

Prisons

Dupl. n^o

ON REFORMATORIES

FOR

THE DESTITUTE AND THE FALLEN,

(BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A PAPER READ AT THE STATISTICAL SECTION
OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION,)

BY

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ROYAL CHARTER.

A MAGISTRATE OF THE COUNTY OF LANARK, ETC. ETC.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED,

REPORT ON AGRICULTURAL COLONIES,

BY

M. DEMETZ,

HONORARY COUNSELLOR OF THE IMPERIAL COURT OF PARIS.

GLASGOW:

JAMES MACLEHOSE, 61 ST. VINCENT-STREET.

1856.

THE interest still continued to be manifested by the Public in the promotion of Reformatories for the Fallen, makes it of great importance that the views of men of other countries, and the result of their experience in this laudable work, should be well known throughout our own country. With this end in view, the following pages were prepared for and read at the meeting of the British Association, held at Glasgow in September, 1855. Numerous enquiries having since been made for copies of the paper, I have been induced to publish it in the present form, in the hope that the views advocated may arrest the attention of a more numerous class of the community, and thus tend to increase the interest felt by the public in this important question.

While the citizens of Glasgow were discussing this subject in the autumn of last year, the benevolent men of France were about the same time similarly engaged. At a meeting of the International Charities of the Continent, held at Paris in August, a most interesting and valuable report on Agricultural Colonies was read by M. Demetz, of Mettray. Few men who have paid attention to the subject of Reformatories for destitute and criminal children, are not familiar with the name, and the successful labours in this benevolent calling, of the great French philanthropist, M. Demetz.

The report read by him at this meeting has been published in the French language, and as it contains matter of great interest and importance bearing on the management of Reformatories, a translation of it is now appended. The work has been done by my daughter, whose services in such matters have always been of great use to me.

From a perusal of this able address, it will be seen that M. Demetz arrives at the same conclusion all men who have given attention to the subject of Reformatories have done, that in order successfully to solve the problem of the reclamation of a criminal or destitute child, the work must be carried on in Agricultural Colonies—that the system of grouping the children in limited numbers, and placing them under the constant care, tuition, and moral guidance of Family Fathers or

Brothers, trained for the purpose, is most likely to prove beneficial to the child.

In the present position of Reformatories in this country, the testimony here brought to bear on this point is of much importance. Among numerous benevolent men, many of whose lives have been dedicated to this good cause, one and all of them testify to the superiority of the Agricultural Colony. The opinions and practice of such men as Pestalozzi, De Fellenberg, Wichern, Demetz, Kuratli, Suringar, and many others hardly less eminent, should serve as guides to the benevolent men of this country; and in the development and prosecution of the acts lately passed by the legislature empowering the establishment of Reformatories, it is hoped the facts and opinions contained in the interesting paper of M. Demetz will help to solve the problem all have so ardently at heart, viz. the mode in which the work is to be carried on for the reclamation of the child at the very base of the social scale.

JAMES McCLELLAND.

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ON REFORMATORIES

FOR THE

DESTITUTE AND THE FALLEN.

[READ AT THE STATISTICAL SECTION OF THE GLASGOW MEETING OF THE
BRITISH ASSOCIATION, 1855.]

THE discussion which has for sometime past taken place on the subject of Reformatories for destitute and criminal children, has tended to pave the way for much real benefit being done to that unfortunate class of society. The recent legislation now so happily brought into active operation and practice, makes it a matter of almost national importance, that a full knowledge of the practical working of similar Institutions in other countries should be known in our own—that we may thus acquire an insight into the most enlightened plans yet adopted for the Reformation, training, and ultimate reclamation of the criminal and destitute child.

In perusing, therefore, the remarks which follow, I should not like it to be considered that almost anything new to the Section is to be advanced by me, but in the hope that the facts which will be brought forward may tend to elicit discussion, and thereby promote the improvement of those Reformatories now established, and of those which may yet be founded under the recent legislation on this subject.

It may indeed be difficult to alter many of the Institutions now located in cities, upon which large sums of money have been spent in buildings, machinery, and management; but many similar Institutions are yet destined to be erected throughout the country; and it is most desirable the promoters of them should have a knowledge of the labours of others in the same cause, that they may thereby cull from their practice such improvements and ameliorations as may enable them to effect the greatest amount of good in the simplest, most economical, and efficient manner.

My attention has been more or less turned in an indirect manner to some of the details of this subject for many years; but the paper read to this Section at the Liverpool meeting of the British Association in 1854, by Mr. Lloyd Baker, has forcibly reminded me how desirable it would be to bring the question before a meeting of the Association at Glasgow, where so many ardent, enlightened, and generous patrons of the poor, do themselves so much honour by

unwearied attention to the welfare of the erring fallen within their own city.

With the object I have in view, it may be desirable to give a short sketch of the origin and progress of Institutions for the reclamation of the fallen, which from time to time have been established throughout various countries in Europe, under the enlightened guidance of some of the best and most philanthropic men of the day.

One of the first pioneers in this great work was M. de Fellenberg,* of Hofwyl, near Berne—a name known throughout the civilised world for the unwearied interest taken in the cause of education. About the year 1810, this gentleman instituted on his own estate, at Hofwyl, a labour school, which began with teaching and training beggar boys and criminals.

The high principle with which he set out, was by the training the children received at his hands, to attempt to create an improved race of men, according to his means, and thus to infuse new blood into the veins of society.

To do this he resolved to isolate his pupils—to guard them from contamination with any outward form of vice, and on their attaining the requisite education and training, to send them into the world as models for their associates to follow. He then hoped that, like so many loadstones, they would attract others around them, and thus be the means of doing good to others, as he had attempted to do good to them. In this way this little leaven might, he thought, in process of time, leaven the whole social lump.

The peasantry were at first offered the benefit of his Institution, but they had a feeling of distrust in his plans, and unwilling to lose the labour of their children, they either refused or omitted to come forward to adopt the views he had placed before them.

Being a man of firm and undaunted resolution, he was not to be baffled by such an obstacle. His next movement was to try the beggar boys of his neighbourhood. He took this class even in their most neglected state of body and mind. Young criminals he did not refuse as his pupils, and this class of the “fallen” he fed, clothed, instructed, and trained, and instilled into them habits of industry, truthfulness, and order.

The means he had at command for the promotion of his views were excellent. On his estate at Hofwyl M. de Fellenberg carried on extensive farming operations, and in this way advantage was taken for the development of his scheme, and the labour of the children made an accessory in promoting it. He was not without a fellow-labourer to follow up the detail of this good work. A young man, named Vehrli, entered warmly into his views. While in the establish-

* I have been reminded by a correspondent, Isaac Weld, Esq., Vice-President of the Royal Dublin Society, that the labours of Pestalozzi took the precedence of those of De Fellenberg. I am glad to have an opportunity of making this correction. No man of his time ever exercised so great and philanthropic an influence on his countrymen as was done by Pestalozzi. By his powerful mind, by his devotion, his example, and his labour, he gave an impulse to the elevation of all classes of society in Switzerland, while he helped to alleviate and better the condition of the poor of the district in which he resided.

ment of M. de Fellenberg he had shared the lessons of M. de Fellenberg's own family—lived at their table, and partaken of their amusements. But he sacrificed all in exchange for the society of beggar and outcast children. During the day Vehrli wrought in the field by the side of his neglected pupils, talking with them, instructing them, singing with them, and afterwards entering into their games of play. At night he prayed with them, and shared their straw bed. The scheme was hard to take root in the soil in which De Fellenberg had planted his labours. Nothing is, however, an obstacle to a dauntless mind. In December, 1811, there were eleven children; in two years after twenty-seven, and the numbers ultimately reached a hundred. They were taught the ordinary elementary portion of education, and by the training they received, their moral and religious feelings were called into activity.

