen years, has only learned to obey his masters who are with him, has often only learned to be disobedient the rest of his life. There are degrees to which he must be gradually submitted:—1. Obedience to his masters, when present. 2. Obedience to orders which may be immediately enforced by the presence of his master. 3. Obedience to an order, in the absence of his teacher, which leads to obedience to a moral principle assented to by the reason; or, in genuine English, obedience to a sense of duty. And we thank God heartily that we have in England, in daily and in hourly use, a term which does not occur in the whole writings of M. Séguin, but which foreigners are forced to admit is the strong characteristic of the British character,—*a sense of duty.*

At first, *simple* obedience must be enforced. The Idiot, must be made to look, to touch, to act, to perceive, to compare, at the will of his teacher. He must be at first passive: his progress, and the use of his own free will, is the fruit at last. For the end of education is not passive obedience, but liberty; and to be free, there must be a will. *Liberty* and *will* are words only to be spoken by those who comprehend *obedience* and *authority*. No one can command but he who has learned to obey. The *will*, regulated by the intellect and the moral sense, is the secret of success in men of cha-

racter. *This* will is the result of education. The Idiot is destitute of it. *His* will is governed by his instincts, and by his inertness. Indulge his appetites and let him alone, and he is content. But moral education consists in conquering these appetites, by breaking up his habits, and in subduing his indolence by varied and incessant activity. The instinctive and negative direction of the will having been subdued, the will must be morally trained by imitation, by authority, and by compression; it grows morally by the *resistance* given by a good education to the first instincts.

The Master.—Every one cannot teach Idiots; the teacher must have a will, he must have ability to command. This is by no means in proportion to the intellectual power: the intellect and will are distinct faculties, and this is an important principle in M. Séguin's method. Often the labours of the study seem to deprive a man of the personal power of influencing others. A teacher should have no physical defects; above all moral qualities he should be *calm*, whether exercising firmness, energetic decision, gentleness or insinuation: under all his aspects, and in all moods, *calm*. Calm in command, calm at table, calm at play; of an unchangeable serenity of mind. If he has never had an occasion to exercise that self-control which produces this calm, no better opportunity of self-conquest than the education of an Idiot can be afforded; for no other occupation demands more patience, more observation, more concentrated action, more calmness: but a man capable of dedicating his youth to the education of an Idiot is found with difficulty, and one who gives his life to the work must daily call to mind the sacred words,—"the good shepherd gives his life for his sheep."

But how is the Idiot to be ruled? If he be capable of foresight, he has been apprised of the new hands into which he is to be placed, and looks forward with some anxiety, so that the first interview is well calculated to impress him; but,

for this purpose, the master should act as a master, not as an ordinary visitor—his address frank, his language and gesture plain, and his manner so decided that at first he is remarked, listened to, regarded, and recognised. If the first impression succeeds, and has not been weakened by the comments of relatives and servants, the master has gained, and will keep, the magisterial position necessary to his success; but he must not think that time will increase his authority; he who looks to time has had little experience either of men or of Idiots. If he be really the master, he may in time relax his authority, as the pupil's own will grows, and is more regulated; but if he has not gained the ascendancy, the child does not lose his time, but hour by hour, day by day, will steal from his master some concession, surprise him in some weakness, will profit by the lassitude of one day and the indisposition of another, to command him, in his manner—that is, negatively, in doing, or not doing, whatever suits his disordered instincts. The master, therefore, must at once take up a decided position, raising his authority above that of the family, which has been weakened by daily concessions to a delicate, suffering, or ungovernable child. The weakness of parents must be pitied, perhaps, rather than blamed; but the master must not for a moment hesitate as to how he is to act. If he cannot be master, he can do nothing.

The Pupil.—This necessity of commanding the Idiot depends on his want of moral will. Accustomed to do nothing, he will do nothing; accustomed to manage his parents, he will attempt to manage his master, by force or address, sometimes by smiling and looking at him with that scrutinising eye which sees into dispositions, sometimes by anger, or by crying, biting, rolling on the ground, or escaping from any constraint—from the energetic, "No! No!" incessantly repeated, to the most subtle pretences of fatigue or suffering. Thus the master has often to be exposed to all the various

batteries of negation; he must expose to the family the nature of this resistance, for its energy proves the necessity of control, and that a will is present, but not exerted in the right direction. The struggle between the two wills, the master's and the pupil's, may be long or short, ending by the conquest of one. The pupil will conquer, if the master has not the ability to command, and especially if he have not calmness; or if the parents take the child's part against the master.

