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1.—*The Educational and other Aspects of the Statistics of Crime in Dublin.* By Mark S. O'Shaughnessy, Esq., Barrister-at-Law.

[Read Monday, December 17th, 1860]

IN a well-ordered community where the duty of Government to provide a well-regulated *Police* is recognized and has been fulfilled, it is to be apprehended that the existence of social disorders which are kept out of view, may perhaps be ignored, and that their causes alike with their effects may be disregarded. The better-ordered the social life of a community is, the worse chance that the foul undercurrent of moral degradation moving about will come under cognizance; the more refined does a community become, the less likely is it to give its interest to the workings of the silent crimes of capitals. An effort then to draw attention upon the extent of the crime which is known to have been actually committed in the community in which we live, upon the criminal population existing amongst us,—an attempt to investigate some of the causes which lead to these evils, and to recall considerations which may serve to abate them, may, however inadequate to the importance of the subject that effort really is, be yet not unworthy the serious attention of those whom opulence, intelligence, and virtue have saved from the temptations which surround the indigent and the illiterate. There is another and a more special reason why notice should be directed to the important information as to the social condition of this metropolis, which is contained in the statistical returns of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. In consequence of a recent Treasury order, but a very small number of these returns is printed; the circulation is therefore very limited, and is almost exclusively amongst persons whose public employments are of so engrossing a nature as to make the investigation of such returns as these all but impossible. If, then, any lessons of benefit to the community can be had from them, no opportunity of examining these returns ought to be missed; and should attention be awakened before the operations in connexion with taking the census in the coming year be commenced, it may be the means of

inducing steps to be taken by which further information in relation to this subject may be obtained and made permanently available.

Notwithstanding that no very remarkable differences between the population in Ireland at the period of the last census and at the present time may be supposed to exist, there must necessarily be much uncertainty in any observations adopting the census of 1851 as a basis. But where the subject of our investigation is a city of the magnitude of Dublin, and that we are about to direct our attention upon the facts which are existing in it with reference to the coexistence of ignorance and crime, certain observations of the Census Commissioners in 1851 become of peculiar importance. "It is remarkable (they say, Report on Ages and Education, p. xiii.) that some of the cities and large towns showed a retrograde movement, or were, at least, stationary in regard to education;—It is difficult to account for the increase in the proportion of uneducated in these cases, especially as towns almost invariably afford many more facilities for imparting instruction than rural districts. The male population, too, would appear to have retrograded more than the female. Large numbers of males were also to be found in the civic districts, who had removed thereto from the counties in which they were born; and it may probably be the illiterate males who, for the most part, thus migrate and increase the proportion of the uneducated, whilst they diminish the number of ignorant in those counties from which they remove." There can be little doubt that the circumstance which the Commissioners thus note does still continue, that the immigration into cities, which in regard to Dublin increased from 56,397 in 1841, to 90,350 in 1851, does still go on, and that we shall not be far wrong in assuming that, so far as the great centres of population are concerned, the state of education is not much higher at the present moment than it was found to be in 1851.

It is, however, a very curious fact that for the last few years, whilst the total number of persons taken into custody in the Dublin police district has fluctuated in a remarkable manner, the proportion of the number so taken into custody who could neither read nor write, to the whole number, has steadily decreased. In 1857 the per centage of those who could neither read nor write was a little over 51 per cent. of the total number taken into custody in that year, it was 48 per cent. in 1858, and but 44 per cent. in 1859. Going back to the census year, 1851, we find that the total number taken into custody was 63,106, of whom 39,191, being nearly 62 per cent. of the whole number, could neither read nor write. The per centage of the total number (63,106) taken into custody in that year on the population on Dublin (258,369) was nearly 25. Assuming the same number to have been that of the population, the per centage in 1857 would be nearly 12, the total number taken into custody having been but 30,832. In 1858 the number fell to 23,045, being nearly 9 per cent; whilst last year (1859) it rose to 25,848, or about 10 per cent of the same total population. It cannot be doubted, however, that the population of Dublin has steadily increased since 1851; the per centage of the three years referred to ought, therefore, to be taken at a lower figure, and the results of the comparison with 1851 are, therefore, more satisfactory.