A portion of this instruction was of course only made an accessory to the field and out-door labour they were daily called upon to perform. Their tuition was never carried so far as to become a burden and wearisomeness to them, as in many other schools takes place. The change from labour to learning tended to keep attention to the teaching in hand, and it is stated by M. Ruggery, in a report on the schools, that from observing their countenances at the evening reading, so full of the highest interest, it was difficult to conceive that these very children had laboured during ten hours in the field.

So strong was the desire for instruction among the elder boys, that they frequently begged to be allowed to go on with the reading or writing while the others were gone to bed. At the same time, it was observed that the hours set apart for instruction were not the only ones employed for that purpose: whether in field, at the table, or in the midst of the sports, Vehrli continually found an opportunity for instruction. And on this point he says, “I have now tried, and am perfectly sensible of the difference, the essential difference, between a school conducted like ours and ordinary village schools. Not only are our children better and more carefully brought up, but at less expense, and they are here prepared for all the different circumstances which await their future life. What can be more calculated indeed for this purpose, than the labours in which they are employed, and the instruction which they receive? A thousand objects connected with their principal occupations, furnish opportunities for acquiring knowledge which they could never have enjoyed while seated on the forms of a school; nor would they seek for information and explanation with that eagerness which, with us, leads to the most gratifying results. Here the children question me repeatedly on every subject that strikes them; and never surely can instruction be so effectually given as when it is previously solicited. Such is precisely the case with my children. For instance, one of them asks, Why are they digging a ditch in that place? Another, Why is the water carried here instead of lower down? Perhaps a third, Why is such a plant cultivated in this field and not elsewhere? Why is so much space left between the plants? Why are they planted at such a depth, neither more nor less? Why do they dig so much deeper here than they do there? Or again, Why are the days long and the nights short

in summer, and in winter just the contrary? Whence come the clouds, and fogs, and vapours, and what becomes of them? If they perceive an insect, bird, or animal, I am sure to have a hundred questions on the subject. If their curiosity is excited by a plant, a stone, or any sort of earth, they are not satisfied without a full explanation; and are never tired of asking questions. Can anything similar be found in the generality of schools, where the children are crowded together, not allowed to stir from their seats, for ever occupied on one subject, and seeing nothing but the same dead walls?"

The foregoing gives the reader some faint idea of the mode in which De Fellenberg conducted this labour and farming school, at a time when, as now, all men's minds were absorbed with the din of war and strife. His labours were of a more productive character than the results from the clash of arms; and the economy with which they were conducted, seems striking and encouraging to the prosecution of Reformatory Schools on similar principles.

According to the report of M. M. Ruggery, the establishment was partially kept up by the labour of the children. This is estimated at half a kreutzer an hour, which is equal to the sixth of a penny, for the youngest child; a kreutzer and a half for the eldest, or one half-penny; and one kreutzer for the middle class, or one third of a penny.

The average of the yearly produce of each scholar is about £3 16s., and the average of *yearly cost* of a child, including labour and learning, and after deducting the value of the work, is about £5 4s. sterling. It thus appears that the cost of a child, including his own labour, is about £9 a-year. This, however, does not include interest on the cost of the buildings, schools, dormitories, &c. These were of a very frugal and ordinary description, but not the less fitted for the work of reclaiming the child.

This system of training under De Fellenberg, and the enlightened family he reared around him, continued for nearly forty years, and was the means of setting an example, and instructing kindred spirits throughout all Switzerland.

The fruits of his benevolent exertions are now seen, not only in the reclamation from ignorance and vice of many thousands of his fellowmen, but in the impetus ultimately given to the foundation and promotion of similar institutions in various parts of Switzerland.

We have thus in the person of De Fellenberg a fine example of the devotion which men of powerful minds have often shown in the desire to elevate the condition of the most degraded classes. Although by birth a nobleman, and possessed of wealth sufficient to support his position and family in his adopted country, he could not forego the pleasure he felt in training and elevating the young, not only of this lowest class of children, but in the education and training of the higher classes, to which he devoted a long and well spent lifetime.

The next example in point of date we meet with in developing the views we are advocating, is that of Count Von der Recke, member of a noble Prussian family. He renounced, like De Fellenberg, his station in life, and its accompanying pleasures and comforts, to devote himself to the education of poor, destitute, and fatherless children, at Dusselthal

Abbey, near Dusseldorf. About the year 1816 he commenced an institution and refuge for the destitute, following up the same views and principles as have been alluded to. The number of destitute children, and others, together with the servants and teachers, seems to have amounted at one time to two hundred and twenty persons, among whom Von der Recke lived as a father—improving their minds, training their various talents, and, by the undeviating law of love, reclaiming the most vicious and the most destitute among the inmates. The most lively descriptions are given of the truly religious and benevolent exertions of this excellent man, but the institution seems to have languished for that aid from without, so essential to the successful continuance of such institutions. A master mind—devoted affection—simple-hearted love, are all requisite to the successful development of such Reformatory Institutions; but even with these qualifications, and lacking the aid necessary to carry them forward, the best of them will die.

The Dusselthal school exhausted the strength and injured the health of its benevolent founder; and after suffering from pecuniary difficulties, it is now partially supported by the inhabitants of Dusseldorf.

The children at first brought together in this school were of the worst description. War had recently been ravishing the country. Many thus became abandoned by their parents and guardians, and only tried to gain subsistence by begging or theft, making use of the woods for shelter, and wild herbs and roots for subsistence. Their habits had thus become wild, and restraint irksome; yet through the devotion and untiring zeal of Von der Recke, they were brought back to the restraint, the decencies, and duties of civilised society.

In the narrative from which the above account is obtained, the history of one of these reclaimed outcasts is given, which may be taken as the type (perhaps the worst) of the beings on whom this work of labour and love was spent.

"One of these, Clement, was supposed to be about thirteen years of age: more depraved characters have been received into the asylum, but none so nearly resembling the lower animals in appetites and manners. It was not known where he came from, and he could give no account of his earlier life. His language was scarcely intelligible, and partook of the sounds of the four footed companions of his infancy. Among his most pleasant recollections seemed to be his familiarity with the Westphalian swine, and his most frequent stories related to these favourite animals. While yet a child, he had acted as swine-herd to a peasant, and was sent to the fields to eat and sleep with the swine; but his unfeeling master, less attentive to the miserable infant than to his bristly charge, scarcely allowed him food sufficient to sustain nature. When hungry and faint, the poor little wretch actually sucked the milch sow; and to satisfy his craving appetite, browsed upon the herbage. At his first reception into the institution, he would steal secretly on all fours into the garden, and commit great devastation on the salad beds, nor was he induced, till after repeated chastisements, to give up his unwonted luxury. The sequel of the story is encouraging. After unspeakable pains, the more amiable qualities of Clement began to develope. He discovered an uncommonly kind and obliging

disposition, which gained him the affection of his companions; and by his humble and submissive deportment, he became not only a favourite with his teachers, but an example to others who previously enjoyed much greater advantages. He requited his benefactors by cheerfully employing his strength in the lowest services, and continued a faithful Gibeonite, a hewer of wood, and a drawer of water for the institution."

