

That the Petty Sessions' Clerks have permanent tenure, but salaries subject to revision according to the produce of the fees and fines in the court in which each is employed, could likewise have their salaries relieved from this uncertainty, and themselves from having any interest in the fines imposed and proceedings taken in their courts, by having the funds out of which their salaries are now paid accounted for, like the dog tax, to local rates, and those salaries in exchange charged upon such rates.

That the fourth impediment to lending money on leasehold interests, is the insecurity to registered mortgages of such interests, introduced by the Landlord and Tenant Act of 1860, which deprived such mortgagees of their nine months to redeem, or of notice of ejectment by superior landlord—a defect which again arose from the defective state of the registers in Ireland.

That the fifth impediment to the lending of money to farmers and small owners of land, is the want of a local registry, based on a public map for such interests, for which system the maps used by the valuation office in every union in Ireland, for the revision of the valuation each year for changes of holdings and improvements in buildings, afford the greatest facility.

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### III.—*Reports of Charity Organisation Committee of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, appointed 7th December, 1875.*

THE committee was appointed at the December meeting of the Council, to consider and make suggestions upon the subject of a charity organisation:—(1°) To collect further information as to the working of charity organisation in London, New York, Elberfeld, and other places; (2°) To collect information as to the working of charities in Dublin, and to suggest the branches of Charity organisation that could be best undertaken by charitable bodies in Dublin; (3°) To collect, through existing charitable organisations, information as to the causes of pauperism, and to suggest means by which such information may be more completely and systematically collected; Professor Ingram, LL.D., F.T.C.D., chairman; The Very Rev. H. H. Dickinson, D.D. (Dean of the Chapel Royal); Major H. Le G. Geary, R.A., (Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster-General); John Lentaigne, Esq., C.B.; Edward Gibson, Esq., M.P.; Alderman J. Campbell, J.P.; William Findlater, Esq.; Professor O'Shaughnessy; David Ross, Esq.; William J. Hancock, Esq.; John R. Garstin, Esq.; Henry Dix Hutton, Esq.; Henry H. Stewart, Esq., M.D.; John O'Hagan, Esq., Q.C.; Professor Donnell; David Drummond, Esq., J.P.; and Murrough O'Brien, Esq.; Dr. Hancock, Constantine Molloy, Esq., and Joseph T. Pim, Esq., Honorary Secretaries.

1° *Report on proposed Reform in the Law as to Lunatics in humble circumstances, who are within, or just above, the Pauper Class.*

THE law as to lunatics in Ireland who are in humble circumstances, either within or just above the pauper class, is in a defective state, and in some particulars very far behind the corresponding legislation in England and Wales.

By an act of the past session (38 & 39 Vic., c. 47) magistrates in Ireland are authorized to order, by a summary proceeding, the cost of maintenance of lunatics in asylums to be paid out of the property of the lunatic, where more than sufficient to maintain the family.

The committee are of opinion that this salutary jurisdiction admits of some valuable extensions. The magistrates should, we think, in every case where they send persons to asylums, be authorized to inquire at once as to the property of the lunatic so sent; if there be no property applicable to his maintenance, as to the liability of any relation bound to support such lunatic; and to make a continuing order as to future maintenance, and not merely an order as to past maintenance.

The magistrates should be empowered, in every case where the whole of the lunatic's property does not, in their opinion, exceed £30 a-year, to appoint a guardian or guardians of the person, or a guardian or guardians of the estate, to discharge the duties of a committee appointed under the sign manual, and to make orders from time to time as to the management and protection of the property of the lunatic, for himself, his family, and others dependent upon him, and his successor in estate.

The Chairman of the county should have like jurisdiction in cases where the whole of the lunatic's property does not exceed £60 a-year, power being reserved to the Lord Chancellor, or other judge authorized under the sign manual of the Queen, to remove any case to lunacy jurisdiction under the sign manual.

In this way a remedy would be provided for the fact disclosed in *The Judicial and Criminal Statistics*, that of 724 lunatics placed in custody for the protection of their persons, in 1874 (a considerable portion of whom must have been possessed of property), only 25 had their property protected by the existing legal arrangements for the purpose.

The unsatisfactory state of the law in Ireland as compared with that of England in the case of lunatics committed by justices, is thus explained in the volume of *Judicial Statistics* for 1874:—

“The Lunatic Asylums’ Act of 1853 enables Justices [in England] (§ 11) to send a pauper lunatic to an asylum, upon a certificate that he is deemed to be a lunatic and a proper person to be sent to an asylum, and (§ 21) to send to asylum lunatics (whether paupers or not) wandering at large, not being properly cared for, or as being cruelly treated. The Act provides stringent penalties upon medical officers and overseers of the poor, etc., who omit to give notice so as to have the above classes of lunatics brought before justices. Lunatics sent under this Act are not classed as criminal lunatics; and so successful has this Act been in its operation, that the justices in England did not send a single person to an asylum under the earlier Act of 1837 (1 and 2 Vic., c. 14), which enables them to commit on evidence of derangement of mind ‘accompanied with an intent to commit a crime.’

“In Ireland, Justices of the Peace have, under the Irish Act of 1867 (30 & 31 Vic., c. 118), only the powers of the earlier English Act of 1837 in a modified form, and none of the powers of the later English Act of 1853.

“They consequently had, before committing lunatics, to wait for evidence ‘*of an intent to commit a crime,*’ and the 1,099 lunatics committed by them were necessarily classed with the criminal lunatics.

“The earlier stage at which lunatics were sent to asylums in England and Wales led to the satisfactory result—that the number of actually criminal lunatics there in 1873 was only 35 in a population equal to that of Ireland; while the number of lunatics in Ireland committed, who had gone beyond an intent to commit a crime into actual crime, in 1874 was 64.”

The Committee are of opinion that Justices in Ireland should now have the salutary powers of the English Act of 1853 entrusted to them, and should not be left with only the earlier and less effective powers of the English Act of 1837.

Medical officers and relieving officers in Ireland should also be placed under the same obligations, as to giving notice respecting the lunatics above referred to, as the corresponding officers in England and Wales have been under since 1853.

The adoption of this change in the law is greatly facilitated by the provisions of the Act of 1875, under which the asylums can be relieved of harmless and incurable lunatics, without altering the chargeability on the county at large, or depriving the counties of the contribution for the support of this class from the imperial taxes.

Whatever may be thought of the policy of using workhouses as a place of reception for these cases, their removal from the asylum will make more room for the curable cases, which should, as far as possible, be sent to asylums at the earliest moment, and before the lunatic has shown an intent to commit, or has been irritated into the actual commission of crime.

## 2° *Report on Amendment of the Law as to Ruined Houses in Towns.*

The Council of the Charity Organisation Society of London having entered into the subject of the defective state of houses in London, and had a committee of inquiry, and having made representations to the government on the subject, the Committee have had under their consideration the subjoined proposal of Dr. Hancock, to extend the Scotch law as to ruined houses to England and Ireland.

The Committee have decided to recommend the proposed extension of the Scotch law, and to ask the Council of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland to seek, as to Ireland, the co-operation of the Irish Town authorities, and as to England, the co-operation of the Charity Organisation Society of London to have the extension made. Miss Octavia Hill has already stated her opinion of the importance of the reform for London.

The Committee are of opinion that the subject falls peculiarly within the province of charity organisation, as it is persons whose poverty compels them to live in any houses that offer, who are the chief sufferers from the defective state of the law as to ruined houses.