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Contributors

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Royal College of Surgeons of England

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CONTRIBUTIONS
TO
SOCIAL PATHOLOGY.

SECTIONS I. & II.

The Blind and the Deaf and Dumb

BY

JOHN BIRD (BLIND),

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS, ENGLAND.



SECOND EDITION.

"Haud ignara mali miseris succurrere disco."—ÆNEID.

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DE

BIENFAISANCE.

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INTRODUCTION.

SIXTEEN years of complete blindness, preceded by almost three years of gradual loss of sight, has, as a natural consequence of the present little understood condition of the blind, excluded me from the society of my equals of my own age and time, and has not only rendered, but has kept me in too great ignorance of passing events. This is still further aggravated by the jealousies and antagonisms of the advocates of several systems, or partial steps of a system, dogmatising and almost legislating for the four-sensed, whom they have in their power, in the full vigour of too little opposed five-sensed routine, partiality, and prejudice. For years I have waited in the hope that some steps would be taken by a body capable of giving to this subject due consideration, and whose judgment would be likely to have some weight, and exert a beneficial influence on the public mind; and it was not till yesterday, Tuesday, June the 10th, that I heard from some of the members of the Congrès International de Bienfaisance, assembled

at Burlington House, that papers were to be read to-morrow (Thursday), and on Friday next, on these very important and far too little understood subjects.

I have therefore determined to reprint, if possible, in time for distribution, some of those papers I have for years been in the habit of distributing, and which have been so much approved of and so welcomed by the best judges, "The Blind and the Deaf and Dumb themselves," as well as extracts from my Essay and other papers I have written.

Considering the haste in which these contributions are selected and prepared, and that I have to contend with that great embarrassment which the late Mr. Isaac D'Israeli, when blind, so truthfully described when alluding to his own greatest difficulty in composition, *that dependence on the eye and the hand of another to trace the thought ere it vanish in the thinking*, and to which may be added, *and retrace the written line that continuity may be sustained*,—considering these impediments, I trust that inaccuracies, either of style or of printing, will be accounted for, as, in order not to lose time, it has been decided that they should be printed off without even the correction of the proof.

In the spring of 1846, when blindness was

complete, and just as I was on the point of leaving England on a voyage to Bombay as the surgeon of a merchantman, by the kindness of a friend my name was placed on the list of pensioners of the charitable fund bequeathed by the late Mr. Charles Day, once of the well-known firm of Day and Martin, the blacking-makers, of Holborn, who at the same time informed me that on my return I should be elected to fill the vacancy caused by the dismissal of a blind clergyman from the benefits of the charity. This induced me to inquire into the history of his case; and, whilst others were shocked and horrified, I did my duty as a medical man, and endeavoured to discover the source and causes which led to this mental and moral deterioration. Those who censured him, perhaps, did not reflect on all the blessings they enjoyed of those conditions which were necessary to mental health, whilst he, with his daughter, were left to years of isolation. Deprived of mental nutriment and without perception, that shuttle of the mind which is ever carrying the thread to be interwoven into that warp for thought and varied adjustment under the guidance of conscience, laid down in the mind from the first by the design and will of the Creator, he had nothing to compare, nothing on which to form a judgment or to

decide. Without opportunity he had no responsibility, and the higher powers of the mind dwindled for the want of that exercise which is necessary to sustain and increase their vigour; and the inevitable consequence was, that the animal instincts alone gained the ascendancy, and thus both were ruined.

“ Aliquid agere semper appetit animus.”

And if motive and opportunity be not supplied to the intellectual and higher powers of the mind, not only to the four-sensed, but to the five-sensed, the same results will too often follow.

During a twelve-month's absence, the greater part at sea, I had much time for reflection, and having, two years before, been compelled by approaching blindness to give up a very good opportunity of obtaining the appointment of one of the resident surgeons at Hanwell Lunatic Asylum, for which I was well recommended by my *then* friends, the medical staff and Professors of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, I was naturally led to reflect on my future doom by inquiring into what had been the fate of others who had preceded me, and therefore were better experienced in the privations and sufferings of blindness. This inquiry was very

difficult and laborious, interrupted and fragmentary, because I was compelled to pursue it in silence, and, I may almost say, unsuspected, solely on account of the erroneous, mischievous, and perverted views taken, not only by my friends, but even by my professional brethren, by whom I had been before respected, and whom I had often been in the habit of meeting in daily intercourse and in frequent consultation. Believing that there was nothing to be done but joke, banter, and delusion, for the purpose of effecting that very extraordinary and unintelligible process "*of taking a blind man out of himself,*" all my endeavours after earnest inquiry and serious reflection were regarded as morbid, hypochondriacal, dwelling too much on my own calamity, deficient in resignation, and ultimately as insanity itself. If I had only had the uneducated to deal with, I could have stood my ground; but when, without a single exception, all my medical brethren, until it was too late, gave me this unwritten certificate, on which the less educated public acted with full confidence, I found it was impossible to bear up with any hope of success, or even chance of relief. The vulgar errors of the uneducated are a serious evil to contend with; but the erroneous dogmas of the educated, the esteemed, and the influential, who, un-

fortunately, happen to be educated only in some other branches of science, and not at all, perhaps, in this one, in which they unhesitatingly rush in and dogmatise—this is a far greater evil. In the autumn of 1847, just after my return from my voyage to Bombay, avoiding all other introductions, fearing lest the aforesaid certificate of monomania should accompany them, I called on the Rev. Dr. Hoppus, the Professor of Mental Philosophy at the University College, and stated to him the condition of my circumstances, the adversity of my family, my own blindness, and consequent loss of the means and opportunities of supporting myself. With these introductions, I asked for a gratuitous admission to his course of lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind. I have often paid for lectures, and have been correspondingly welcomed and remembered, but never in a more manly, kind, and Christian spirit than by Dr. Hoppus, then and in all the other many communications I have had with him since. Constant attendance on these lectures not only supplied me with the means and opportunities of tranquillising my mind, but of gaining that insight into my own condition which enabled me to reflect and to reason out those principles on which I have based my views for ameliorating the condition

of those whose mental powers are deteriorated, because impoverished, imprisoned, and unapplied, in consequence of the obstructions opposed by four-sensed existence. As I continued my inquiries, I very soon perceived that the cause of the Blind was too much in the hands of those who were insufficiently educated for this very important duty. In fact, that it was treated too much by the dilettanti and amateurs as a question of sentimentalism, or of fancy charity, whilst hundreds, if not thousands, of manly and womanly minds were writhing under those privations and sufferings which were never likely to be understood or explained in their lifetime; and too often has it been made a question of sectarian ascendancy, or of chapel interest, instead of its being pursued as a question of science and of duty, irrespective of all selfish considerations, but of universal application to every home and every church, to every district, county, and country. In 1851 I visited Paris and Lille, Bruges and Brussels, for the purpose of gaining information, but more especially of visiting the Abbé Carton, of Bruges, who in the year 1836 had been sent as a commissioner by the Belgian Government into England, to inquire into the state of the Blind in this country, and the insti-

tutions provided for them. His report on the state of our Blind was printed and presented to the Belgian Government, but I have never heard of its being translated, asked for, or even known in this country, with the exception of the copy he kindly gave to me almost eleven years since. I explained to him my views, and showed him the outline of my scheme, and asked his opinion. He replied, "Your views are good; in fact, the best I have ever seen. Your education as a medical man, and your power of describing that evidence from experience, which we who have sight can never attain, fits you for the task; but I tell you plainly, you will never succeed. I have visited your country, and I know your countrymen and their unfeeling indifference to the subject. Your institutions are very rich in wealth, but there is still great room for improvement in their management." I myself, and those connected with me, have had too much and very painful reasons for knowing too well the truth of these remarks, and every intelligent blind man, not hopelessly fettered by dependence on some system or institution, will also acknowledge them to be nothing but the truth. As I brought from Paris for Miss Bessie Gilbert, the blind daughter of the Bishop of Chichester, some

Sir

will you give us the pleasure of seeing you tomorrow evening at half past seven if convenient to your self and then you can bring the sketch of your plan with you to which I shall gladly listen though I feel I know but little of the subject