I have not the means of saying what has been the yearly cost of the children in this institution; but I doubt not, from the frugality of the Prussians, and the fertility of the soil in the part of Prussia which witnessed the labours of this amiable and enlightened Count, that the expense did exceed that of the Hofwyl institution; or about £9 a-year, including the value of the child's labour in the cultivation of the soil.

Again, we see the successful operation of the same principles of kindness and discipline upon like specimens of the human race, producing the same happy and gratifying results, and leading ever and anon to the same conclusion, that if we mean effectually to raise the lowest to a higher platform in the scale of existence, it is only effectually to be done by the exercise, and practical working, of those principles of benevolence and duty which are so eminently shown in the work of those devoted men.

The next institution to which I shall direct your attention is that of J. H. Wichern, a man originally in a humble position, of the village of Horn, near Hamburg. We have seen by the foregoing narrative, how the entire thoughts of two accomplished German noblemen were directed to the practical elevation of the lowest class of the community among whom they lived. We have now, in the person of Herr Wichern, to record the services in the same elevated mission, of a man of whom any country may be proud. Sprung from the poor, he had neither wealth, position, nor influence to help him; but during the space of nearly a quarter of a century, has this nobleman of nature's forming, devoted with untiring zeal, his talents and his time, to the elevation of the lowest among the poor of his own country. By his own indomitable energy and perseverance in doing good, he has formed and carried into practical operation, for upwards of twenty-two years, an institution for the reform of the erring fallen, which has been a model to many, and an example to all. There he now follows his calling with the same devotion, and seeks out the destitute, the neglected, the abandoned, and the fallen, with the same energy, and without either the forms of police, or the convictions of judges, formally indorsed upon their characters.

In the year 1833, Wichern and his mother resolved to devote their minds and labours to an attempt at the solution of the difficulty which besets all civilised life—the permanent reclamation of the lowest grades of society.

With this end in view, he acquired a small house in the village of Horn, near Hamburg, to which was attached about an acre of land. In this domicile he began his work first with those unfortunates taken from the streets of Hamburg. These soon increased in number to fourteen, ranging in age from five to eighteen years, and all versed in the practices and haunts of ignorance and vice. Nearly all had been trained to beggary, theft, and untruthfulness. One of them had been

convicted of ninety-three thefts, and yet had only reached his twelfth year. Their calling by day was beggary and theft, their domicile at night was under carts, in door ways, or herding with the lower animals. These children found themselves of an evening sitting in the cottage around a blazing fire, with the inmates of Wichern's family. There was no allusion made to their previous history—all that was past was forgotten. Wichern and his mother showed kindness in every action, love in every look—telling them he would be their father, and addressing the old lady as their mother. He talked to them with kindness in his eye, and benevolence in his looks, of our house, our pigs, cabbage, potatoes, and thus attempted to gain their confidence and attention. In this way, and with constant moral and religious training, these outcasts were educated. As the number grew, the boys set about building a new cottage, and an additional colony was hived off under a trained disciple of the law of love, who became their father for the time being, living, eating, working, sleeping alongside of, and with, his adopted family.

Following the same practice, principles, and views, as we have seen in operation at Hofwyl, Wichern has thus raised an institution which, while it does permanent benefit to his own country, serves as a lesson to instruct men of other countries of the true method of overcoming and solving the difficulties of this social question.

According to the report of 1851, there had been created quite a village of children families; and besides the dwellings for them, there are work-shops, wash and dyeing house, printing office, bakehouses, schools and chapel, &c. The institution has about 70 boys, and 25 girls. They constitute 4 boy families, and 2 girl families, ranging in age from eight to sixteen years. They are superintended by teachers and guardians, under the name of family brothers and fathers, and by young men sent there, as to a normal seminary, for preparation for similar institutions.

In the report of Herr Wichern, numerous instances are given of the character and training of the pupils previous to, and after admission to, the school. It would be trespassing too much on your time to enter into the detail of many of the cases; but to show the practical working of the system, and of the characters which are yearly plucked from misery by the noble work of Wichern, one striking case may here be quoted.

"A lad belonging to a family sunk into a hopeless condition of vagabondism, left us about three years ago. His subsequent conduct cannot exactly be called a model of propriety, though it was at times satisfactory. The blame lay (how frequently is the case) as much with the employer whom he served as with himself. Various circumstances separated him from me for a time, though I never completely lost sight of him. The quality which always rendered him dear to me, was a continually recurring feeling of piety, which was in his case hearty and sincere, added to the love he bore his unhappy mother; a love concerning which I had frequently spoken with him, and whose existence inspired me with an increasing hope for his future career. After he left us, however, this element seemed to lie in abeyance. The seductive influence of his mother, and of the rest of his degene-

rate family, particularly of his father, became exceedingly dangerous. But shortly afterwards he summons fresh resolution, hires himself as a servant, behaves well, is again attired in respectable garments, and comes to us somewhat ashamed of himself, but with the hearty confidence of former days. That part of his history which relates to his connection with his mother, is that alone which is given here. After he had retrieved himself, his first proceeding was to seek out his wandering mother in the surrounding country. He had maturely considered his plans, and understood that his strength and the means at his own command would be insufficient to raise the condition of his father, who is so entirely given up to intemperance that he is become more brutish than human. He must therefore leave his father to his fate. He had provided for one of his younger brothers (who afterwards was drowned in the Elbe, 'but he never became a man,' said our quondam pupil), the youngest, and his mother he took to himself. Then he hired a room at ——— for his mother and the young boy, paying a portion of the rent in advance (three dollars). His mother, he said, felt strangely in her new domicile, for she had never possessed a room of her own since she came from Norway, and took to the trade of a sutler woman, in which capacity she had gone through several campaigns and battles, among the rest, that of Waterloo. She had been used to bivouac under walls; in winter behind barn doors. The majority of her large progeny had been born in ditches by the roadside, and carried through the country on her back. She was above sixty years old when her son hired this little room for her, and he continues to help her as best he can. He has furnished the room for his mother and brother with a bedstead and a table, and has finally purchased three chairs, one for his mother, one for his brother, and another for himself. His whole striving is now directed towards getting his little brother placed in a school. For this object he will contribute something from his own small earnings, and has so strongly impressed upon his father the duty of caring for his little boy, that the parent intends laying aside three schellings per week from his pittance, and at the request of his son, to deposit them with the bailiff of the district where he dwells. The son intends to draw the sum periodically from the bailiff, and thus the happy deliverer of his mother and brother hopes to defray the expenses of the school."