Immediate Command; or that of the master when present. —Resistance varies, and rules must be modified: those given suppose the maximum. To make an Idiot will, it is necessary first to will for him: to will that he should will; the command given in the most imperative manner, with the words supported by gesture and look. If the master's voice be dull and insonorous, if his articulation be vicious, his words dissonant, nasal, long, and monotonous, he labours under great disadvantages; he should unite the two qualities of a flexible voice and a perfect articulation; his commands should be in short, sonorous, and decisive sentences: in the explanatory part the expressions may be slow, detached, every syllable expressing its meaning, aided by gesture and look. All the notes of intonation and articulation should be contributed, from the short, dry command, to the most sympathetic and fascinating intonations.

Gesture.—It is a constant excitement to imitation and activity. To attain a facility, the master should practise privately with another to express by signs only what he wishes; the master should also do himself what he wishes the Idiot to do. The general rules are, that gestures to enforce stillness and attention are made by moving the hand from above downwards, and from without inwards; those from below upwards, and from within outwards, are used to excite activity. Again, the movements of the hand and arm should

be in a straight and rapid line in imperious commands; and in a curved line, produced by a slow and undulating movement, in explanatory commands.

Expression.—The eye, in fixing attention, becomes a powerful instrument; the Idiot should feel that it is always on him, and that it expresses better than words whether his master is satisfied or not; it should command him at first, and afterwards guide him, animate his activities, and sustain his exertions: for this purpose, the master should not only have a good eye, but should have studiously practised its use. As his gestures and words should be more decisive than ordinary, so also should his expressions: he is not to stare and alarm by making faces, but simply to express by his eye and features what he himself feels at the sight of a child when obedient or disobedient, attentive or inattentive, patient or angry, and to make their expressions so marked that the child cannot mistake his meaning. For this purpose:—1. The physiognomy should be naturally moveable, expressive, and inclined to reflect the feelings. 2. It should always be in harmony with the mind. 3. The expression of satisfaction should neither be long, lively, nor noisy, so as to interrupt employment, especially if the Idiot be vain. 4. The expression should be confined to the thing in hand, and never be interrupted by what is foreign to the immediate purpose.

Coercion.—No other means but words, gestures, and looks, should be employed. All children are born with a spirit of resistance; children are all of the opposition; *No* precedes *Yes* by many months. This instinct of negation is most marked in Idiots, and when joined to their extreme laziness, and confirmed into habit, by finding it overcomes the reasonable wishes of the family, it must not be expected that the master can at once overcome it. No! he will be opposed in every way; but let him will with patience and perseverance, and the child will obey him. If, however, he has a pupil who

has this habit of negation, and has ruled his parents, the master should never begin with an order which can be refused him. He must begin by negative orders chiefly; as, not to go there,—not to touch that,—or not to eat this; and by positive orders of which he can compel the execution; and afterwards proceed to those which demand a concurrence of the child's will. The transition requires an adaptation to circumstances, which makes it a scientific art in the hands of a man gifted with that serenity of mind and charity of heart necessary to success.

In cases of extreme resistance, the master must put himself in immediate proximity with the pupil. For instance, in commanding him to raise his dumb-bells, he only raises that arm next to his master; he must, therefore, place himself before him, beginning and continuing the action for him, and thus acting immediately by word, look, and act, on every part under command: this is hard and painful for both, especially for the master, but it is not necessary that both should be incessantly together. A milder authority, a half will, in the intermediate time, may carry out the plans; a woman attendant, who knows how to resist the perverse will of the Idiot, without completely understanding how to enforce her own, is sufficient. The imperative command is necessary for each new step, but the child would repeat better the new lesson under a less rigid disciplinarian: the master passes from this imperative mood to a milder form or *mediate* command.