I remain yours truly
Bessie Gilbert

43 Queen Anne Street
Friday Evening.

tutions provided for them. His report on the state of our Blind was printed and presented to the Belgian Government but I have never heard of it. It is well known in Belgium. I have the copy before me. It is many years since I saw it. It showed how much he asked his country for good; in the education of the blind of description of which we have heard from you for the last few years. It will never be forgotten and I know that the same indifference is not to be seen in the great room of the Government." I have had the pleasure of knowing that every intelligent and free institution in the world is doing nothing but what is best for the blind of Paris for the daughter of the Bishop of Chichester, some

volumes printed in relief type, this gave me an introduction to that family. For about two years I was in the habit of frequently visiting there, and of always sending or communicating, as soon as I acquired it, all information or improvements relative to the Blind, especially some observations on the neglected condition of the Blind, which I had first printed in the spring of 1853. As I had noticed in that publication my intention of printing a more perfect scheme, I received a special invitation in the autumn of that year from Miss Bessie Gilbert, inviting me to "bring the sketch of my plan," to which, she wrote, "*she would gladly listen, as she felt she knew but little of the subject.*" I left my manuscript, the result of all my labours, and on which my future hopes depended, with her family for some time; and on my next visit Mrs. Bowles, her eldest sister, said how glad she was to see me alone, and thanked me for the scheme, "*for it is just what they wanted,*" as her sister (the blind Miss Bessie Gilbert) "*was getting too old to be so much and so continually with children.*" My first introduction was at the close of the year 1851, and this happened in the autumn of 1853. About February, 1854, Miss Bessie Gilbert told me that her father had thought it better to adopt another plan, and

they had met with a youth from the Blind School, named Levy, just introduced by the Rev. W. Taylor, who would superintend their scheme ; nevertheless, sentences from my manuscript were copied, and the first prospectus issued under the directorship of her two brothers and the Rev. W. Taylor, and up to this day my name has never been mentioned in connection with it. I regret, however, that they have departed from my original design, by admitting goods on the premises not manufactured by the Blind. However plausible the excuse, and however honestly the profits may be applied, and honourable as the design originally was by those who adopted this system, I do believe it to be bad in principle, and so think many others. It opens the way to deception when the purchaser is not very experienced or acute, and when the vendor may be interested in the percentage obtained, or forgetful to be too scrupulous or conscientious. It gives rise to distrust in the public, more especially when the practice is becoming too general beyond the limits of the institution, for the needy of the streets who are not blind are not slow to adopt a new idea. The duty of an institution is not only to prove what the Blind can do, but what the Blind cannot do ; so that

ingenuity and invention may be encouraged, whilst the public are kept informed of the amount the Blind can really earn, as well as the amount of aid and assistance they otherwise need from the benevolent. My object from the first has been to introduce the Home and Social system of education, and thus to supersede, in the course of time, the exile institutions, with all their inevitable privations and evil consequences. Social institutions, or rather the germs of them, are gradually gaining ground under the various forms of class meetings for reading in relief type, but more particularly labour marts. In Manchester, in Liverpool, York, and lastly the School in St. George's Fields, the Home and Social principle of the labour mart is at length gaining ground, but not in so perfect a form as in the subdivisions of Cheltenham into that scheme which I regard as far nearer perfection than any other. Cheltenham has already established an Association which should be imitated by all large towns, till a combination of those of each county, each radiating independently from its own centre, present a report of the number and condition of its Blind and Deaf and Dumb*, thus establishing not only an honourable rivalry with its neighbouring county in the accuracy and usefulness

of its report, but contributing in the end to form a more correct, comprehensive, and effective national system of charity. Cheltenham is divided into nine districts; the Committee, therefore, is composed of nine members, one for each division, who is assisted in the work of home visiting and teaching, as well as instruction in trade, by other volunteers; and if a medical man in each division would undertake the care, when sick, of his share of the Blind, this scheme would be rendered far more complete. Their object is, relief to the aged Blind, and those who are disabled or past work; secondly, to afford facility to those who can work for getting good material at wholesale prices, and also to secure for them introductions and the opportunities of sale; and, thirdly, to educate the young in Social schools with others who enjoy the use of all their faculties, and who must in after life either help them to self-support as friends, or bear the burden of them as paupers. Happily also they have, in addition, an able and zealous defender of the Home and Social rights of the Blind in the Rev. Morton Brown, one of its most active and earnest friends.

This introduction, under the full pressure of many an urgent thought anxious to be expressed, with great difficulty of selection and control,

has run to a length which, I fear, will increase the delay, or perhaps destroy the chance of its appearance in time. As, however, two of my former medical friends, the one a recent member of the Council of College of Surgeons, well known to myself and family for the last quarter of a century, and the other dating back to friendship of earlier date and growth, have so spoken of me, my pursuits, and its objects, to a physician, as to induce him, not many weeks since, to warn a lady against me as a monomaniac, and guilty of many eccentricities, I think it right to append the opinion of a distinguished and well-known physician, to whom, as juniors, and far less informed on the subject, they must bow. I mean the late Dr. Hue, so many years physician to Saint Bartholomew's and the Foundling Hospitals.

June 19, 1858,

MY DEAR SIR,

9, Bedford Square.

You ask me to put down on paper the opinion which I entertain of your character, as it has become known to me more particularly since the period when that great calamity, the loss of sight, fell upon you ; and it is but an act of justice which I owe to you to comply with your request. You are entitled to the strongest testimony I can give to the fact of your unwearied endeavours to improve the condition of all who are suffering from a like affliction to your own. For many years you have been the unceasing advocate of the most enlightened and ele-

vated views as regard the condition of the Blind, and the kind of assistance most likely to be really beneficial to them. I regret that you have not received more general and hearty support from quarters where you had most reason to hope for it; but the difficulties you had to contend with seemed only to inspire you with greater energy, and if you have met with discouragements and disappointments to yourself personally, I cannot think that your labours have been altogether unsuccessful as regards the class you intended to benefit. Your suggestions will still bear fruit, and it will be more and more felt that the wants of the mind are ever more pressing than those of the body, and that those who, by the loss of any of their senses, are incapacitated for many of the active pursuits of life, need not therefore be excluded from all; but that if the helping hand, the guiding eye, the sympathising heart, and voice of relations and friends, are but present, as they should be, there are fields of labour still open to them, in which they may achieve an honest independence. If this expression of my esteem can be of service to you, you are most welcome to make what use you please of it. I trust it will in some degree meet what I apprehend to be your wishes, and that you will always find me ready to come forward whenever you point out other ways in which I can assist you.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Ever yours sincerely,

J. BIRD, Esq.

C. HUE.

Nor is this the first time that a distinguished physician has come to the relief of a blind man accused, or rather stigmatised, as morbid and insane. Democritus of old—con-

cerning whom the mischievous fable of his putting out his own eyes that he might speculate with less interruption and with greater facility, has been more welcome to wonder-seekers than a true history of his life and character—was accused of insanity, and the celebrated physician Hippocrates was sent by his friends, the citizens of Abdera, to visit him. The genius and higher education of Hippocrates enabled him to understand those pursuits, objects, and motives of Democritus which were unintelligible and beyond the comprehension of his fellow-citizens, and he gave his opinion that Democritus was not mad, but that his accusers were labouring under an unenlightened condition of “*mens abderitica*,” a state of mind which was well known to differ widely from Athenian wisdom.

I would wish to add a few remarks on Relief Type, on which such sums of money have been wasted, principally in consequence of the endeavour of five-sensed inventors, directors teachers, and amateurs to force on the four-sensed Blind the use of their own form of letter, which are not adapted to perception through the finger. All their inventions would have succeeded much better if the Blind “had only possessed an equal amount of sight to

themselves ;” and this error of five-sensed routine predominating in all they provide, pervades and mars the schemes of much well-meant but mis-directed benevolence.

In the “Cyclopædia of Useful Arts,” under *Printing*, there is an article on printing in relief type, by the editor, Mr. Tomlinson, written soon after the Jury Report of the Exhibition of 1851 was printed. Books in relief type came under the section presided over by a jury of men distinguished in other branches. Mr. Van de Meyer, the Belgian plenipotentiary, presided, and recommended an alphabet obsolete and no longer used in his own country. M. Firmin Didot, from France, did the same. The English gentlemen, I believe, were innocent of any knowledge whatever of the business ; and Mr. Stephens, a literary gentleman from America, who, I believe, wrote the article, advanced opinions which were far more acceptable to his sighted friends in America than to the Blind of Europe. In the section, however, for philosophical instruments another alphabet, that of Mr. Gall, of Edinburgh, the Caxton of relief printing to the Blind of Great Britain, America, and their dependencies, was praised, and I believe a medal awarded ; but of this latter fact I am not

certain. Those who wish to read up to this point can purchase at Messrs. Virtue, Ivy Lane, for one shilling, Part 32 of the "Cyclopædia of Useful Arts," above alluded to. The permanent form of relief type, however, for the Blind will not be invented till the earnest and inquiring educated Blind of matured years shall be consulted, and their opinions, reasons, and objections shall be delivered, and submitted to the judgment of a competent body of educated and disinterested philanthropists. Honourable and conscientious Blind men, who seek their own elevation by elevating their less fortunate and less educated fellow Blind, must not be accused by sighted amateurs of undervaluing or of being unfavourable to the dissemination and use of the Scriptures among the Blind because they are opposed to the phonetic system, which is ill adapted to the Blind; or to a short-hand system, which has no fixed, but constantly changing rules of abbreviation; or to a system where the words may be spelled at full length, but the form of the letter so ill adapted that in digging and in spelling out the word there is so great an exhaustion of mental power that there is much less left for continuity of thought and sustained reflection. And yet so little has this state of tedious exhaustion been

understood, that by advocates of particular systems, and by men of undoubted benevolence unacquainted with the cause, this tedious slowness of the Blind has been compared to and confounded with that slow but calm and easy reading of the sighted, which is well known to be most favourable to reflection.