Pursuing the investigation of the condition in respect to education of the remaining number of those taken into custody during the year of more immediate interest, that which has last gone by, we find that about 2 per cent. of the total number consisted of persons of superior education, 4 per cent. could read and write well, nearly 50 per cent. could read only or read and write imperfectly, while (as already stated) about 44 per cent. could neither read nor write. Now, taking from the census returns for the city of Dublin the proportion per cent. of those in the same educational state, we find that amongst the whole population literary knowledge is far from being unevenly distributed. Thus, in 1851, the number per cent. of males who could read and write was 67; of those who could read only, 11; of those who could neither read nor write, 22; of females 53 per cent. could read and write, 19 per cent. could read only, and 28 per cent. could neither read nor write. It is worthy of remark that these proportions vary but little from the per centage of the year 1841; when they do, they show some slight decrease of ignorance. Thus in 1841 but 50 per cent. of females could read and write, against 53 per cent. in 1851, and 30 per cent. could neither read nor write in 1841, whilst only 28 were in this state of ignorance in 1851.

Now returning to the examination of the police returns we find some remarkable results in the comparative table of the education of the persons committed for trial and convicted for the seven years ending in 1859. Little change is to be found among those of superior education. There were but 2 such individuals in 1853, in some years none, and in 1859 but 4 such persons. So, too, of those who could read and write well, there were fourteen individuals in 1859, there had been 16 in 1853, in 1856, the number had fallen to 8; from year to year fluctuating with little variation. Not so with regard to the classes who are illiterate or nearly so. As the total numbers decreased, so did these classes. In 1853, those convicted who could neither read nor write numbered 410; with slight exceptions they steadily decreased until 1859—when the total number was but 159, making a difference of 62 per cent. in seven years*. So, too, of those who read only, or read and wrote imperfectly, 383 were convicted in 1853, and the decrease went on almost steadily, to 167 in 1859, making a difference of fifty-seven per cent. in the seven years. The remarkable steadiness in the total numbers of persons of education who were convicted, naturally leads to an examination of the tables with a view to ascertaining the class of offences to which such persons are found to be prone. Of-

* Years.	Taken into Custody.	Committed for Trial and Convicted. Neither read nor write.	Read only or imperfectly.
1859.	25,848	159	167
1858.	23,045	155	190
1857.	30,382	229	216
1856.	38,876	197	207
1855.	35,634	263	206
1854.	43,108	378	351
1853.	48,556	410	383
1852.	56,424	399	351
1851.	63,106	482	349

fences against the currency, forgery, or uttering forged securities would seem to be a class of offences generally requiring superior education even to attempt. But generally it would seem such offences are attempted by illiterate persons. It is in offences against property committed without violence that criminals of a better degree of education are found exercising their ingenuity. Embezzlements and frauds hold the first, larceny from dwelling-houses by persons other than servants the next place, and this order seems to hold good from year to year.

The subject of juvenile crime has for some time occupied a large share of public attention. Encouraged not less by the charm of a work so holy as that of withdrawing from vicious influences those whose ways should not be with the wicked, but whose lips should perfect God's praise, than incited by the prospect of the benefit to society of taking away much of the pliant material from which the habitual law-breaker is made, many good, wise, and earnest men in England, and happily in Ireland too, have borrowed from the experiences of Mettrai and Ruysedele, of M. de Metz, and of M. Pol, and promise themselves not only the conversion of the boy-thief into the workman conscious of duty to God and society, but also the diminution of crime, as year by year they stop up the main sources of it—ignorance and the habit of idleness. The Reformatory has become a recognised institution, and we look with confidence to the results of its curative agencies upon the heart and the habits of the poor misguided child. As yet the preventive agency of the Industrial School is unknown in Ireland. In 1853, a Select Committee of the House of Commons, after a protracted investigation into the subject of juvenile criminals, agreed to a Report, and in it the following resolutions are to be found, (*Parliamentary Papers, Session 1852-53*).

“That it appears to this Committee to be established by the evidence, that a large proportion of the present aggregate of crime might be prevented, and thousands of miserable human beings, who have before them, under our present system, nothing but a hopeless career of wickedness and vice, might be converted into virtuous, honest, and industrious citizens, if due care were taken to rescue destitute, neglected, and criminal children from the dangers and temptations incident to their position.”

“That a great proportion of the criminal children of this country, especially those convicted of first offences, appear rather to require systematic education, care, and industrial occupation, than mere punishment.”

“That the education given in workhouses, although improved of late, has not been sufficiently directed to industrial training, which the Committee deem to be of especial value, as affording the best means of enabling children to provide for themselves the means of independent support upon leaving the workhouse.”