In one of the recent reports of Wichern on this institution, an abstract is given of the working of the whole establishment from its foundation in 1833. The document shows the result of a portion of his labours; and as it is interesting to the cause of the Reformatory Schools in general, I will now give it in brief detail.

"During the period of almost thirteen years, since the foundation of this establishment in 1833, a total number of 207 children, viz., 157 boys, and 50 girls, have been received into it: at the period of this report 90 of these are still in the establishment. Up to the present time, therefore, 117 have quitted the narrow circle of our pupils. 6 of these having died at various periods, 3 remain, who have adopted some social calling, or at least quitted the establishment.

"To these 3 may be added 6, who are indeed still living in our institution, but occupy there the position of apprentices, inasmuch as

they are learning a trade for their future subsistence. These 117 stand thus in detail:—

"Restored to their parents in order that the latter might complete the education of the children, or provide for their future maintenance, after confirmation. In these cases, therefore, the institution has only taken a partial position, including the 6 received for one year during the year of the fire, 21; emigrated, 6; agriculturalists, labourers, and gardeners, 5; seamen, 9; shipbuilder, 1; sailmaker, 1; carpenters, 2; joiners, 7; smiths and locksmiths, 6; coppersmith, 1; wheelwrights, 2; strap cutters, 2; tailors, 5; shoemakers, 6; weaver, 1; tinman, 1; plasterer, 1; butcher, 1; coopers, 3; bakers, 3; lithographic printer, 1; grocer, 1; bookbinder, 1; printers, 5; student, 1; workmen without definite occupation, 8; female servants, 13; homeless (female), 1; in prison, 1 woman and 1 man, 2; total, 117."

Well may Wichern ask, in his simple language, "what would have become of these 117 outcasts from society, but for the hand extended to them by the Rauhe Haus?"

M. Wichern goes into the detail of the labour performed by the children, in carpentry and joiner work, in the tailors' shops in making and mending clothes, mattresses, pillows, &c., in the shoemakers' and at the wooden shoe manufactory, in wool-spinning, in the bakehouse, and in a great number of minor branches of industry, including the work of bricklayers, painters, &c. The produce realised out of the labour and work performed by the children, and their family fathers, is thus given.

"The produce of the farm cannot be separately stated, without entering largely into detail. Suffice it to say, that even the smallest harvest from garden or field is accurately entered on our books. We have carried home cabbages and vegetables of various kinds to the amount of 362 marks 13 schellings. Fruit to the amount of 16 marks, (our 4000 to 5000 fruit trees, many of which have been planted for ten years, have as yet produced little), 578 sacks of potatoes, 213 of oats, 10,000 lbs. of hay and grass, and 80 loads of dung; 6 pigs have been fattened, 4 calves slaughtered, and about 4000 quarts of milk delivered into the kitchen. The produce of the field and garden may be reckoned, according to the market prices, at 3009 marks 5 schellings, the costs at 1685 marks 1 schelling, thus leaving a profit of 1324 marks 4 schellings, or about £88 12s. sterling."

The next institution to which I should wish to direct your special attention and consideration is that of M. Demetz, at Mettrai, in France, conducted under the title of the "Agricultural Colony."

This Reformatory owed its existence and present state of efficiency to the enlightened intellect and benevolent sentiments and labours of Demetz. Aided by a few kindred spirits, he conceived the plan of forming an institution which was to take from the prisons young criminals subject to punishment, and give them the discipline of a school and a family, instead of that of a prison. Doubts existed in the minds of his countrymen, as to the success of such a plan; but the devotion and personal energy of Demetz overcame all difficulties—plans were matured—teachers were trained, and in January, 1840, a beginning was made by a selection of youths from various prisons.

In less than two years the success of the institution was no longer doubted; and what was looked upon as a scheme of utopia, now became, "*un fait accompli*."

The principles adopted by Wichern in the care and management of his Reformatory are here systematically and faithfully carried out.

There is the same attention paid to the personal and material wants of the child, the same absence of allusion to the past, the same forgetfulness of all his previous conduct, the same amount of personal labour and work required of the boy, the same employment in field labour, and the same attention to the intellectual and moral training, the same division of families; a small number being placed under a family father, who is responsible for the labour of each child, attends personally to his moral well-being, and, by the constant control exercised over his conduct, helps the child to restrain his previous bad conduct, and to improve and develop the better feelings of his mind. The boy thus comes to look on the family father as a relation and friend, who, while he watches over him, sympathises with his misfortunes, and has a sincere desire to correct his faults, and to raise him to a better and more honest condition of life, than that he has been lately following. The law of kindness here, again, operates most powerfully in the conduct and education of the inmates of this institution. From a report recently published, it appears the Mettrai School contains about 400 boys, arranged on the principle of being a collection of families.

The report says:—"The boys are divided with a careful regard to the varieties of their character and disposition, into a number of separate portions, each containing about 40. Each of these portions or families has a master, and two assistant masters specially connected with it. Each family resides in a distinct house, having no connection with the other inmates of the establishment, except during the hours of work, recreation, or divine service, or on occasion of any special assembling of the whole number. The master or *pere*, as he is called, and the two assistants who act under him, live and constantly associate with the boys, sharing in their amusements, and having in the main the same accommodations. The responsibility of the master is thus made far more personal and individual. These 40 boys are his especial charge, he is answerable not for the whole in general, but for them in particular. Hence the masters are led to exert themselves more definitely; an emulation is created among them, as to who shall show the best moral and intellectual results from his labours. The boys and the master are much more closely connected, and more real influence, as well as a more kindly one, is produced; by this daily association confidence is generated, a higher moral feeling roused and silently thwarted and destroyed; by this division of labour and responsibility, the discipline of the establishment is more effectually maintained, faults are fewer, and punishment more rare. The use of the rod is prohibited, the moral means employed being found more effectual in winning the affections, and overcoming the stubborn propensities of the boy."

The principle of the school instruction is, that the boy shall only

be taught as much as the average of agricultural, and other labourers acquire, viz., to read, to write, and to cypher. The more advanced boys are taught the elements of drawing and geography. The instruction is in all points made as individual and personal as possible; all the boys are taught music. Industrial training occupies a large portion of the day. It is a principle that the boys shall be continually occupied and thoroughly fatigued. There are about four hours allowed for meals, recreation, morning and evening prayers, dressing, &c. The rest of the day, with exception of one hour appropriated to instruction in the school, is devoted to labour. The accommodation, dress, and food, of all the inmates, officers as well as boys, are of the "plainest description."

The whole establishment thus feels the effects of the benevolent mind of Demetz. He lives among the boys and family fathers as they do, teaching them thus, by his own devoted example, and inculcating on all the cultivation of those moral and religious principles which form the foundation of the whole institution, and the issue is shown in the good already done to many outcast fallen, who might have been left to roam in dens of ignorance and vice, proving themselves a pest to the society among whom they were born. In the report alluded to, it appears:—"Since the first establishment of the institution, in 1839, there have been received 521, the number of present inmates is 348, leaving a remainder of 173, of these 17 have died, 12 have been sent back to their prisons for misconduct, 144 have been placed out in various situations in the world. Of the 144 thus placed out, 7 have relapsed into crime, 9 are of doubtful character, 128 are conducting themselves to the full satisfaction of the directors.