One word more on Exile Schools. Let those who advocate these unsocialising institutions remember the words of the blind Mr. Charles Day, whose pensions of £12, £16, and £20 a year to 270 Blind are the best proof of his wish to secure to the Blind the blessings of social life. When conversing with those friends whom he left as trustees on the disposition of his property, he said, "NOT A SINGLE SIXPENCE TO BE SPENT IN BRICKS AND MORTAR, TO BUILD A PRISON FOR THE BLIND ; THEY ARE IMPRISONED TOO MUCH ALREADY."

JOHN BIRD (BLIND).

28, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, BLOOMSBURY, W.C.,

June 12th, 1862.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL PATHOLOGY.

SECTION I.

MIND, FAMISHED AND IMPRISONED, OR UNDEVELOPED AND UNAPPLIED, THE MOST FRUITFUL AND PERNICIOUS SOURCE OF PAUPERISM.

“It may be taken for granted that a community cannot act *right* towards a class without *ultimately* elevating itself; nor can it act wrong towards any portion of its members without perpetuating or promoting social evils—perhaps the very evils it is anxious to eradicate.”—*Hovenden on Crime and Punishment*.

EXILE schools tend to force these Social Outcasts, the Blind or the Deaf and Dumb, to intermarry, thus aggravating their own misery and public pauperism. Few have any conception of the enormous sums expended, or rather worse than wasted, on this form of misdirected charity, such as on the land purchase, buildings, constant repairs, enlarging or rebuilding; then the staff of officials, with their keep, comforts, luxuries, and servants, before the expenditure reaches the third, or only important, division—“the real objects for whom the money was left.” Exile schools are in existence for the Blind as well as for the Deaf and Dumb, in Exeter, Brighton, Norwich, Bristol, Bath, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, York, Doncaster, and other large or county towns; and the following statement of the enormous wealth of the one for the Blind in St. George's Fields, and the other

for the Deaf and Dumb in the Old Kent Road, will astonish many who see the number of Blind in the streets of the metropolis, and of the Deaf and Dumb, starving almost in body as well as in mind, in their scarcely known and seldom visited homes. It is not always easy for those most deeply interested—the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb—to obtain reports; but the following united amounts, each for a year, are taken from the report for the Blind School, 1858, and for the Deaf and Dumb, 1859. If there be any error, it is unintentional, and it can be easily corrected. In addition to extensive freehold premises and buildings in each instance, with payments from parishes for the children of the poor, promised to be educated, and expected, by their future (not always most considerate) taskmasters, the parochial authorities, to *be really so* educated fit for life and self-support, as well as £243 9s. 5d. received for ground-rents in the case of the Deaf and Dumb Institution, the following sums were contributed:—Annual Subscriptions and Donations, £3,727 3s. 2d.; Legacies during the same time, £7,145 11s. 11d.; and the interest derived from £247,330—almost a quarter of a million of funded property.

If some member of the House of Commons would but procure a return of the property belonging to the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb in the many other charities of London, as well as the more numerous ones in the different counties throughout England, similarly or more minutely analysed—and if to these were added

the numerous pensions, and the different ranks and classes by whom they were received—the public would be astonished at the amount, and at the low views of the otherwise educated classes, who, having no conception of the possibility of making a market of their intellect, sink their relatives still deeper by making a market only of their calamity. The real elevation of the Blind and of the Deaf and Dumb will never be begun till families of the middle class recognise their duty of educating to self-support their four-sensed relatives, as an example of *what can and ought to be done* under the more favourable circumstances of education, competency, social influence, family aid, and personal ties ; for the very scanty per-centage of pupils—unsocialised, if not ruined, by exile schools—who struggle and hover just clear of parochial pauperism—have too long and most improperly been taken as the standard of the capacity of the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb. If the time and opportunities wasted in whining pity were given to the consideration of capacity, and of the inevitable painful peculiarities (not funny eccentricities) of four-sensed life, the means would be discovered and the duty obeyed of re-educating the Blind of matured years to the health-giving and mind-preserving exertion of achieving, in a great measure, their own self-support.

Directors of institutions should remember that one important duty is to prove to society what work the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb can and cannot do, and “the market value

only should be charged," because there is no greater curse to the Blind in the long run than "fancy prices for useless articles." The generous will give, but do not like to be fleeced. Another growing evil of a recent institution should be noticed. Those articles only which have been veritably made by the Blind should be sold at such charities.

If the skilled and hard-working artisan, blessed with perfect sight, cannot compete with the increase of machinery at home, and with the product of skilled labour from abroad, where labour, living, and materials are cheaper, how is it possible that the ruined and neglected, the deserted and unaided Blind, can, by groping in the dark, compete with the activity of the sighted, and the under-selling power of the capitalist? As agents, vendors, or hawkers, the Blind can, by the benevolence of wholesale dealers, be supplied with good and genuine articles, and, thus protected from imposition, can, by the fair profits of retail, contribute towards the support of themselves, their wives, and their children; and in this, it is to be hoped, a benevolent public will give them a share of support.

Within the last few years more attention has been directed to the cause of the Blind, and some institution-constructors have thought more of their own success than of the real welfare of the Blind—for it is not right that basket work, and other fabrics made by the sighted, and purchased of the wholesale importers of foreign goods, or brushes, and such like, purchased of

the wholesale manufacturer, should be imposed on the benevolent as the work of the Blind.

Let the benevolent seek opportunities of transferring their subscriptions as premiums or encouragements to certified and pupil teachers in social schools, and a new race will spring up of higher-qualified teachers, for the support of whom, when developed and organised, there are more than sufficient funds in the property of existing exile institutions. The more highly educated of certificated and pupil teachers in the National and British Schools in each county will soon prove themselves capable of imitating those distinguished teachers in the Roman Catholic Schools, the Christian Brothers; and the legitimate and honourable reward of their intellectual exertions will be the rich booty on the fall of these exile institutions—their Lucknows and Delhis, which are by them to be most thoroughly superseded and charitably sacked. Such a system will not only harmonise with, but find assistance and protection in that scheme of comprehensive benevolence recently matured and determined on by those noble and enlightened philanthropists who held their first meeting at the Thatched House Tavern about a week since.

Miss Florence Nightingale quotes the following from Lord Macaulay:—

“That it is extraordinary that whereas the laws of the motions of the heavenly bodies, far removed as they are from us, are perfectly well understood—the laws of the human mind, which

are under our observation all day and every day, are no better understood than they were two thousand years ago."

The unrecognised privations and continued degradation of the Blind are due almost entirely to this ignorance. Every one advocates plenty of water, especially for the skin, and the necessary cubic feet of pure air in the barrack or the sleeping room, pointing out, at the same time, the deterioration of health and strength from insufficient ventilation in the cottage of the Berkshire labourer; but none of those with the principal avenue to the mind—the eye, ever open, and crowded with life-sustaining import—think of the deterioration of the mental powers of the Blind, famished for the want of the necessary amount of perception, writhing in the obstructed action of imprisonment, and wasting away for the want of motive and opportunity. The mental powers of the felon are protected from the evil effects of too much silence and isolation by the daily inspection of the prison governor, the chaplain, the medical man, and the turnkeys; whilst he is animated by the hope of restoration to social life after the expiration of his sentence; but who has thought hitherto of inspecting and reporting on the mental deterioration of the Blind, suffering from too much silence and isolation, aggravated by darkness, and imprisoned, not for months, but for years, without any hope of restoration to society. On the contrary, most of those who obtrude themselves on the public as the collectors for

pet systems, under the guise of friends of the Blind, never allude to this question—“*their mental necessities, which is the true key to the whole subject,*” whether it be approached from a physical, intellectual, social, or religious point of view.

How long will it be before medical writers will do their share of befriending the Blind, by pointing out that to sustain the healthy current of thought, a certain amount and quality of truth-conveying impressions are as necessary through the ear, as of pure air to the lungs to fit the blood for its destined duty? and that as the heart will not contract without its necessary stimulus of oxygen, so the human will in the Blind will only act when it has derived confidence from the adequate supply of truth. For this supply of life-sustaining element each Blind person must depend on the circle of friends on whom he has a claim; and their denial of it, or their substitution of the poison of falsehood or deception, will sooner or later inevitably do its work. The thoughtless and the insufficiently educated must not reproach the Blind with the assertion that “they have plenty of time to think,” when the materials for thought have been long exhausted, and when they have no longer the hope of application. The voluntary retirement of the five-sensed, congested with facts or with sight for observation, for the purpose of undisturbed reflection, animated by the hope of a return to application, may be compared to digestion; but the

compulsory and prolonged isolation of the Blind, without materials for thought, and without the hope of return to society, can be compared to nothing else but starvation.

SECTION II.

HOME AND SOCIAL EDUCATION OF THE DEAF AND DUMB.