From subordinating the Idiot's will to his own, the master next induces or excites him to act for himself. The favourable moment of transition must be watched and seized, it cannot be hastened; it is infallibly indicated by two signs, usually simultaneous—the absence of all resistance to authority, and some spontaneous wish for an active and intelligent occupation. An instance is given of an Idiot, who would do nothing but keep in incessant motion; the usual steps of compelling him to be still, and to use certain exercises, were

gone through; one day he seized a crossbow, which had been used to direct his eye, and shot the arrow through the eye of one of his ancestors in his sculptured frame. His governess was in despair. M. Séguin was enchanted. He procured painted lithographs of heads, stuck them along the garden wall, placed the crossbow at hand; the Idiot seized it, discharged it at one of the figures, was encouraged, did it again, and subsequently the promise to repeat the play, kept up his attention and patience in his exercises.

After the first spontaneous act of an intelligent kind, the immediate imperative authority should be gradually discontinued, and the Idiot should be induced and excited to obey, through the means of his tastes, preferences, ideas, and feelings, which the master understands; gradually spiritualising him; commanding him more by words than gestures—more by the sense of words than by the sound of the voice—more and more by hopes, reasons, and feelings. This is a very gradual process. It begins by commanding the Idiot to do a thing which he has done well, by an imperative order, in a less imperative tone; diminishing, little by little, the rigour of the voice, the precision and decision of articulation, gesture, and expression, until it is relaxed to the ordinary usages of society; but still the pupil must always feel that the old master can reappear—he must fear the claws beneath the velvet paw.

Stimulants of the tastes and desires are numerous. The Idiot loves his parents, and desires to see them; he likes the country, and desires to walk; he likes flowers, cakes, pictures: all these may be promised as rewards. His antipathies may be used also as preventives of disobedience and idleness; but, to be efficacious, these promises must be facts—something positive and real. He should see or touch the object desired or feared; gradually the conditions should be adjourned, and thus his desires spiritualised by putting their satisfaction at a distance.

Games hold a high place in this education. M. Séguin mixes with his pupils as their play-fellow, though he imperceptibly directs the games. A game is the most spontaneous act of infancy: it is more, it is the force and voluntary accomplishment of a bodily and mental function; an Idiot who can play, almost deserves another name. The choice of games lies with children, their variation and graduation with the master, who should take care that the game does not become a mere routine, but that there should be always something to learn; at first the games which please his tastes, afterwards those most useful. Thus, when there is inability to direct the eye, the bow and arrow; for difficulty in motions of the hand, or involuntary contractions, the battledore; for unsteady gait, the wheelbarrow, &c.

Negative Command, or that which is not expressed in words, but depends on such arrangements as shall lead the Idiot to think and act for himself.—The master has only to watch quietly and patiently, after making his plans. Has at first forced the Idiot to act, next has assisted him; now he places him in such circumstances as to force him to exercise his attention, comparison, judgment, reflection, and moral will. He has arrived at that point in his education, when he can execute all voluntary movements; he can read and write; whatever his master wills energetically, he can do; but still he is an Idiot, ἰδιος, *solitarius*, alone! He cannot act on persons or things by his own free will; he cannot spontaneously will; before acting on persons he must begin on things, and as the prehension of food is one of the first voluntary acts, the master may begin to exercise the will with this. The cloth is laid; you sit down, so does he, but the dish is wanting; you take no notice; he calls the servant: "Where are the chops?"—You wait, he goes to find the dish. At first it is placed on the sideboard, where he can also smell it; another day in the passage which he has passed through;

finally in the kitchen: the same with bread, wine, &c. Next, the dish is there, but no plate, no fork, no spoon, and he is compelled, in the same quiet way, to exert his own thought, and seek them. Thus, if his health permits, a meal may last for hours, but the time is not misspent, if he learn to think. At a later period, he must have nothing for dinner which he has not ordered in the morning, or purchased himself beforehand. Dress is another stimulus to thought, especially as regards cleanliness; he must not take a walk, unless he has ordered the laundress to send home his clean linen.

To establish his relations with persons, he must have some want or wish that they can satisfy. When, therefore, he goes to find an object, a third person must detain it, and exchange it for some other object which the Idiot can comprehend, and which is not injurious. The simplest relations with others depend on the sentiments of property and of resistance; the inert, inoffensive Idiot, incapable of defending himself, should be encouraged by innocent struggles, which develope his strength, and excite his confidence and courage. With regard to property, they should be taught that some things are common to all, as water; some personal, as their clothes; some are both, as playthings; but as all have their equivalent in money, they should be taught its use among themselves; this will reveal indifference, prodigality, theft, and avarice, which should be corrected in time. The essential point is, that the Idiot should cease to be isolated, that by his wants, tastes, habits, attractions, repulsions, he should establish voluntarily, the most numerous relations possible with others.