"A great portion of the singular success which has attended the efforts of the directors, is attributable to the attention paid to the education and training of the masters and the youngest assistants. M. Demetz commenced his operations by establishing a normal school, and by devoting himself for some months to the education and training of young men, to undertake the superintendence of the families which he proposed to form. There is still a normal school attached to the colony, in which there are always from 12 to 18 pupils preparing to replace the masters, as any of them leave for similar institutions which are being formed in various parts of France."

There is a difficulty in finding out the cost of a boy at such an institution as this, and it becomes a question to which the whole work of the Reformatories conducted agriculturally tends, whether the cost of this system will bear an economical comparison with the tuition, training, and attempted reformation, within the walls of a town institution.

It appears that in the Mettrai school, if you shut out the first cost of the building, or the interest or rent, with the teachers' salaries, taxes, servants, &c., the gross annual cost of each boy is £20. Then his labour in and out of doors produces upon an average £8 a-year, thus reducing the annual expense of the Reformatory training of a child to £12; and as each child stays on an average three years and a-half at the institution, the total cost will be £42.

Now if you contrast the palace prisons of England, and, I may say,

of our own country, with the modest requirements of the farm or agricultural system at Mettrai, the advantages of this economical system of bringing up the boys, and in working out their own human improvement, will be at once seen. At York Castle the cost of each cell is stated to be £1200; other prisons vary from £120 up to £500; and Pentonville has cost £161 per cell. If a trial be systematically made of the Mettrai, or the Fellenberg, or the Wichern systems, in this country, there can be little doubt that, independent of the elevated moral training imparted to the child, which would soon be visible in such a Reformatory, the cost to the country would be very considerably less than under the system now adopted either in prisons or Reformatory Schools, conducted amid the influences and seductions of a city population.

The class of Reformatories in Switzerland, as they presently exist, are now deserving of attention. Here the spirit of De Fellenberg, though dead, yet speaketh, and his example has awakened in some of the best minds of that country, a desire to extend the system of agricultural Reformatories to every canton in Switzerland. A society has been for sometime in existence to accomplish this object. Their labours are now in active operation in various cantons; and as an example of the views of the society, and of the method of conducting these schools, a brief account may be given of one establishment, on a farm named Bächtelin, in the neighbourhood of Berne, conducted by M. Curatli. This gentleman, like Wichern and Demetz, enters with his whole life and soul into the conduct of the school; and so eminent has he become as a teacher of the "fallen," that the central government of Switzerland lately selected him to organise a model establishment they were about to institute for the reformation of criminal children.

The system which was first founded by De Fellenberg is here carried into practical effect. When the institution first commenced, there was a farm yard on the lands, a school house, and a dormitory with a kitchen. As the children increased, they help to build dormitories for themselves; and they now number 45 boys, pursuing, under the enlightened Curatli, the same training as followed at Rauhe Haus, and at Mettrai. There is a moniteur, or family father, appointed to every 12 children. He is generally selected as a pupil teacher, for the calling of a head family father in some other institution. He is entrusted with the care of a division of children, such as named above. These children he has to educate, train, and work with in the field, and to act the part of a parent to, while with the children in the institution. These divisions or families are under the chief superintendence of Curatli; and as these teachers are educated, they are lived off to other schools of a similar character in other portions of Switzerland. The recommendation for the introduction of a boy into this institution is the crimes he may be known to have committed, his confirmed vicious disposition,—extreme destitution and helplessness forming another ground for the reception of a child. The instruction in the schools is chiefly attended to during the winter months; and the labour of the farm and other out door work is more attended to in summer. Each boy is also taught the rudiments of a trade; those of a cooper, saddler,

shoemaker, tailor, joiner, wright, &c., being chiefly attended to; and in education, besides the religious teaching, and the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, the boys are taught, chiefly in connection with the application to agriculture, the elementary principles of botany, mineralogy, and zoology, and the more advanced boys are taught drawing.

About two-thirds of the boys, when their seventeenth year has been attained, are considered saved, and are placed with a master to learn a trade, and for the purpose of facilitating the employment of the reformed boys, a correspondence is kept up with the friends of the "fallen," who are scattered over various cantons, and in this way a boy is transferred and kept while learning his trade under the eye of a friend, at a distance from the scene of his early misconduct.

Curatli receives every new arrival, and he or the family father to whose care the boy is given accompanies him everywhere. The child thus accustomed to the kindness shown him, now begins to impart his mind, and ends with telling the master all. Curatli finds the chief vice manifested by the child after coming to school is untruthfulness. His chief aim, therefore, before all other training, is to bring the child to a love of truthfulness, and to an appreciation of the sin there is in telling falsehoods, and so soon as this is achieved, the education and training of the boy begins to prosper, and then often makes wonderful progress. Curatli says the difference between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, kindness and harshness, are things quite new to these children; and which appear never to have been impressed upon them by any one. The system thus adopted by Curatli and other Samaritans whose labours have been noticed, requires on the part of chief moniteur or family father, a thorough training before he can attempt to conduct such institutions as have been described.

The annual cost of a boy in this institution is from £5 to £6 yearly, and the society who conduct the various schools throughout Switzerland, pay on an average about as much for interest of price of farms, salaries of teachers, taxes, &c.

The only other institution to which I should wish to direct your attention is, one inaugurated in Holland about five years ago. It owes its origin and present efficiency to Professor Suringar of Amsterdam. This gentleman brought under notice of his countrymen the neglected state of the criminal poor in Holland; and it was not long ere he obtained the countenance and support of many eminent and distinguished persons to his proposal for the erection of a Reformatory for the fallen. M. Schüller of Amsterdam contributed 16,000 florins, which, with gifts of other friends, was sufficient to purchase an estate called Rysselt, near the town of Zutphen, and in the district of Gorssel, containing about one hundred acres, and buildings on the land of sufficient capacity to cultivate it.

Two members of the royal family of Holland patronized the institution by each building a cottage to form a family house for the children.

Professor Suringar took great trouble before founding it, in making extensive enquiries regarding the labours of others in the same good work. For this purpose he visited various institutions of a similar character throughout other parts of Europe, including the "Rauhe

Haus" of Herr Wichern at Hamburgh, the Asylum of Mesnil, St. Firman, L'asyle Fenelon, all in France, the colonies of Oswald and Newhof near Strasburgh, and an institution called the "Mettray," near London, and the colony of Ruyssele in Belgium.

Professor S. also caused M. J. W. Schlimmer, a gentleman who for 25 years laboured as a prison teacher at Rotterdam, to visit the Mettrai under Demetz in France, Ruyssele in Belgium, and an institution called St. Nicholas in Paris.

By this intelligent mode of action the directors of the Reformatory of Rysselt, were enabled to draw a comparison between their own views of conducting such an institution, and those of the founders of others of a similar character; and thus to adopt in the foundation of their own institution such improvements and alterations as they considered worthy of imitation. Books and manuscripts bearing on the practical management of Reformatories were consulted, and the best portions of each system engrafted on their own.