In the course of my reflections on the evils and privations of Blindness I felt convinced that those endured by the Deaf and Dumb must be equally severe and unsuspected, and having, about eight years since, become acquainted with Mr. Matthew Robert Burns, a gentleman Deaf and Dumb from birth, and who, for the last thirty years has, with equal zeal and success, devoted himself to the elevation of his less fortunate fellow-sufferers, I have often rendered all the assistance in my power to the society and congregation of Deaf Mutes with which he is connected. The following letter was written for their benefit, to accompany a notice of their dinner at Christmas, 1859. But, from circumstances common to a subject so little understood, it did not appear till the 30th of April following, when it first appeared in the *Clerkenwell News*, and the demand for reprints of it by the four-sensed, the Blind, as well as the Deaf and Dumb, and their friends, not only in London but in Manchester and in Scotland, proved that it was welcome to those who best understood the subject. At the request of Lord Raynham, it was reprinted in his journal, which was exclu-

sively devoted to philanthropic objects, *The Friend of the People*; and not many months since I was agreeably surprised by the receipt of a newspaper from the United States, printed at Boston, in which the letter had been reprinted at full length, with this difference only, that the last nineteen lines, now given in larger type, made twenty-six in the American newspaper, in consequence of the whole being printed in capital letters.

“The following considerations are offered on the above important subject, combined with an inquiry into its economy, humanity, and sound policy, as contradistinguished from the more extravagant, barbarous, and less successful system of exile education, which tends to break down in early life the growth of those domestic ties and social obligations which knit society together, and strengthen mutual support.

“The Rev. Dr. Chalmers, in his well-known ‘*Bridge-water Treatise*,’ with equal clearness and truth points out that when man, in his ignorance, but with well-intentioned benevolence, establishes any institution or scheme in opposition to the Divine plan for the moral government of society, ‘that not only will he signally fail, but lay the foundation of aggravated mischief and suffering.’ In no instance is the truth of this assertion more evident than in the state of privation and suffering, long neglected because unrecognised, of the ascertained 17,000 Deaf and Dumb and the 30,000 Blind existing in our own country. In their day, the exile institutions for the Deaf and Dumb, as well as for the Blind, established and endowed by the genuine benevolence of those who have passed away, have done much good; but when we come to examine their results, we find that, founded on principles in direct opposition to those designed to knit together the brotherhood of man, and for the well-being of society, they have not only perpetuated,

but in a great degree aggravated, the very evils they were designed to eradicate. The first exile school for the Deaf and Dumb was founded in Paris by the well-known Abbé de l'Epée, and the first exile school for the Blind, within a very short distance both of time and space, by the earnest and noble-minded Talentine Haüy ; and yet scarcely had sixty years passed away before the mischievous results and thorough failure of this system were so evident that the municipality of Paris, about five years since, on the recommendation of the Central Board of Instruction, voted liberal supplies for the more enlightened and far more economical scheme of 'Social Education of the Deaf and Dumb as well as the Blind' in the ordinary schools with those who could hear and see, and with whom they must either associate in the labour market of after-life, or hang on them for ever an undeveloped and unemployed, because misunderstood, burden—either as private or public paupers. These exiled Deaf and Dumb (and with the Blind it is the same) exert, in a far greater degree than is suspected, an unsocialising, and consequently pauperising, influence on their families, or on those who share their lot ; whilst, on the contrary, those who have enjoyed the blessing of social education and intercourse are not only free from such evils, but, as the history of all the distinguished four-sensed prove, not only gained a far higher degree of education, but they make those friends in the generous period of youth who, in after life, are ever ready to assist them usefully to apply it. In these exile schools the Deaf and Dumb, as well as the Blind, rooted up from home and social influences, of which they have far greater need than their more fortunate five-sensed brothers and sisters, are immured during the most important period of their lives—a barbarous system, which accustoms the parents and other relatives to throw off the unfortunates, whom they ought to learn to understand and aid in their development to the elevating duties and happiness of four-sensed labour, instead of making a market of their calamity, and of relying solely on charity pension, or viewing them as aliens, getting rid of them in after life in asylums and union-houses ; and those who would

advance the well-being of society by doing justice to the injured, or by improving the condition of the afflicted, must act in accordance with the principles laid down and enforced by Dr. Chalmers—that is, ‘to begin in, and not to destroy, home ties and claims, nor undermine social rights and responsibilities.’

“Every one who has had opportunities of observing conscientiously and without prejudice, must be convinced of the injustice of pretending to call the usual ‘Sign-system’ education. Not only is this, when exclusively relied on, learning a language which society in general do not and will not learn, but even when learnt is incapable of conveying precise and definite terms and words with anything like grammatical accuracy; and sign-language, as generally used and understood by the majority of the Deaf and Dumb of mature years (called educated) at costly exile institutions, whose special buildings, with their staff and management, annually absorb, to an extravagant amount, the contributions of the benevolent. On the other hand, ‘lip-reading’ and acquired articulation can and ought to be taught at a very early period in the home and in the social circle. The five-sensed relatives and friends have not to learn any new language: they have only to acquire the habit of articulating clearly and distinctly. The Deaf and Dumb by this method acquire a more accurate idea of language and habitually construct their sentences more grammatically, without which it is impossible for them to reason correctly, and thus develop their faculties, whilst they store their minds with definite facts and correct conclusions. At the same time, the endeavour to use acquired articulation animates and gives expression to the countenance, which encourages intercourse and conversation as much as the fixed and statue-like stillness of those who rely on signs only, which chill as well as check both the one and the other. Besides, each school and country has, most probably, its different sort of signs and gesticulations, whilst the language of the United Kingdom and of America, and the colonies and dependencies of both, is the same, varying from each other only as much as one person’s style of writing the common

letters varies from each other. Lip-reading and acquired articulation can only be learnt in social life and social schools, and not in an assemblage of mutes, where there is neither the inducement nor the power to move the lips. Mr. Robert M. Burns, the Biblical Instructor at Shaftesbury Hall, is a good example on this point. For the first fifteen years he was educated in common with five-sensed boys, and to this he attributes his greater knowledge, as well as health and vigour of body and mind.

“At an annual meeting of a society for the welfare of the Deaf and Dumb, last summer, the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, with his usual statesman-like depth and comprehensiveness of thought, said, ‘Still he had his doubts as to the propriety of those institutions for bringing the Deaf and Dumb too much or exclusively together ;’ and, if leisure from his other important avocations had given him the opportunity of perusing a paper read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Liverpool (by Mr. Buxton, principal of the Deaf and Dumb School in that town), he would have seen sound reasons for his doubts. The evils resulting from the system and but a little consideration would have traced them to the cause—the unsocialising principle already and so frequently alluded to.

“Mr. Buxton gives the result ascertained of the offspring of 310 Deaf and Dumb, each of whom married not a Deaf and Dumb but a healthy five-sensed partner ; and the proportion of Deaf mutes in the whole of these families was only one in 135 ; but the case was very different when 303 Deaf and Dumb males were married to 303 Deaf and Dumb females. In this latter case the proportion of Deaf mute offspring was one in 20, or almost seven times as many. In addition to the evils of both being exiled from the world of intercourse, without the link of power and communion as in the former case, when both parents are Deaf and Dumb they can neither educate nor control their children. Independence begets disrespect ; and when parental care and influence have not been sown, filial affection, obedience, and especially aid and support in after life, are not reaped. It is not the fault of these exiles if they en-

deavour to sustain and cheer each other. They are driven to it by that exile system and foreign language which drives them from their home, and prevents their being appreciated and understood by those to whom years of separation in that unsocialised state has made them appear, not only aliens in habits and language, but almost in interest, as well as to the enjoyment of the unforfeited privileges of social life. When they are not banished from home and social schools, as well as the social circle, they make a large amount of, and are soon appreciated by, their five-sensed acquaintances, which in proportion diminishes the chance and opportunity of their being only known to each other. In the contribution to the census of 1851, by Mr. Assistant Commissioner Wild (section Ireland), it is stated that dumbness prevails to a greater extent in the hilly districts and the mountainous countries. Is it that this physical barrier to intercourse deprives this organ of the necessary amount of varied stimuli and use? If so, is it not fair to infer that the greater amount of activity of those deaf mutes, more educated to the use and frequency of speech, may even diminish, in course of time, among the more highly educated Deaf and Dumb, the proportion of Deaf mute offspring to a smaller number than one in 135?

"In the education of the Deaf and Dumb, not only has Scotland produced George Delgarno, one of the first writers on that subject, and the inventor of the finger alphabet, and buried, perhaps scarcely known where, in one of the churches of Oxford, whilst the Abbé de l'Épée has his monument in the church of St. Roch at Paris, with the finger alphabet on it, invented by Delgarno years before! Scotland also gave to the Deaf and Dumb Mr. Thomas Braidwood and Dr. Joseph Watson; but the first in a new field—that of performing Divine service to the Deaf and Dumb—which was not only first suggested and commenced at Glasgow by the Rev. W. Ferguson, of the Episcopalian Church, who could hear and speak, but three of the most eminent Deaf and Dumb, and first of the Biblical instructors to their own suffering class, all came from Scotland, bearing names that will be easily recognised. Robert M. Burns has been engaged for

thirty years in Edinburgh as well as London ; and Mr. James Herriott, also Deaf and Dumb from infancy, first established these services at Manchester, and afterwards at Leeds, where he is now succeeded by Mr. Colin Campbell, another Deaf and Dumb gentleman, one of the first to assist the Rev. Mr. Ferguson in his ministry at Glasgow. There ever is, and ever will be, continued opposition to these excellent and deserving men by their five-sensed opponents, the teachers at exile schools, and other middle men, who live on their calamity, or who, being on the staff, wish to make the exile institutions monopolise everything, and absorb every credit ; but the just and the generous have a duty to perform to protect these earnest labourers in so elevated a cause against those opponents with whom they struggle to so great a disadvantage, where so much is concealed from them, and where opportunity of explanation to those who have influence is very seldom given. These Deaf and Dumb gentlemen are most earnest for the well-being, and best understand the wants and interests, of their fellow-mutes ; and they ought to be allowed the privilege and be sustained in their endeavour to elevate themselves by elevating their less fortunate fellow-sufferers."