The pupil acted, perceived, and thought, for some time, but he willed nothing spontaneously: he was motionless, from a languor of the soul. Now his spontaneous will has been restored to him, and he has gained the energy that distinguishes man.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—We have now shewn, that Idiots have been made good, active, intelligent, and, to a certain point, useful to their relatives and to society; and it is impossible to say, *à priori*, what cases are incurable. The trial must first be made; neither the smallness of the head, nor the hydrocephalic enlargement, are signs on which any opinion, as to the result, can be formed. The most unpromising cases are those attended with general paralysis, or with hemiplegia, chorea, and epilepsy. But it is only after the failure of assiduous means that even these cases can be pronounced incurable; for proper treatment often meliorates or removes these complications, and thus benefits the diseased. Indeed, though epilepsy be accompanied with deformity of the cranium, and with imbecility of mind, it should not be considered incurable by the physician until an endeavour be made to correct in the patient every function which is disordered, and the whole armoury of the practitioner be exhausted.

With the view to establish a college for the Idiots of the Midland Counties, we obtained the co-operation of a few of the leading gentlemen of Manchester, Sheffield, and Leeds. To save expense, we offered to give our services for eighteen months to the undertaking, on the condition that we might then retire to resume other important duties. We received a commission from one of the Manchester Common Council to collect subscriptions; but we soon found this incompatible with our feelings. We chose, therefore, rather to charge ourselves with the preliminary expenses of establishing an initiatory college till a committee was organised, than undertake the arduous duty of collecting subscriptions. After taking suitable premises near Sheffield, as central for the object in view, we visited Leeds in the summer of 1852, to obtain the co-operation of the most influential of that town with gentlemen of Manchester and Sheffield; and at a private meeting

of gentlemen in Leeds, at which Mr. Roebuck was present, the prospectus was examined, and the case of Idiots discussed, when we were recommended to suspend our labours—that the Idiot had higher claims than private inefficient assistance—that we were to make out our report, and give it to Mr. Roebuck, who would introduce it to the attention of Government. We soon after broke up our establishment and came to London to fulfil our mission, but found the member for Sheffield incapacitated for attending to his Parliamentary duties. We waited a long time for his convalescence; and during this period of suspense, the condition of the Idiot engrossed the whole of our time and attention; and since then, we have not only embodied all the original facts contained in our former Report, but have added the appliances to be used for the Idiot's recovery. The whole, though now appearing in a condensed, yet we trust will be found in a comprehensive and satisfactory form; such as it is, we publish it on our own responsibility of making it useful for those we anxiously desire to see benefited, and request, my Lords and Gentlemen, that you now look *alone* to the Report and appliances to be used for the benefit of the Idiots; for to these we call attention, and not to ourselves. If we express our conviction of the success of the plan now placed before you, let it be received, no matter who has propounded the means to be employed, or from whence the plan has come. A jewel is a jewel, wherever it is found.

My Lords and Gentlemen, the question of educating Idiots has now been brought to the test, and it has been found practicable.

There are upwards of nineteen thousand Idiots in Great Britain; a large proportion of whom, as experience has proved, only demand the Government support for proper training, to enable them to become useful members of society. Many have been trained to make all sorts of wearing apparel and fancy work; others have been taught to read, write, draw, &c.

At the Institutions under the Governments of other countries, it has been found that intellects, which seemed extinct, were really only dormant, and, generally speaking, required only time and care to stimulate and bring them out. Dr. Guggenbühl, a physician of eminence, in speaking of the success that has attended the Institution in Switzerland, mentions the case of a child of seven years of age, a complete Idiot, who was in a few years enabled to speak two languages, and was afterwards trained for a schoolmaster.

If you, my Lords and Gentlemen, will it, the Idiot of this country need be no longer so,—his unhealthy frame,—the abnormal condition of his physical functions,—his deficiency of nervous stimulus, may all be meliorated, if not cured;—his imperfect perception, vacant thoughts, frivolous fancies, and eccentric bearing, are all capable of melioration;—in fine, the imperfect material which envelopes his soul, may be greatly removed, and the folly, weakness, obtuseness, or mental inability, may be purified.

If, therefore, in America, in Wurtemberg, in Prussia, in Switzerland, in France, the Idiot finds in the Government a refuge and a cure, why not in England?