“That the Ragged Schools existing in England and Scotland, and recently introduced into Ireland, especially the Ragged Industrial Feeding Schools, at present supported by voluntary subscriptions, or, as in Glasgow, by local rates, have produced beneficial effects on the children of the most destitute classes of society inhabiting large towns.”

Since the date of that Report a measure has become law in England under which Industrial Schools can be established, and to institutions with similar objects most liberal aid is afforded by the Council of Education in England.* Of the necessity for similar institutions in Ireland, the returns before us present, so far at least as Dublin is concerned, most convincing proofs. During the year 1859, of the summary convictions (under which most of the class of offences which juveniles commit will be found) no less than 1,078 were of children under fifteen years of age; of this number 151 were under ten. The proportion of juveniles to the total number so convicted, was five per cent. Now it is a remarkable fact, that assuming the total population of the city of Dublin to be the same as in 1851, (2,58,369) the total number of convictions during the past year would be no more than eight per cent. on that population. Of course, if the population have increased the per centage would be smaller. If the rate of increase between 1851 and 1861 be not less than it was between 1841 and 1851, the present population of Dublin would amount to about 283,500. We have seen that the number of children of fifteen years and under was five per cent upon the total number of convictions. When we come to examine into the total number of children of fifteen years and under receiving education in Dublin, the result given by the last Census was this:—The total number of persons aged fifteen years and under was 70,826; of the same age the number, so far as it can be ascertained, attending school was 23,136 or thirty-two per cent. of the entire, leaving sixty-eight per cent. of the juvenile population of the city growing up in ignorance.

Pursuing the investigation of the subject of juvenile crime, we find that of those under ten years of age, fifty-nine boys and sixty-six girls were summarily convicted as vagrants; eight boys as disorderly characters, one for gambling, and one for drunkenness. In children of such an age charity will not see depravity, but rather the painful results of neglect. Here then at once arises the necessity of which we have already spoken, and here at once we recognise the deficiencies of the law in this country as compared with what legislation had provided, first for Scotland, and upon the results of its experience, for England too. The Irish Act relating to Vagrancy is the 10th & 11th Vic. cap. 84, and was passed in 1847. Since then no improvements in respect to this class of offenders have been introduced into any Statutes relating to Ireland. The enactment is as follows:—

Section III. "And be it enacted, that every person wandering abroad and begging, or placing himself in any public place, street, highway, court, or passage, to beg or gather alms, or causing or procuring any child or children so to do, and every person who having

* Since this paper was written a letter has appeared in the *Globe* newspaper (29th January, 1861), from Mr. Adderley, M.P., from which it seems that the aid given is as follows:—"By a Minute of the Committee of the Council of Education, December, 1857, Ragged Schools may receive half the rent of the premises in which industrial instruction is carried on, one-third of tools and materials, five shillings per annum per individual scholar, aid in purchasing books, maps, and apparatus; easier conditions as to the qualification of masters, whose salaries the Committee will augment; and if the school be certified it receives £7 10s. for every child per annum, or for females £27 for every person in training as a teacher, on certain conditions."

been resident in any Union in Ireland shall go from such Union to some other Union, or from one Electoral Division or Relief District to another Electoral Division or Relief District for the purpose of obtaining relief in such last mentioned Union or District, shall on conviction thereof before any justice of the peace, if such justice shall think fit, be committed to the Common Gaol or House of Correction, there to be kept to hard labour for any time not exceeding one calendar month."

Compare this with the legislation for Scotland contained in the Act, 17 & 18 of the Queen, cap. 74; and 19 & 20, cap. 28. An admirable exposition of the provisions made by these enactments may be found in the *Irish Quarterly Review* for January, 1858, whilst the Society has been made aware of the valuable results of the working of them by the paper read on the last night of meeting by Dr. Hancock, ("The Aberdeen Industrial Schools contrasted with Irish Workhouses," *Transactions*, vol. iii. page 6). Compare this again with what has been done for England by the Act of 1857, 21 & 22 Vic. cap. 48, already referred to. From a paper read at Birmingham, before the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, by Mr. Alfred Hill, Barrister-at-law, the following exposition of its provisions is taken, (*Transactions of the Association*, 1857, pp. 290, et seq.)