I know not how this letter reached America, or who the person is who inserted it with such marks of approval, but it is evident to me that it is some educated Deaf and Dumb man, who feels acutely the evils I have described. No real advance will be made either in the elevation of the Blind or of the Deaf and Dumb, till

the educated of both sections of matured years, and of enlarged experience are listened to—I mean those who can bring the important evidence derived from consciousness to correct the imperfect observation and mistaken theories of the five-sensed.

A few days since I heard repeated, not for the first time, an account of Captain Macnochie's noble endeavour to elevate the convicts by associated labour, and a community of interests. There are some in power, not only in London but in Manchester, whom I could, without injustice, reproach with iniquitously sowing dissension between the Deaf and Dumb, and between the Blind, for their own selfish ends and ascendancy.

“Divide et impera”

being the spirit and the object in which too much has for many years been done, to the serious injury of the cause, and the creation of universal distrust amongst each other. A twelvemonth since, Lord Ingestre, when presiding over an annual meeting for the Deaf and Dumb, thanked me for some books and these papers I had sent him, observing, at the same time, that it was to such persons, the educated four-sensed, the five-sensed must look for valuable information, which they could not obtain from any other source. And a few weeks since, at the annual meeting of the same society, presided over this year by the Archbishop of York, at Willis's Rooms, Professor Owen read extracts from a reprint of

the above paper, which I had sent him, commenting strongly on the advantages of social education over exile schools, and referring especially, as a physiologist, to the evils certain to arise from bringing them so exclusively together, inducing them to intermarry, thus multiplying the evil and its consequences, as proved by the paper of Mr. Buxton, of Liverpool, alluded to above. The Bishop of Oxford also said that if it were designed to build a church exclusively for the Deaf and Dumb, to make them a distinct and separate body, *he for one would have nothing to do with it*; but, looking on these district services for the Deaf and Dumb, now carried on in connection with four or five churches, only as temporary, and in the hope of a better state of things being hereafter adopted, he would gladly lend his aid to further the cause so ably advocated by Mr. Bather, a deaf and dumb gentleman, who had written and laboured so much to improve the condition of the less fortunate Deaf and Dumb. As his Lordship the Bishop of Oxford alluded to the hope of the Deaf and Dumb ultimately joining in the general service of the Church, I am inclined to think that his lordship may have had in his mind, not thinking it so impossible as others do, the following sentence, extracted from some remarks of my own, which I had the pleasure of sending to him a twelvemonth since:—If the minister of religion, by a few chance and casual sentences or greetings, as he meets the deaf and dumb child of his congregation, renders his

pronunciation familiar—and if the Deaf and Dumb in church and chapel be placed so near as to be able to read the earnest and expressive countenance at the same time that he reads the clearly articulating lips—and if at the same time he be familiar with the prayers and the rest of the service, some relation or friend pointing out each as it is commenced—it will not be long before his eyes will desert the dry page for the more animating expression of the human countenance, and the equally animating and distinct enunciation of the lips of the reader. To those who have studied the subject, the process is evident; nor will the next step appear too sanguine, that of enabling him to read the lips of the preacher. When this is gained, the minister of religion will be his protector.

ABOUT two years since, in consequence of learning through the newspaper that the Rev. J. Ellis had directed his attention to the Blind, I sent him copies of nearly everything I had written, and this induced him to review and consider the subject, when he soon became convinced of the evils of the exile system, and of the duty of advocating home and social education, in two sermons, "The Christian's Duty to the Blind" and "The Christian's Duty to the Deaf and Dumb," to each of which, at his request, I prefixed some preliminary remarks, which, as they are of a later date than the preceding, I have now added, in a hasty manner, in the form of extracts:—There are, however,

some facts which ought to be more generally known, and presenting them here may not be inconsistent with the occasion. It is evident, and fully acknowledged by all who have examined the question, that there is in the public mind a very great deficiency of the knowledge that ought to be possessed by it, before it can attempt to undertake this section of Christian duty with the same prospect of happy result as has attended its labours in other branches of philanthropic enterprise. The oft-repeated remark that you cannot reform the world is a folly, and much more likely to proceed from selfishness or weakness than from careful observation and serious reflection. The enlightened and conscientious Brahmin who has lately addressed us, Mr. Gangooly, instances one of their proverbs in support of the principle of endeavouring to secure the conversion of the high-caste Brahmins first if we would wish to Christianise India, foreshadowed in that saying of the East, "If you would wish to wet the whole man, you can only do so by pouring water on the head." Many years of deep and anxious thought, in which every insufficient scheme had been rejected, at last left the only but sufficient means so clearly open to view, that it has long been with me a firm conviction that we must appeal to and begin with those who have the privilege and the responsibility of educating every branch of society, before we can hope to make any permanent impression on the public themselves. These

leaders and educators are, first, the ministers of religion, medical men, gentlemen of the legal profession, schoolmasters and school-mistresses. If any one will read Diderot's "Lettre sur les Aveugles, a l'Usage de ceux qui voyent," they will see how the philosopher can speculate without the responsibility of application. In the next stage, in the celebrated sermon of the Rev. Sidney Smith, they will see how the philosopher and divine can expand the subject, not only to awaken sympathy by the delineations of the pleasures of sight and the privations of blindness never before expressed, if conceived, by any sighted man, but to inculcate a duty which no one on reading it would have the hardihood to deny as not an obligation on himself; and now, in this sermon of the Rev. John Ellis, we have the more complete and perfect application of the point from which such duty must proceed, from which it can never be absolved, and around which, however large or diversified the sphere, it must ever centre.

When the Christian minister, instead of exciting transient pity and questionable sympathy to obtain contributions, thus preaches to the conscience, and rouses every family from their lethargy to a sense of their obligations as Christians, and their duties as members of society, the work of the emancipation of the Blind is begun in earnest. Medical men, in their advice and conversation in the family circle, and in their reports to the subscribers to Institutions by whom they have been appointed to the trust,

will—by their constant reference to the conditions necessary to the mental action and health of four-sensed life, and to the causes of mental imprisonment the class of diseases such *never-absent irritation* is certain to produce, and the means, mental and physical by which they are to be either prevented or relieved—prove their fitness, or by the absence of such communications their unfitness, as advisers and authorities in the Home and officers in the Institutions.

Where ordinary men will seldom rise beyond the rights of property and the protection of land from encroachment or trespass, and believe in little more than the soil of the field as the great productive source of home wealth, the conscientious solicitor of higher education will often enlighten those families—the happiness of whose disabled members, deficient in the powers of self-protection, is so much in his hands—with salutary advice on the sacred rights of the human mind, the duty of protecting it from the trespass of the selfish, and the encroachments of those of greater strength; whilst, at the same time, he will cheer them on to the honourable enterprise of sowing broadcast and with a liberal hand in the mind which he still feels has great capacity for producing a happy and profitable return. And little are the Bar of the United Kingdom conscious of the claim the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb have on the honourable exertion of their more alert and practised discernment, as the many opportunities present themselves, not only in conversation, but

more especially when the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb are brought, as they often have been and still are, to the bar of justice—not in the mystification of evidence, but in their appeal for consideration on the ground of their misunderstood, mismanaged, or neglected condition—the principal, if not the only cause for the culprit being reduced to where he then stands.

Every plant has the power of selecting from the soil the special elements necessary to its particular growth; and by the same law the mind of the Blind becomes developed in proportion to the amount it receives from society of the special elements of truth and generous treatment necessary to its growth. To the schoolmaster and to the schoolmistress belong the responsibility of inculcating into and of diffusing through the youthful minds entrusted to them, those necessary principles of aid and sympathy which in the school, as in after life, they ought to contribute, instead of permitting to grow in early life that feeling of indifference, which afterwards becomes inveterate apathy, and which leads the individual in matured life, as at school, to regard the four-sensed, whether Blind, or Deaf and Dumb, as aliens in race, in education, in habits, and treatment, and even in the privileges of life. When the schoolmaster is also the minister of religion, his opportunities, as well as his responsibilities, are far greater.