If improvement prove hopeless in some few cases, deterioration in others is stopped,—comfort succeeds degradation, and repulsiveness becomes changed into decency.

Looking at home, we see what the Independent Dissenters did at Park House, Highgate, and at Colchester, previous to their removal to Red-Hill, near Reigate: there Idiots were taught to read, write, and to cast accounts; to learn grammar, geography, drawing, basket-making, shoe-making, tailoring, dancing, drilling, gymnastics, sewing, knitting, and domestic work. Of two hundred and fifty-six patients, ninety-eight could read and spell, eighty-six could write, twenty-five could draw, twenty work in the garden, forty-four sewed, knitted, and plaited, six were carpenters, twenty could dance, seventy learned by objects, eighteen worked from dictation, and learned

geography and mental arithmetic, one hundred and twenty-one were drilled, thirty-nine had speaking lessons, one hundred and forty-nine attended family prayers, and one hundred and four public worship!!!

Too much praise cannot be given to the Committee of the Red-Hill Asylum, for their exertions in behalf of the poor Idiot. The Committee being exclusively of Dissenters, have all the honour to themselves. They have now a suitable building, on a large scale, to receive an increased number of Idiots; yet, with all their humane efforts, they cannot reckon on ever being able to provide for the nineteenth part of the unfortunate outcasts of society which are in this country.

If the zealous exertions, then, of a sectarian body have been able to stir up the Christian feeling of other denominations to assist in this labour of love by private charity, to achieve for a few hundred helpless Idiots such happy results, what may not be expected by you, my Lords and Gentlemen, in inducing the Government to take under its charge and guardianship the remaining eighteen thousand neglected, unreclaimed, of our fellow creatures?

Above all, let the professing Christian pause before he refuses to assist this national cause in behalf of the helpless Idiot. If in the exercise of faith, hope, and charity, the greatest of these be charity, how far the Creator has permitted upwards of nineteen thousand Idiots among us for the trial and exercise of our professional Christian principle—our love towards His children of our common humanity—we know not; but we do know His declaration when He himself dwelt amongst us, "He that giveth but a cup of cold water to the least of these my brethren, shall not lose his reward."

But in addressing a Government, my Lords and Gentlemen, held up to view as an exemplar to all nations of the earth, shall a rule of gone-by days be of avail—that the

British Government leaves the voluntary principle of benevolence to be carried out by the people exclusively in all her charities? This cannot, in the nineteenth century, be deemed a plea by a Christian Government to withhold the means of training and educating the poor helpless Idiot! If it be a rule in Great Britain, the sooner it be abrogated the better, that it may no longer tarnish her honour, as an anomaly in the eyes of Europe. But happily, my Lords and Gentlemen, for this country, if it be a rule, it is not without a powerful and significant exception.

The Privy Council of Great Britain have long performed an act of powerful benevolence, by granting to the Elementary Schools of Scotland, on an average for the last twelve years, upwards of TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS PER ANNUM. The sum they voted, also, for National Education in Ireland, for the year ending in March of last year, was ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-TWO THOUSAND POUNDS; and the sum voted for Public Education in England for the same year was TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY THOUSAND POUNDS.

Here, collectively, is nearly HALF A MILLION STERLING, given in one year for training and educating the sound and healthy of Scotland, Ireland, and England, while the weak and the helpless have hitherto been passed by! Now, my Lords and Gentlemen, a very small portion of this annual grant, added to the sum now received by the Lunatic Asylums from the county rates, would train and educate all the poor Idiots of this country,—would meliorate their condition, and place them, as human beings, in a condition the Creator designed—on the platform of humanity, as brothers and sisters of our own; and, not allow the natures of our fellow-creatures to remain so wretchedly debased as to be shunned, spurned, and neglected with a cruelty not exercised towards the most common beasts. You cannot, my Lords and Gentlemen, nor will you, fail to ask at least a small

boon from this annual grant for the object which we so imperfectly advocate.

Let it be remembered also, my Lords and Gentlemen, that the Idiot has equally as great a claim on the Government to be supported separately, in an establishment suitable for his melioration and recovery, from the county-rates, as the Lunatic. If he be now placed in a lunatic asylum, it is merely with a view to place him out of danger to himself and to others, without any means used for his melioration or restoration.