After digesting the information thus received, it was resolved that the principles of training the children in family groups should be adopted, and that the training and labour should be conducted under the system of family fathers or brothers, and the education by a head master, or as he is called in that country, "a director." Professor Suringar and his friends, with the caution characteristic of their countrymen, then drew up rules and regulations for the government of the institution; and having had them translated into English, French, and German, and circulated, thus brought their views within the knowledge of kindred spirits in other countries. Many subscriptions to their institution followed upon this plan being adopted; and their example has been imitated in Bavaria, where an institution similar to the one at Rysselt has been established.

An elaborate report upon the working of Rysselt was prepared by Professor Suringar for the annual meeting held in August, 1852. It contains a detailed account of the mode adopted to raise the necessary means to found the school, and enters very minutely into the whole question of the management of such institutions.

Rysselt began with a dwelling house and farm of 100 acres, and separate cottages for the families of children. There were at the outset 11 children under a family father, M. G. J. Van Dyck, and a director or head master, M. J. W. Schlimmer, for 25 years a prison teacher at Rotterdam. At the end of the year 1851, there were 45 children, and the work was then conducted by four family fathers and a master for the agricultural department.

The great aim of the establishment is, in the reclamation of the children, to develop their moral and religious feelings—to teach them the system of tilling the ground and gardening—to initiate them to a trade by which in after life, independent of their agricultural training, they may be able to gain an honest livelihood. To endeavour to eradicate or deaden the sinful dispositions—strengthening weakness of character—repressing and controlling angry feelings, and thereby help to develop the good qualities inherent more or less in every child. To attain this end, systematic instruction is given in the simple elementary and practical principles of religion, and (independent of the farm

training in the open air and fields) by the common rudiments of knowledge taught in all schools, great attention being paid to the child's musical faculties as an important instrument of reform. They go four hours on an average each day to school; and when the time of year permits, are employed six or seven hours at field labour. The school hours are regulated by the seasons. In winter the education is given in the evening. In summer, early in the morning, and in the afternoon. Horn music, or the bugle, is found an efficient aid in promoting order and cheerfulness, giving life and animation to all around. It is employed as a signal for rising, for going to bed, and for school and labour hours. Military exercises form another branch of training, and half-an-hour is daily devoted to this object, sticks being used in place of guns.

Field and garden labour, and work in the woods, is found to be of the utmost consequence, hence the chief business is the culture of the land, gardens, and trees. The small number of teachers and family fathers does not admit of a variety of trades, as that would imply large outlay for the wages of experienced workmen. It is at present confined to carpentry, and architecture. The boys helped to build the porter's lodge. Also, a carpenter's shop, and a hut, in which 60 boys can work wood. Two boys assist the baker, who is also a family father. A couple of boys are taught to shave; all are accustomed to darn stockings, and to mend rents in clothes.

They fill alternately the post of porter, and by turns serve at the family table, and keep the family house clean. Every morning the head master, the farm master, and the book-keeper (who is also a family father), and all the family fathers assemble to direct the labours and work of the day. This is noted down and made known to the whole, at the morning hour of muster. In spring and harvest, when speed is needed, the boys are all set to work and make up, during wet and frosty weather, for lost hours at education. During the hours of winter, they are employed in mending tools, weaving, and spinning, &c.

The results which seem fairly to flow from the facts contained in the foregoing narrative, are,

1. That the union of labour, and especially agricultural labour, with learning, and constant occupation, and work in the open air and field, are the best calculated to promote, in an efficient and economical manner, the steady and successful reclamation and reform of the majority of the criminal and destitute among the young.

2. That under the operation of the recent legislation upon Reformatory Schools, the course which should be recommended to be followed is, to plant and encourage Reformatories upon small farms, and by following out the family system, to apportion the children in such small sections, or groups, as will be effectually managed (under a head teacher, or director), by house or family fathers, apportioned in cottages upon the farm, fitted to contain each family, and living continually under their care and control.

3. That to carry the work efficiently into operation, that the director, and house or family fathers, should be thoroughly and practically trained to the calling, and should only be employed on their evincing,

under a probationary test, their love for the work, and on giving proof of their intellectual, moral, and religious capacity for the calling.

4. That from the foregoing views it seems to follow, that the erection and foundation of Reformatory institutions within the precincts of cities or towns, will not serve the end in view of the promoters with so much efficiency, or economy, as the adoption of the family system upon small farms, and that such institutions now situated in cities or towns should be gradually removed, and located in districts of the country, favourable in soil, situation, and proximity to railways.

REPORT ON AGRICULTURAL COLONIES,

READ AT THE

"RÉ-UNION INTERNATIONALE DE CHARITÉ,"

(HELD AT PARIS, AUGUST, 1855.)

BY

M. DEMETZ,

HONORARY COUNSELLOR AT THE IMPERIAL COURT OF PARIS.

REPORT ON AGRICULTURAL COLONIES.

BY M. DEMETZ.

SOMETHING would have been wanting at the "Exposition Universelle" if, beside the products of human industry which were sent there, from different parts of the world, to solicit the admiration of all, and the rewards of the state, there had been no mention made of the existence of that charity among us, which, as a duty, is becoming daily better understood, and more actively practised. Among the beneficent institutions to which public attention was to be drawn, the "Réunion Internationale de Charité" could not fail to number the agricultural colonies, and to me it assigned the duty of showing in its true light the value of these institutions, of explaining how they were first established among us, what conditions are most favourable for their development, and lastly, by what laws they are governed.

The Agricultural Colonies may be divided into two classes, according to the description of their inhabitants.

The establishments belonging to the first class are open to orphans, foundlings, and sometimes to the children of the poor; those of the second, receive the young criminals. Some of these asylums, but not many, may be considered as of a mixt character, receiving at the same time orphans, foundlings, and young criminals.

It is no new idea, that of employing in agricultural labour, those children whom bad dispositions or evil example expose without defence to the dangers which surround them, in the centres of great populations. The influence of agriculture on the manners of the people was recognised in early times; antiquity proclaims it by the voice of Cato: "He who *tills* the ground," says this wise man, "does not think of doing evil." The agricultural labourer has indeed but poor pay, yet he suffers nothing from the distractions of city life, nothing from the ruinous habits which make a higher rate of wages unavailing, and nothing from the frequent suspension of employment, which subjects the town workman to unlooked for destitution; nor is the field labourer exposed to those frequent checks from want of work, which so often leave the other in destitution, his improvidence not always enabling him to foresee them. I will not dwell further on this point, it is so incontestable a truth, and has been so victoriously demonstrated, that we do not think it necessary to bring it more at length before you.

It is to the charitable efforts of Pestalozzi, that we owe the foundation of the first Agricultural Colonies. This benevolent man opened at Newhoff, in the canton of Argovia, in 1775, an institution for poor

or destitute children, of which agriculture and the branches of industry thereto belonging formed the basis; but his establishment, always suffering from adverse fortune, shifted successively to Hanz, Berthond, and lastly to Yverdun, prospered nowhere.—Fellenberg, the friend of the poor, walked in the footsteps of Pestalozzi, and adopted his views. He was more fortunate than Pestalozzi: the house which he founded at Hofwyl, near Berne, in 1779, saw prosperous days, and soon Vehrli, one of his pupils, gave, to the institutions with which we are now occupied, a wise and energetic impulse. They are now spread over all Switzerland—there is scarcely a canton which does not possess at least one. Among these it is right to point out the school of Carra, due to Vehrli, and which was founded in 1820; the colony of Bächtelin, organized by M. Kuratli in 1840, and, of later date, that of Garance, which owes its foundation to M. Auband, who does not cease to aid and sustain it by his great experience.