The present practice of educating the Blind, as well as the Deaf and Dumb in exile institu-

tions generates and perpetuates among the healthy and prosperous five-sensed members of society a selfish indifference towards the suffering four-sensed, whether Blind or Deaf and Dumb — leading to the habitual practice of almost considering themselves exempt from the responsibility of giving either time or thought to the subject; and hence the public do not expect relatives and friends to shun barbarity and practise humanity. Public opinion is not ready at all times to animate and help the zeal of the most conscientious, nor to correct the negligence of those who are indifferent even to the verge of cruelty.

One of those devoted, zealous, successful educators, called the Christian Brothers, speaks thus on this subject:—"I distinctly see that we have been working at the wrong end; we have been educating the Blind and Deaf and Dumb, when we ought to have been educating the members of society who have all their senses how to understand the peculiarities and necessities of their four-sensed relatives, and, above all, how to perform their duties as Christians towards them. We have been pulling up those young plants from the soil of home which required the greatest share of it, and more attention; and when their roots have withered, for want of proper nutriment, in these exile establishments, we bring them back again to home, and try to re-plant them, and expect them to grow."

The advocates of the Deaf and Dumb, as

well as of the Blind, are constantly reminded of the enormous sums bequeathed, given, and contributed to their use. In estimating the real worth of an exile charity, the annual report should contain these three divisions: first, the interest of the money that would still have been annually applicable to the relief of its unfortunate inmates, if it had not been sunk in land, architects, buildings, constant repairs and necessary furniture, or re-building; secondly, the amount paid in salaries, wages, or otherwise, to the staff of officials and servants, including their necessities, comforts, luxuries, privileges, and perquisites; thirdly, how much in reality reached the objects of charity, to benefit whom was the sole wish and desire of the benevolent. When charities are thus analysed, and a comparison made between the enormous expenditure of these costly establishments and the much greater number that would have been far more effectually benefited by the system of social charities now, happily for the unfortunate, gaining ground in this country—when it is considered that in proportion to cruelty to the individual, by offering premiums to family selfishness, there is a certain increase of pauperism in after life, from the destruction of home ties and the responsibility of relatives—when it is possible that it may be considered hereafter a point of family honour or vanity to relieve national charities of the burden of a social pauper, whilst it is an event which has seldom or never been heard of, that of taking a relative out of an exile charity,

when once he or she may have been got rid of in what too often proves as fatal as an *oubliette*—it is evident that justice, humanity, and economy all point in the same direction.

Every song which expresses the animating and sustaining hope of the sailor in the hardships and dangers of his duty, points to home and social joys as his recompense; instead of which he is rewarded by a semi-monkish residence at Greenwich, without religious or secular employment—a system which Parliamentary inquiry proves to be worse than a failure. Those wiser philanthropists who, in organising a body of Commissionaires from the wounded and pensioned soldiers, are restoring them to the privileges of independent and honourable citizenship, are building up reproach, and perhaps a cure, to the other semi-monastic establishment at Chelsea. That which is the only, and oft-times the most valuable, property the hard or over-worked clergyman has to leave to his widow is the recollection of his conscientious devotion to the duties of his parish in the minds of his parishioners. The semi-conventual establishment at Bromley, in Kent, at once deprives these widows of the portion before alluded to, whilst a humane disregard of the strict and un-socialising laws of the institution prevents their being the congregation of parochial exiles they otherwise would be; and one of the evils of this exile system is proved by the necessity of the humane to provide another exile establishment adjoining, for the reception, after the death of

their mothers, of those daughters who have become exiles from society by devoting their lives to their exiled parents. Dugald Stewart has said, "Unless man had an opportunity of imparting knowledge to his fellows, it is very doubtful whether they would ever acquire knowledge;" and the Rev. Dr. Thompson, in his work "On some of the Necessary Laws of Thought," has also said: "The human mind, like the well-trained hound, will not give chase unless it scent game worthy of pursuit." There must be the confident hope of export, or the manufacturer will not import. There must be the confident hope of the mind exerting its influence as designed on external objects and on society, or perception will be indifferent to that which is no longer needed. All exile charities, by the apathy or mental decline of their inmates, tell this tale, whether in the Charterhouse or on Blackheath; and the mediæval revivals on Epsom Downs and at Woking will soon prove the mistake to those inmates, especially to medical men of active and healthy intellectual powers, who will hereafter have to suffer, and who will learn only when it is too late, that it is far happier, more useful, and more consistent with Christianity, "to wear out than to rust out."

"Man," says Professor Lordat, of Montpellier, "in his civil capacity, is a citizen of two republics, of which the one is material, the other intellectual. The old man ceases to belong to the first of these when his organic principle

refuses to perform its wonted functions as in days past; he becomes nought but a parasite, and may reasonably dread the fate of the drones when their presence is no longer required by the working bees. In the intellectual republic, however, he still preserves *his rank and rights, and may, of he choose, do so up to the latest term of his existence.* The truth of the *insenescence of the intellectual principle* becomes thus an appeal not only to his self-respect, but likewise to that innate sense of duty which regulates every conscientious man, and whispers in his ear *that no opinions capable of proving useful to humanity at large ought to be buried in the tomb.*" *

The most useful work, and that which has proved, both directly and indirectly, a valuable blessing to the Blind, has been the "Lives of the Useful Blind," written many years since by James Wilson, himself a blind man. It was the study of this work which induced me to write about six years since an essay on his life and writings, in which I proved that nearly all the Blind who had distinguished themselves by being useful in their day, had been educated under the blessings of Home and Social life, instead of having their intellect dwarfed and cramped, their affections blunted, their social ties broken by imprisonment in exile schools. I might also have pointed out that most of the distinguished Blind had risen from the lower ranks of society, where poverty, or conspicuously narrow circumstances

* Dr. F. Winslow's Journal of Psychological Medicine, July, 1852.

invited and welcomed the visits of the benevolent, and of their superiors in intellect, who set an example which the relatives could not shrink from following up to their utmost, especially when they discerned that their own interest, reputation, and perhaps welfare would be compromised by any wavering or evasion. With the middle classes, however, it is far different, where there is no ambition beyond the unfortunate one of being respectably clothed, housed, and amused, as well as led and fed. Happy would it be for many if they were so far reduced as to come within the range of district visitation or the inspection of the more enlightened benevolent. Here, however, is the point to which attention should be invited—"to the middle class Blind," whose relatives ought to know and to be kept in mind of the fact "that if their Blind sink in social life, and if they fail to achieve something towards their own self-support," it must be due to one or more of these three causes, which I will arrange in the order of frequency, beginning with the most frequent—1st, Either parent or relatives neglect to learn their duty, to understand the necessities and rights of the Blind, or that they neglect to apply such knowledge if they possess it; 2nd, Society in general will not learn to understand their duty, and to give the Blind man an opportunity of applying and of profiting by such knowledge, business, or skill when he shall have acquired it; or, 3rd, The Blind themselves are incapable, deficient, or indolent, or with health

too much impaired, advanced in years, or past work.

When, fifteen years since, I began my inquiries into this question, and the antagonism between myself and medical friends led to the frequent reproach that I was entering on a subject to which they had not time to attend, and which was beyond their range of duty, I felt the argument was not sound, especially to those friends who, to one who had impaired and ruined his health by a life of reckless excess, would never have refused their daily aid. Still the argument had its weight; but I think they must take a different view of the question now, since the speech of Sir John Pakington at the annual meeting for the welfare of the Blind in May last, when he did me the kindness to praise fully as much as I could wish my Essay, which had been ridiculed, and perhaps not understood, by inferior minds of less note. I will therefore most earnestly and seriously call the attention of my fellow medical men, especially those connected with St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and those who knew and met me, and were in the habit of meeting me in the days of sight and usefulness.

Sir John Pakington, in the course of his speech, after quoting another passage on the higher cultivation of the intellect of the Blind, and the names of those so distinguished, selected a second, in which he said that my experience and reflections during my period of blindness had thrown valuable light on the

diseases of the Blind. He then read the following, from the 21st page:—

“The diseases of which the Blind die, and from which they suffer long before death, are physically those resulting from indolence and inactivity, from the absence of object and motive; and mentally, those of impoverished, imprisoned, and unemployed mind; or that irritability from incapacity when the needed information is withheld; or the constant irritation of thwarted will, the lot of those who are in the power of others, especially the selfish, and their inferiors. It is therefore imperative on every sincere friend of humanity not to evade a duty by denying the existence of an evil into which he has never inquired, but to promote inquiry, that those suffering may be relieved, and those pernicious influences averted that embitter and shorten, whilst they pervert the design of mental life.”

Very often when borne down by the inevitable and depressing consequences of too much isolation, “*Vacuity of famished and unstimulated Mind*,” or in those long and sleepless hours so common to the Blind, who are denied healthy sleep by night because they are denied healthy occupation and exhaustion by day, I think of the fate of Falconer, the author of “*The Shipwreck*,” who perished by that death, the successive stages of which he so clearly conceived and accurately described.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

Suggested by the papers read at the Congrès International de Bienfaisance on the subjects of the Blind and of the Deaf and Dumb, and by the resolution of that body, founded on the suggestion of their President, the Earl of Shaftesbury, "That an appeal should be made to the Government of each country, to grant a commission to inquire into the condition of the Blind and Deaf and Dumb, and the prevalent causes of those maladies."