You have now seen, my Lords and Gentlemen, that the ground has been broken up ; difficulties have been surmounted, and future progress should now be marked by your support,—by striking deeply at the root of the evil and cause of Idiotcy —diseased or imperfect organization—the healthy tone of which can be restored or improved ;—to fathom the causes of such a melancholy canker in our social system, and if possible to destroy it ;—to elevate in such a case, as far as possible, every one bearing the human face, and found fitted, by experiment, for human susceptibility,—to make them assume their proper position in the great human family,—to lead them to respect themselves,—to become intelligent,—to be capable of enjoyment ;—to know, at least, that every fire-side can find its own shape of endearment, and every heart its own inward sunship, is our duty towards these banished and forlorn children of our common humanity.

Under your protection, my Lords and Gentlemen, experienced and progressive methods of training and instruction can be adopted ; classifications and systematic arrangements of class-rooms, workshops, recreation grounds, dormitories, nursery, infirmary, &c., can be made ; talent of the first order can be brought into full activity ; kindred institutions can assist and stimulate each other, by unwearied exertion of philanthropy, to Christian rivalry. "Strive to excel," says an inspired Apostle. We must be up and doing ; active and dili-

gent, ready to embrace and to adopt every plan which others have proved useful and successful for the benefit of the poor Idiot.

Toil is onward—use it
With a forward aim!
Toil is heavenly—choose it;
And its war fare claim.

'Tis a period of progression,
'Tis an age of growing mind;
'Tis a time when mighty impulse
Heaves the breast of human kind.

Indeed, it is difficult to perceive upon what ground any objection can be urged not to follow the noble example of America, and not allow her to outstrip the parent country in such benevolence. This country recognizes the right of all to an education. She provides it for her ordinary children in the common schools, and shall the Idiots, my Lords and Gentlemen, be excluded from participation in the boon, which they, more than all others, need, because they are the most unfortunate and the most helpless? Surely not; but, on the contrary, their claim should be considered all the stronger by every friend of humanity in Great Britain, because they have not the wit to urge, nor the power to enforce it. Hitherto, to have neglected, as a nation, so large a portion of our helpless fellow-beings, in whose minds the Divine voice has an utterance as well as in our own, (we had almost said, Christian men and philanthropists must have slumbered deep and long,) society must have been hardened into a callousness as criminal as it is indifferent; and human responsibilities and ties must have been wantonly and wickedly trampled underfoot.

If we have hitherto failed in our endeavour to urge the claims of the Idiot, and to show the necessity, my Lords and Gentlemen, of Government influence being exercised in behalf of the Idiot, permit us to call your attention to a case at once conclusive upon this important question, which appeared in all the leading journals of April of last year:—

"EXTRAORDINARY POOR-LAW CASE AT MARLBOROUGH-STREET POLICE-COURT.—Titus Denwell, a miserable looking man, with two idiot children, one about six, the other eight years of age, begged to know if anything could be done to relieve him of one of his afflicted children without the necessity of his becoming a pauper himself, and remaining a permanent burden on the ratepayers, as he was able to maintain himself and his other child by his trade of tailor. The two children were idiots from their birth. The elder had recently manifested such a tendency to mischievous acts, that nearly all his time was occupied in watching the child. This of course prevented him from doing work enough as a tailor to keep himself and children. He had made his case known to the authorities of St. Giles's, in which parish he had a legal settlement, and had proposed that the parish should take the elder child, he paying, when his circumstances admitted, something towards its support. He represented that the child had attempted to set the place on fire, and that it was continually attempting to wreak its idiot malice on its younger brother. The parish authorities referred him to the surgeon, who refused to declare the child insane, and his request was refused. He addressed a letter to the Board of Guardians, setting forth all the circumstances of his lamentable case. The reply of the Board was, that if his elder child was received into the workhouse, he and his other child must enter the workhouse also. Mr. Hardwick thought it was not reasonable to suppose that the Board of Guardians could have come to what appeared to be such an absurd decision, with a full knowledge of the facts, and therefore wrote a note to the Relieving Overseer, requesting him to call at the Court, and give some explanation of the matter. On a subsequent day, while the man and his two children were at the Court waiting for the Overseer, the whole place was kept in confusion by the howlings and acts of the elder child, who exhibited the most positive signs of active and dangerous lunacy.—Mr. Riley, the Relieving Overseer, admitted that the Board had refused to receive the elder child unless the father also became an inmate of the workhouse. Their medical man had pronounced the child not insane. The Board, after hearing their medical man's opinion, ordered a minute to be made to the effect that the applicant must come into the workhouse.—Mr. Hardwick: A decision more remote from common humanity and common sense it is utterly impossible to conceive. What right have the Board to say this man shall be shut up in a workhouse because he has the misfortune to have an afflicted child, whose dangerous lunacy requires proper restraint and treatment, and not workhouse discipline? I will draw up a statement of the whole of the circum-