"When any such child (i. e. apprehended for begging or other vagrancy) is brought before the justices, they have the option, instead of convicting and sentencing him to imprisonment, &c. to send him, unless his parent, guardian, or nearest adult relative can be immediately found, to a certified industrial school for not more than a week. Inquiries must then be instituted, a notice given to the parent, guardian, &c. if any can be found, or to the person with whom the child was last known to be residing, of the circumstances under which he has been taken into custody, and that the matter will be inquired into at the time and place mentioned in the notice. When that time arrives the magistrates may inquire into the matter, and, if they see fit, discharge the child altogether, or deliver him to his parent, guardian, &c. on the latter giving an assurance in writing that he will be responsible for the good behaviour of the child for any period not exceeding twelve months; but if no such assurance be given, then the magistrates may order the child to be sent to a certified industrial school, for such time as they may think necessary for his education and training. Parental responsibility is enforced by the punishment of the parent, &c. if, notwithstanding such assurance as above stated, the child be again charged with a similar offence, provided it is proved that the last offence has taken place through the neglect of the parent; and upon the complaint of the managers of the school to which a child has been sent, the magistrates may order a weekly sum not exceeding three shillings to be paid by the parent, &c. until the child shall attain the age of fifteen years, beyond which age he cannot be kept in the school against his will. If the managers think it expedient to allow any child sent to their school under the Act to sleep at the house of his parent, or of any trustworthy person, they may do so. On the application of the parent or managers of a school, the justices, if satisfied that a suitable employment in life has been found for the child, or that there is any other good cause, may order

his discharge before the expiration of the period for which he has been sent, or may order him to be removed from one school to another.—A power is given to Boards of Guardians to contract (with the consent of the Poor Law Board) for the maintenance of pauper children at certified industrial schools.” Mr. Hill concludes his paper in these words :—“It will be seen that, notwithstanding some defects and blemishes which the bill has received (in common with most others) during its passage through Parliament, it has laid down two important principles.

“*First*,—That when the natural guardians of children neglect their parental duties towards them, the State has a right to step in and see those duties performed; and, *secondly*,—That neglectful parents shall be compelled to bear the expense of their children’s training and maintenance.”

It cannot be questioned that in the humane exercise of such provisions as those quoted above would be found effective safeguards for the children of poverty; that they would be withdrawn from the evil examples of street-life, from the corruption consequent upon constant temptation, from initiation into prison-life and its foul companionship, from the commencement of that course of disorderly excitement so different from the patient, toilsome existence of the industrious poor.

How rapidly contamination spreads, how quick and strong is the growth of evil, how the child taken up for begging, for stone-throwing, for some trifling offence, the result of heedlessness, the mere thoughtless breaking out of a child’s uncertain temper, or aptness for mischief, or love of fun, how sin engenders sin, may be readily illustrated. The following account of a trial upon one of the Spring circuits of the present year appeared at the time of the occurrence in a respectable provincial journal :—

“The ample space in front of the dock was crowded by seven boys whose ages ranged from 14 to 17, all sharp-witted, fully alive as to what was going on, ready to make points upon the evidence as it was given. The facts disclosed were shortly these. Between 3 and 4 o’clock on a night last January, the inmates of a house in a neighbouring town were aroused by the stealthy tread of some persons who had contrived to break in. The burglars, interrupted in their work, made off, and a search was then made to ascertain what had been plundered. A jar of whiskey, tobacco cut into lengths for sale, some copper money, with other property, were missed, and the police were given information. Less than two hours after, the constables found the missing property in the school of the Union workhouse, the seven prisoners there, all but two in Union clothing, ‘the worse for liquor, and two so stupidly drunk that they could not be brought to the barracks.’ Some fine-drawn distinctions as to identification of property and the nice dissection of evidence made by a conscientious and acute minded judge, (the Hon. Mr. Justice Christian), led to the acquittal of three of the gang. The first of these is aged 17 years, *ten* of which were spent in the workhouse; his initiation to gaol life occurred in 1858, when he got a month’s imprisonment with hard labour, for a workhouse offence. His companion then, as now, was No. 2, who has spent 9 years in the workhouse, and was