As the cause to which the foregoing contributions especially refer, received marked and serious attention on Friday last, June 13th. from the delegates and others assembled at their concluding meeting, I have thought it best to give a brief sketch, as the notice in the papers was necessarily short, and as some months must elapse before the Report can be printed, and when even in that form, it is not probable that it will reach the homes of those whom it most concerns. M. Grosselin, of Paris, on the preceding Tuesday, had read his paper, "*Sur le langage mimique des Sourds-Muets*;" and on Friday a paper was read by the Rev. R. G. Baker, vicar of Fulham, on "*Measures for ameliorating the condition of the adult Deaf and Dumb amongst the poor*;" whilst another, by Dr. W. R. Wilde, of Dublin, on "*the number and*

distribution of the Blind in Ireland, and the means provided for their instruction and support," was read by Mr. J. Hammack, one of the Hon. Secretaries of the Congress, who also read to the Congress some remarks "on the English census of the Blind and Deaf and Dumb." As it was imperative that the reading of papers should terminate at one o'clock, that of M. le Chanoine Carton, directeur de l'institution royale des Sourds-Muets et des Aveugles à Bruges—"De l'abandon dans lequel végète le petit Sourd-Muet avant son admission dans les institutions spéciales," was not read. This is much to be regretted, as whatever comes from that worthy and excellent man deserves the attention of every well-wisher of suffering humanity. This is the same gentleman to whom I alluded at the commencement of the Introduction, page 11, then as Abbé, now as Chanoine Carton, of whom, from my excluded and isolated position, I had not heard since 1851, when I entered Bruges, a perfect stranger, and found that blindness alone was a sufficient introduction to ensure, in a foreign country, the kindest reception and the most frank communication each day of my visit to the institution over which he presides. This honourable example I would hold up for imitation, as a duty not to be evaded by those who receive handsome salaries for the advancement of the welfare of the Blind; for after all, it must be by the genius, enterprise, and perseverance of the inquiring Blind and inquiring Deaf and Dumb, that their fellow-sufferers must be most

effectually aided and permanently elevated. Dr. Wilde's proposal of an appeal to Government to give some support to the institutions for the education and maintenance of the Blind and Deaf and Dumb was, happily for the cause, met by the observation of the President, the Earl of Shaftesbury, who said, "that if the State interfered on behalf of persons afflicted in that way, it would invade the sphere of private benevolence, and would be equally bound to take cognizance of cripples and other forms of infirmity. He thought, however, the object they all had in view, would be best attained by an appeal to the Government to issue a commission of inquiry into the whole subject." I immediately rose, and, in the name of the Blind and of the Deaf and Dumb, thanked his lordship for his suggestion, adding, that we did need Government assistance, but that that aid should be given in the form of a thorough inquiry into the present state of the Blind, as well as the Deaf and Dumb, and into the management of the institutions provided for their instruction. I stated that the enormous pauperism, as well as the suffering amongst these classes, were entirely due to the exile institutions and the spirit and ideas they engendered, and that when families applied for admission for their relatives, it was too often with a desire of getting relieved of the burden, and that the ties thus broken were never again united; and that the elevation of the Blind would never be complete till families felt it a point of honour

and duty not to have their Blind a burden on the charities of the country, but to make a market of their intellect and not a market of their calamity. These and other opinions I expressed on the subject of relief-type, such as I have given some pages earlier in these contributions, and I must own that I feel deeply indebted for the kind attention with which my remarks were listened to by the whole Congress. We have now only to look forward with earnest hope that the same noble philanthropist who suggested it, will have the satisfaction of seeing the commission effect that good which is so much needed ; for his lordship's experience, as one of the Commissioners of Lunacy, has proved to him how desirable it is that there should be some Government protection to shield the unfortunate from being got rid of, or so shelved that they may not interfere with the convenience of those who are in the enjoyment of health, social intercourse, and perhaps prosperity.

One of the points admitted to be of great importance, and which it is desired should be settled, is the best form of relief-type for the Blind. Nearly 80 years since Valentine Haüy first began printing in relief in Paris ; and 36 years since (in 1826) Mr. James Gall, of Edinburgh, introduced the art of relief-printing into the United Kingdom. A few years after, the Society of Arts of Edinburgh (*a sighted community*) awarded their Gold Metal to that which they considered the best, out of 19 different forms submitted for competition, and of course

they chose that which horn-book predilection and partiality approved of—the Roman capital; but which the Blind, except under compulsion or necessity, cannot or will not use. The antagonism of the sighted partisans of different types is the curse of the Blind, and the selfish pleas for the exclusive use of a particular type, or of books of a particular vendor, under the guise of zeal for “The Book,” or portions of it, which of course is always the first to be printed, absorbs all the money, and throws into the shade all inquiry as to how many pence the neglected Blind have been able to scrape together to meet each day’s expenses. It is sometimes an advantage to be at a distance from these centres of strife; and such I believe the Blind in Cork have found it to be. The school for the Blind is happily open to and welcomes Catholics, Church of England, and Dissenters. The clergy of each visit those of their own church, as do the sisters of religious communities, and the Protestant ladies of Cork. Perceiving how much more readily, with how much greater pleasure, and with how much greater less exhaustion the Blind receive knowledge through the ear than through the tedious process of the finger, the Blind are read to, and arrangements are made by the committee for any of the pupils to attend—either classes in other schools, or lectures adapted to their requirements or taste, and thus the exile system is broken through, and the social system encouraged.

In his paper, the Rev. R. G. Baker earnestly

advocates the importance of a more general diffusion of a knowledge of the finger alphabet, that each member of society should perform his or her share of welcoming into social life the four-sensed deaf mute; and he further suggests that application should be made for the insertion of the finger alphabet into the books for general instruction used at the training schools. Lord Shaftesbury took the same view, and instanced the case of a deaf and dumb girl from whom he had received a touching letter, suggesting that if a copy of the deaf and dumb alphabet were printed in every book, it would multiply a hundredfold the number of persons with whom she would be able to converse.

Long impressed with the importance of diffusing more generally a knowledge of the alphabet, as the first step to whatever else might be done hereafter, I two years since had an alphabet engraved, with remarks bearing on the subject printed above and below it, and, arranged in a column on each side, the names and dates of those benevolent men who, by their literary labours, had contributed to the elevation of the deaf and dumb, from the time of Pedro Ponce, the Benedictine of Spain, down to the writers of our own day; the whole forming a guide to those who would inquire further or more deeply into the subject. The whole is printed on a thin card, fifteen inches by ten, and may be had of the publishers, Ward and Lock, 158 Fleet Street. On June the 10th, in the Department of Jurisprudence, Mr. Hare read a paper "On

the Law affecting Perpetual Dedications of Property for Charitable or Public Trusts," in the course of which he advocated "that all gifts should be subject to periodical revision by some competent authority, such as a Committee of Council . . . thus reconciling the desires and interests of each generation." I do not believe that in any instance this revision is more needed than in the charities bequeathed to the Blind. I have been informed that, according to some benevolently-designed act of legislation, now forgotten or superseded, "*the blind man or blind woman is not a pauper*;" and yet how many charities are there from which the suffering Blind, starved, almost, in body as well as in mind, are debarred, and for which they are considered unfit and ineligible, solely because, in their necessity, or, perhaps, desertion, they have committed the crime of receiving parochial relief.

The felon or the convict, on his or her release from prison, is assisted to regain a position in society, and most properly is the past kept quiet by the philanthropist, and good conduct allowed to clear off the stain; but no good conduct can wipe away the stain of having received parochial relief; and more than once has poor Philip Davis, a blind man, now 65 years of age, been brought up at the Mansion House and imprisoned for his threatening language to the Secretary of the Cordwainers' Company. I believe this to be his case:—He became blind; and a vigorous mind imprisoned is much more

likely to become insane for a time than a weak or a soft one. When insane, he was sent to Hanwell at the expense of his parish, and when the balance of his mind was restored, he was let loose on the world blind, to find the pension of £5 or £10 a-year from the Cordwainers' Company "*most benevolently stopped* by this iron rule," to find his home broken up, and little or any other provision than that which vulgar prejudice and insufficient education generally accord to those who have recovered from exhausted mental powers or the strain of over-exertion. Another society of noblemen and gentlemen, connected with the School for the Indigent Blind in St. George's Fields, would do well to re-consider the terms on which they give pensions of £6 a-year, not quite half-a-crown a-week, to blind over forty years of age who are not possessed of an income of £10 a-year—"they must never have been a mendicant." Now I would venture to assert that no institution has made so many private or public paupers, at so dear a cost to the country, as that institution. I believe I state the truth when I assert, that after six years and a half of most expensive education, after a most expensive canvass, only eight per cent. are capable of just keeping themselves either clear of or on the brink of pauperism, whilst 92 per cent. are returned to their disappointed friends as private, or to society as public, paupers. I analysed the account of this charity from the report of 1857, and if there be a mistake it is

not intentional, and can be easily corrected. The following are extracts from the expenditure:—