stances and transmit it to Mr. Baines, the Chief Poor-Law Commissioner, for his opinion.—The Overseer said he would make another representation to the Board, and let the applicant know the result. Benwell came to the Court to state, that the parish authorities of St. Giles's had sent for him to say that his child would be placed in a Lunatic Asylum, and that he would not be required to go into the workhouse with his other child. He begged to return his grateful thanks for the effectual interposition in his case.—Mr. Hardwick ordered five shillings to be given to the applicant from the poor-box."

What more truly, my Lords and Gentlemen, demands our sympathy, as appealing to the kindliest impulses of our nature, than the helpless and neglected Idiot? And shall England be the last of the nations to regard a brother or a sister thus afflicted, without seeking to aid their recovery? But, finally,—

Permit us, my Lords and Gentlemen, to offer a few closing remarks, rather in the spirit of inquiry than recommendation.

What is the exact state of the law concerning Idiots, and by what means may an amendment of the law be made, so as to secure their separate but safe custody and treatment, without infringing on those provisions which the law has made in their behalf?

The records of our Courts of Commission for Inquiry into the State of the Insane appear to labour under two disadvantages.

First,—That the Idiot and the Lunatic are confounded with each other, though medical evidence of a recent date, founded on physical investigation, laboriously and minutely pursued, tends to prove, that there is a marked distinction between the two cases. This error appears to arise from the fact which governs the law of the case, that both are equally incapable of taking the management of their own property, whether real or personal; and that, therefore, such property is placed under the custody of the Lord Chancellor, and the incompetent individual is placed in a Lunatic Asylum.

This proceeding, sanctioned as it must be, by the formal certificate of two medical men, who have examined the case, and the additional examination before the Commissioners of the Lunatic or Idiot himself, is sufficient evidence to give validity to the decision of the Court.

Secondly,—This legal form of inquiry is confined to those persons who have a considerable property at stake, which it is determined, very properly, to place in the custody and under the control of the Lord Chancellor, who is in law the guardian of all wealthy Lunatics and Idiots, and is responsible to their representatives for its just appropriation and disposal.

But, my Lords and Gentlemen, though the rich are thus protected, the poor Idiots, who have no property to dispose of, are brought before a Justice of the Peace, and on the certificate of two medical men, at once consigned to the Lunatic Asylum, and if paupers, are supported at the expense of the parish to which they belong.

Now, my Lords and Gentlemen, both these evils cannot be redressed without your interference for the introduction of a clause into the Lunacy Act of Parliament, embracing,—*First*, The protection and custody of the poor as well as the rich by the interference of judicial authority;—and *Secondly*, To enact, and thereby enforce, the separation of Idiots from Lunatics, and the erection and maintenance of separate Asylums for their reception, to train, educate, and restore them useful members to the country.

A Committee appointed by you, my Lords and Gentlemen, will consult the interests of the Idiot. The Commissioners of Lunacy can furnish a Report of the number of Idiots that are in each County Lunatic Asylum, where they are so much in the way, as to cause complaints to be made at the Office of the Commissioners, in Spring Gardens; and a suitable building can be easily provided in each County for the comfort,

melioration, training, and educating of these poor neglected forlorn outcasts.

We gave millions for the emancipation of the slaves of our Colonies, and surely we cannot withhold the small boon necessary to rescue our native brethren from worse than slavish bondage, to the exercise of reason and to a state of usefulness; and thereby show our gratitude, as a nation, to that watchful Providence over the destinies of our country, for restoring to us, after all our perils and sufferings, the blessings of peace.

Accept, My Lords and Gentlemen,

The assurance of my Respect,

JAMES ABBOTT, M.A.

"The Hill," Laverstock,
Salisbury, Wilts.

Printed by C. F. Hodgson, 1 Gough Square, Fleet Street, London.