England followed closely on Switzerland in this regenerative work. In 1788 the Philanthropic Society attempted to introduce there a Penitentiary Colony, which had unhappily only a short-lived existence. In 1820, an asylum was opened at Stretton, which has lately ceased to exist. At a later period, the government instituted the Penitentiary of Parkhurst. Several private establishments were founded afterwards to meet the same wants. Among these we cannot speak too highly of the one at Red Hill. The colonies in Holland are well-known,—we will consider them a little. In 1818, General Van Den Bosch laid the foundation of the benevolent “*Société Néerlandaise*,” and received in immense agricultural asylums, adult beggars and vagabonds. Two years after, in 1820, poor children and orphans were admitted into the institution at Veenhuizen. If the “*Société Néerlandaise*” has not produced all the good effects that were at first expected, we must nevertheless recollect that it was the first to draw our attention to the means of assuaging the sufferings of the wretched, and that from its birth to 1848, it has sustained and protected no less than 49,000 individuals.*

The Belgian Colonies did not offer, on their first institution, more satisfactory results. Since then, we know that this state of things has greatly changed, and among those institutions which are now in full prosperity, we must mention Ruysselede, placed under the direction of our honourable colleague, M. Ducpetiaux, and which may be considered as a model establishment.

In 1838, when we went to the United States for the purpose of studying the penitentiary system, there existed in that country only a few agricultural establishments for the reform of youth—all was done on a very small scale.

If France was slow to enter upon this career, we must acknowledge that she has made rapid progress in it. Ideas which she did not originate, she has had the good fortune to perfect, to illustrate, and to disseminate. Europe envies us those benevolent institutions which

* We would not pass over in silence all the good which is being realized, at this moment, in the agricultural colony founded in Holland by the cares of M. Suringar, and to which this true apostle of charity has given the name of the *Mettray Néerlandaise*.

are being multiplied daily among us. They afford instruction to ourselves, and serve often as models to other countries, where the first attempts failed.

The first agricultural colonies established in France were those at Neuhoft and at Mesnil-Saint-Firman. They both date from 1828. The first is a small Protestant establishment, which has never passed its first humble limits, but which has, notwithstanding, done much good. The second was organized by the zeal of the worthy M. Basin, one of our most learned agriculturalists.

He received at first poor children, but the demands for admission were so numerous, that he was obliged to give up this class of inmates. Under his auspices the Society for the Adoption of Orphans and Foundlings was established in 1843, and is now in full prosperity. These attempts were successful, but it must nevertheless be acknowledged, that it was only in 1839 that there commenced for the agricultural colonies a new era of extension and progress. It was then that the agricultural and industrial establishment at Mar-seille was founded by M. l'Abbé Fissiaux, to whom that town owes many other charitable works.—The institution of Mettray was also established in that year, by the “*Société Paternelle*,” under the presidency of Monsieur le Comte de Gasparin. These are penitentiary colonies, destined for young criminals, and are the first which were established in our country on a large scale.

To appreciate the results of these institutions, it is necessary to know something of the state of things which they were intended to remedy.

Before the existence of these establishments, the child declared not guilty, was sent to prison, and shut up, separate it is true, from the other criminals, but still subject to the same regimen, as the most hardened of them. In the interior of a prison he could not be taught anything but an industrial trade, which would inevitably force him, at the end of his imprisonment, to go and augment the number of our factory workers, and share their vices and perils. These children, having already weak constitutions, became diseased in the vitiated air of the workshops of our prisons. They became thus unfit for military service, and the blood tax, the heaviest, it has been said, of all taxes, thus pressed on the respectable son, who was often the happiness of his family, and sometimes its support.

A country life remedies all the difficulties which we have mentioned. Exercise in the open air strengthens the body, and the sight of the beauties of nature animates the heart of man with a profound sentiment of admiration and gratitude for the Creator. A poet has said: “God made the fields, and man has made the cities.” But we know that at all times, even the most just and benevolent views meet with opposition, and the system of penitentiary colonies did not escape criticism. It is sufficient, some said, to have infringed the laws to merit your sympathy, and among all the children who could justly claim assistance from your charity, you choose those who merit it the least.

We must say, however, that the colonies founded for young criminals do not aim at making them comfortable, but at preventing them from

becoming more degraded. It is an error to imagine that a peasant's life is one of ease: it is one of rigour. . It forces the labourer to bear the brunt of the inclemency of the seasons, and to brave the fatigues of long and hard labour. In winter he must struggle with the severity of the cold, in summer with the lassitude, the effects of excessive heat: thus it is, that one often sees agriculture deserted for industrial trades. As a proof of our statement, we can affirm, that we have rarely found a child, coming from one of the central houses, who has not, when he first entered the colony, manifested a desire to return to his old condition.

But, it is said, these children are better treated in these asylums than in their own families.

Let us deplore the miseries which we cannot assuage, and not reproduce them. For the rest, hear the words of the legislator who wished to fix public attention on the treatment which it is thought best to apply to the agricultural colonies.

M. Corne, law reporter on young criminals, expresses himself in the following terms:—

"What are these children in general, who even before the age of discernment, have fallen, and incurred the severity of justice? They are, for the most part, young beings utterly deprived of family training: some are the children of wretched parents, who have brought them up to beggary, and even to thieving and robbery; others are the children of careless parents, absorbed in their daily labours, taking little thought of their paternal duties, and leaving their sons to wander in the streets, and yield, from want of a moral support, to the most pernicious influences. What did these unhappy children need? A family which would have impressed them early with good habits, and inspired them with moral and religious feelings.

"It is then family associations that we must give them, in the heart of an establishment, where the just and benevolent governors know how to unite, with strict regularity and discipline, that goodness of heart which attracts and attaches, and the high morality which produces its like, and brings about habitual integrity.

"For these children, whom idleness, in the greatest number of cases, has first led into evil habits, whose passions have been too early over-excited, whose parents, subject themselves to all kinds of misery, have given them only a diseased constitution, bearing the seeds of grave maladies: what do they want in a bodily and mental point of view? They must have, to give a turn to their passions, to make peace enter into their souls, calm and serious ideas—to purify their blood, and to give a robust nature to their bodies, they must have air, a country life, the peaceful habits, and the strengthening work of a labourer."

We see the legislator proclaims the advantages of field labours for young criminals, and seeks to promote the foundation of agricultural colonies destined to receive them. Before the establishment of agricultural colonies, however, there had been already some ameliorations introduced into the old system, which we consider it our duty to mention.

M. Lucas, the Inspector-General of Prisons, thought generously of attempting the foundation at Paris of a society for the protection of

young criminals, which was definitely constituted in June, 1833, under the presidency of a man as eminent for his literary merit as for his charity, M. Béranger, (de la Drôme).*

This work produced a considerable decline in the number of back-sliders (*récidives*). Among the means which were employed, may be mentioned, liberty under surveillance.