Officers' salaries, including Chaplain, Housekeeper, Superintendent, Medical Officer, and others		£2,148 16 11
Housekeeping expenses, including £259 13s. 7d. of home manufactures con- sumed		5,332 19 0
Other expenses		428 3 0
		£7,909 18 11

TRADE ACCOUNT:—

Materials purchased (under every advantage of capital, knowledge, patronage, and influence, very different from the Blind man when he has scraped together sufficient to buy a small quantity by retail and in the dark, and, most probably, unprotected by the eyesight of a friend)		£824 2 8
Implements of trade (in addition to the standing stock of implements and machinery which the indigent blind can never have in their homes)		110 19 9
Goods purchased from blind working at their homes (formerly pupils)	...	233 7 4
Pupils' earnings		72 12 3
		£1,241 2 0
Goods sold to the Public (under every advantage of publicity and almost national notoriety, without the expenses of a shop, or the trouble or waste of time the solitary man would have in seeking a customer)		£815 9 2

Goods had by housekeeper for the use
of the School (and, happily for the
balance-sheet of the Institution, this
same customer generally figures to
the same amount) 259 13 7

If any one should meet with the work advertised on the inside of the cover, "What is doing for the Blind?" by Mr. James Gray, of the Institution for the Blind, Edinburgh, they will see an accurate account of the earnings of some of these unfortunate pupils after leaving, copied from the statement of the chaplain himself; and if £824 worth of raw material, after being worked on for a twelvemonth by, we may suppose, the majority of 154 pupils, assisted by the majority of £2,148 worth of staff in the shape of intellect, influence, and skilled foremanship cannot be made more productive, one may almost suppose rather the worse for being worked upon—how is it possible that these pupils can be said to be taught a trade by which they can earn their living, and, in time, perhaps obtain a pension, "if they should not become Mendicants;" or from the Cordwainers, or some other company, if they should not have received parochial relief; but which pension, however, they will be liable to lose if for a few months they should become insane and unable to pay for their own support at Hanwell Lunatic Asylum.

Another point should never be lost sight of. Does the Blind man or woman support him or herself by the trade or hand-craft he or she

learnt at an expensive Exile Institution, or by some other acquired since he or she returned to social life, and which would have been learned better if acquired earlier, and far better established and more extended if ties and connection had not been broken, or destroyed, by a long period of imprisonment in an Exile School. But in the language of my late kind friend Dr. Hue (p. 18), "It will be more and more felt that the wants of the mind are ever more pressing than those of the body;" and I will again repeat a sentence from the first observations I published on the Neglected State of the Blind nine years since, in 1853, on the difference between *Philozoic* and *Philanthropic* treatment; or, as M. Chanoine Carton so truly expresses it in the title of his paper, "De l'abandon dans lequel végète," &c. "Alms alone, and creature comforts however liberal the supply, and kill-time amusements, are but *philozoic* treatment; to rouse the intellectual powers and awaken the gratitude of man, his social affections and higher aspirations, the treatment must be *philanthropic*."

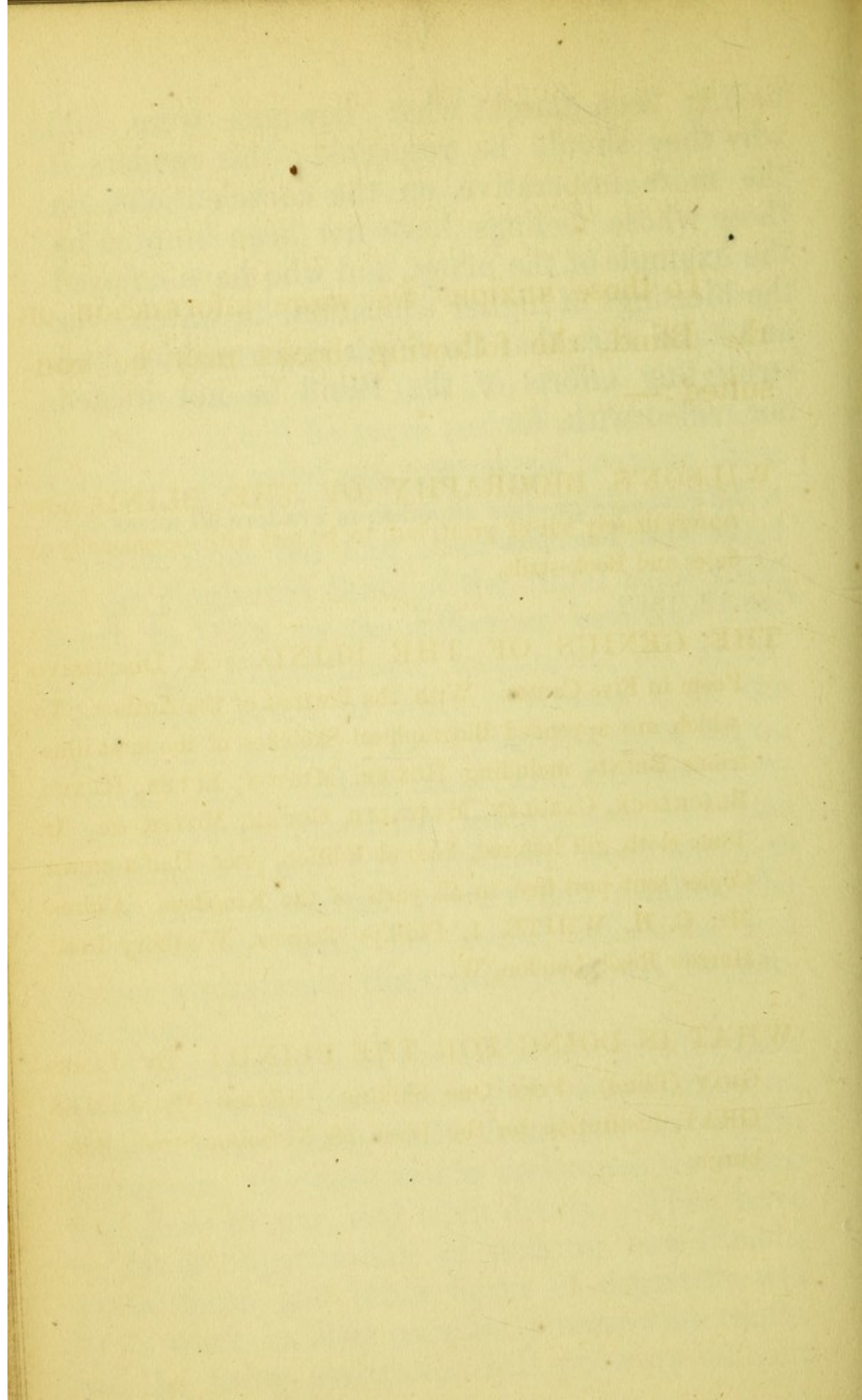
The necessities of the Blind are greater than those of the sighted, from their dependence on others, more particularly from the uncertain, precarious, or questionable assistance for which they have to pay, and often dearly. They have far fewer opportunities of making new friends, whilst death and other forms of departure will do its work in their constantly-narrowing circle, and the rising generation will grow up without

having been taught what they once were, and why they should be respected; this renders it the more imperative on the conscientious, on those whose feelings have not been blunted by the example of the many, and who have enjoyed the blessings of higher education, to watch over and take care that the fewer opportunities and struggling efforts of the Blind be not wasted nor trifled with, for

“facilis descensus
Sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras
Hic labor, hoc opus.”

June 18, 1862.

J. B.



To those anxious for more information on the Blind, the following books may be consulted :—

WILSON'S BIOGRAPHY OF THE BLIND, now unfortunately out of print, but to be met with occasionally at Sales and Book-stalls.

THE GENIUS OF THE BLIND. A Discursive Poem in Five Cantos. With the Portrait of the Author. To which are appended Biographical Sketches of the most illustrious BLIND, including HOMER, MILTON, EULER, HUBER, BLACKLOCK, CAROLAN, METCALFE, GOUGH, MOYES, &c. In 18mo cloth, gilt lettered, Second Edition, price Half-a-crown. Copies sent post free to all parts of the Kingdom. Address Mr. C. H. WHITE, 1, Phillips Terrace, Westbury Road, Harrow Road, London, W.

WHAT IS DOING FOR THE BLIND? By JAMES GRAY (Blind). Price One Shilling. Address Mr. JAMES GRAY, Institution for the Blind, 58, Nicholson Street, Edinburgh.

To those persons for whose information the
the Board the following facts may be of
service:-

WILSON'S BUREAU OF THE BLIND
established in 1871 for the purpose of
teaching the blind to read and write.

THE OFFICE OF THE BLIND A LITERARY
Bureau in the United States. With the purpose of the
which are operated throughout the country in the most
efficient manner. Having received the highest
praise from the Government, the Bureau has
been able to secure the best talent for the
purpose and has been able to do so in the most
efficient manner. J. Edgar Wilson, President, 1871-
1872. J. Edgar Wilson, President, 1872-1873.

WHAT IS BEING DONE FOR THE BLIND IN
Great Britain. The Government has
been able to secure the best talent for the
purpose and has been able to do so in the most
efficient manner.