twice in gaol in 1858 for workhouse offences—his age is 14. No. 3, aged 15, ten of which were spent in the workhouse, bids fair to be a very beneficial subject to Crown prosecutors. In August, 1856, a workhouse offence got him a month's imprisonment. He seems to have become enamoured of gaol life, for in the November of the same year he got two months for maliciously breaking glass, and in the following December five months with hard labour for setting fire to bedding in the bridewell of the town. Again, in February, 1858, he got back to gaol for a workhouse offence; so that his choice of the gaol rather than the workhouse as a residence is sufficiently plainly defined. Now let us take up the four convicted. No. 1, aged 14, was reared in the workhouse. In March, and again in December, 1857, and again in May, 1859, workhouse offences sent him to gaol. No. 2, aged 15, has been ten years in the workhouse. In December, 1857, he accompanied No. 1 upon the latter's second visit to gaol. In February, 1858, he joined No. 2 and No. 3 of batch A. on their visit, and in April, 1859, he found his way there on his own account. The third of this lot of precocious villains has been 9 years in the workhouse, is 15 years of age; for stealing clothing was in gaol in June, 1857, and was one of the party who in January, 1858, got a month's imprisonment with hard labour for a workhouse offence. The system of recruiting for 'the Devil's infantry' which goes on, must have struck the reader as we detailed the stories of increasing corruption. No. 4 is a pitiful example of this system of evil communication. It is his first enrolment on the calendar. He is 17 years old, had been 8 years in the workhouse, of which he was not an inmate at the time of the burglary. It is rarely so striking a case as this presents itself, although we sadly fear the work goes steadily on."

Of the same painful fact,—the quick growth of crime, the rapid development of the criminal, the returns before us offer striking examples. We have seen that of the ages under 10, there were 8 boys taken up as disorderly characters; in the class from 10 to 15 years, this class of offenders had expanded to 449 boys and 20 girls. They are no longer vagrants or the like; that class rapidly decreases as age advances and mischievous propensities are nursed. Of the number of these ages, 947 in all, 280 were convicted for larcenies and like offences against property, 33 for like offences accompanied with malice; and at this tender age we meet with three classed as disorderly prostitutes.

The mention of this revolting fact leads at once to the consideration of the moral aspects of these returns, so far as they disclose to what extent our community is infected with this—the great sin of great cities. If these returns are, in this respect, faithworthy, they show a gradual decrease in the total number of this most miserable class from 1854 to 1857, and a gradual increase since that year. The numbers are as follows:—

1854	...	...	...	...	...	1,128
1855	...	...	...	...	...	745
1856	...	...	...	...	...	781
1857	...	...	...	...	...	585
1858	...	...	...	...	...	704
1859	...	...	...	...	...	865

The amount of property lost in this way is enormous ; the actual loss, not including the portions of the original loss recovered, is set down as follows :—

1856.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£1,051
1857.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	541
1858.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	831
1859.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	730
								£3,153

Another return shows how property put in jeopardy by the drunkenness of the owners was protected by the interposition of the Police. Upon the persons arrested in a state of intoxication during the past year £4,123 in money was found, and property to the value of £1,665 more, being a total of £5,788 thus put in peril by the owners' misconduct, and protected for them and restored.

Some considerations are suggested by an examination of the education of those taken into custody for drunkenness. It would seem that it is not amongst the most illiterate that this vice mainly prevails. Doubtless, as some means are required for its indulgence, the better circumstanced classes are those who are principally its victims. The returns quoted of property found on the persons of those apprehended for drunkenness supports the view which the educational returns have suggested. Of the 10,330 the total number, over 62 per cent. were not illiterate, and of these as many as 7 per cent. were persons of good education : no more than 38 per cent. were wholly illiterate.

Aspects such as these in which we have been regarding our community—views such as these of the dark and gloomy side of society must be painful to all, and depressing too, save to such as, loving their kind and striving to do service to humanity, see work still to do, and being pointed out the way, are prepared to set out earnestly and hopefully upon it. There can be little difficulty in seeing the ways wherein exertion may be used and used with effect. By resisting this continued influx of country pauperism into the large towns ; by repressing so far as is possible the tendency to this movement which is nourished by the circumstance that poor law aid is available only in the towns,—that is to say, in the Workhouse ; by exercising actively the legal powers of enforcing sanitary regulations ; by discouraging the demoralizing crowding-together of the poor in close and filthy city habitations ; by insisting upon the constant use of moral agencies in the education of the young, not mere school instruction, but systematic training in daily labour, and not even this alone, but withdrawing from them the pernicious examples which will ever be found by the simple and unthinking amongst masses of population, and banishing from the public gaze debasing exhibitions of open profligacy and unblushing vice ; by efforts tending to such ends crime must be diminished and society improved. As in the spread of education, the increase of prosperity, the growth of labour, we have seen the number of criminals diminish, so we may still trust in the extension of good results when we devote ourselves to the exercise of good means.