The procuring of situations for the young convicts was not unattended with difficulties. Besides the fact, that they had seldom acquired the sufficient knowledge of their profession to enable them to assume the position of workmen, they inspired the masters who knew their antecedents with a certain mistrust, legitimate in some respects, or they did not feel strong enough to oppose the vicious propensities, or the ill-will of these young assistants, whose manumission was recent, and reformation doubtful.

The "Société de Patronage" obtained permission from M. le Ministre de l'Intérieur, to give provisional liberty to those young criminals, who, during their sojourn at the penitentiary of "La Roquette," had given signs of amendment; but on condition that, for the first grave fault, it should be permitted to send them back again, according to the order of the public minister, and without any judicial formality, and at the simple request of the "Société de Patronage."

This measure produced the most happy effects. Thanks to it, the placing out became more easy, the masters were less apprehensive, and the apprentices more docile. It permitted, also, the repression of certain culpable acts, which, unhappily, do not come under the jurisdiction of the public magistrates. Thus, with us, drunkenness is not considered an excuse, when it leads to the commission of what the law declares a guilty act; but in itself it is not considered as a crime. There are a great many other acts which outrage the moral laws, though the civil code takes no note of them.

Who does not understand, after this simple explanation, the salutary influence that this provisional system of liberation might exercise on the adult criminals, in place of those definite pardons, which those who receive them so often abuse?

The following lines referring to this subject, are taken from a work published by us on the penitentiary system, in 1838:—

"The work of reform will only be complete, when the persons liberated have the means of exercising their good will, and those who may consent to employ them sufficient security.

"The number of individuals pardoned, and then falling back again, is considerable, but it cannot well be otherwise. In the present condition of our legislation, the transition from prison to complete liberty is too quick: if the person liberated is to persevere in the good resolutions which he may have formed, he must first try the effects of liberty under some restriction.

"The provisional liberations, substituted in some cases for free pardons, can alone give us some hope of solving a problem which has hitherto baffled our efforts. It is the only method we

* See the report of M. de Lamarque, on the Societies Patronage, in which will be found a complete resumé of the history of these institutions. (*Annales de la Charité*, June, 1855).

have of coming to a settlement about the, unhappily, too well founded suspicions of society on the one hand, and the necessity on the other, of procuring work for those men, in whom misery and want might destroy all the effects of a better penitentiary system, and who, notwithstanding this laboriously acquired amelioration, would infallibly be thrown back into crime, if they did not find means of providing for their existence."

England has already adopted this measure, but not, we fear, up to this time, with all the necessary precautions.

A similar project, elaborated with great care, is to be submitted to the approbation of the Belgian legislature, and from which the happiest results may be expected.

The "Société de Patronage," which has already done much to ameliorate the moral condition of the young criminals, did not consider its task finished. It procured the nomination of a commission, for the purpose of collecting all the documents which might lead to the knowledge of a better state of things. We were called to take part in this commission, and, from the first, all those who composed it, in seeking the best means for improving the state of the young criminals, were unanimous in choosing agriculture. If it is truly of importance, as we have indicated above, to direct towards field labours, orphan children, without family ties,—how much more indispensable must a country life be to those who have already succumbed to the perils and evil influences to which a sojourn in towns exposed them?

When, however, the commission wished to pass from theory to practice, and to compose the programme of an agricultural colony, the difficulties commenced, and we felt that we had not sufficiently studied the subject. Two members were directed to go and study on the spot, the colonies in Belgium and Holland; and for this purpose M. Léon Faucher, of ever-to-be-regretted memory, and myself, were chosen.

This happened about eighteen years ago. It was then known that the trials made in these two countries, and of which we have just spoken, had not been successful. The Dutch colonies led only a languishing life, making great sacrifices for small results: the state of the Belgian colonies was still more disastrous. We did not, therefore, go into these countries to look for models, but we did hope to gain useful hints, or to learn useful lessons. We do not owe less to those who warn us of the dangers, than to those who show us the right way.

We could at once decide on one capital fact. All these colonies had been established in the midst of heaths, in barren districts. They seem to have thought more of improving the soil by agriculture, than man by the love of work. This idea of bringing in waste land by the help of arms, till then useless, by means of colonies, is tempting, and at first sight appears just: the cultivation of barren land gives the undertaking a more manifestly penal character, and it makes use of those men whose lives have hitherto been troublesome, and dangerous, and on whom it is reasonable to impose hard labour. We should truly have nothing to reply to this theory, if we were speaking only of men who merited severe punishment, and if these colonies had only punishment in view but it seems to have been forgotten, that their principal

object is the moral improvement of the unhappy creatures whom they receive.

They gave barren lands to be cultivated by unwilling (boys) hands, and failure was the necessary consequence. We do not hesitate to state that the sterility of the soil on which they have been established, has been the principal cause of the want of success of the Belgian and Dutch colonies.

To make industrious habits and a love of work take root among men whom dissipation, indolence, or laziness, has reduced to the last state of want, this work must present at least some attractions, and some quick and satisfactory results must recompense and encourage these unsteady efforts. And if these considerations hold good for the adults, how much more then do they not apply to the child, whose flighty imagination cannot look forward and wait, and whose ardour, so easily excited, is just as easily quenched, and whose future is to-morrow.

"To deserve to be sent here," said one of the Belgian colonists to me one day, with an accent of despair, "one ought to have killed one's father and mother; every blade of grass is produced by the sweat of our brows." Can it really be imagined, that by provoking such repugnance, and such rancour, there can be a hope of conquering the dislike of work in natures so obstinately opposed to it?

The administration seemed to unite with us in this opinion, and we have remembered this important testimony. The government has resolved to establish some penal colonies for adults in Corsica, and it is impossible to praise too highly such a measure. They have already commenced the execution of this project, and we have seen with lively satisfaction, that for this important object, remarkably fertile lands have been chosen.

To return to our investigations in Belgium and Holland. We were soon confirmed in the opinion, that we could learn nothing from the establishments in these countries. M. Léon Faucher was forced to return to Paris, and we were obliged to continue our examinations alone. These ended at Hamburg, where, we do not hesitate to say, we found the solution of the problem which we were charged to study. It is near the village of Horn, in a picturesque and fertile country, on the side of a hill, which looks over the beautiful valley of the Elbe and Bill, that the Reformatory School called the Rauhe Haus, is situated, and there we visited it. We will not stop to describe this establishment, which has become celebrated, and which has been much added to, since we saw it. We will content ourselves with noticing some of its principal characteristics. It was founded towards the end of the year 1833, by the worthy M. Wichern, for the reception of young children, whom vicious habits threatened to pervert, or had already branded. The wise founder sought in family associations a means of improvement—he tried to excite in those young hearts the soft and salutary emotions which family life produces, and which either had become, or had always been, strangers to the breasts of these unhappy creatures.

The colonists were divided into groups, each containing twelve individuals, which took the name of families. This denomination was justified by the cords of firm affection, and continued benevolence,

which they endeavoured to establish between the members who composed it. To each of these families was attached a chief, or guide, whom the children called father. They inhabited a small separate house, constructed by their own hands, and separated from the neighbouring house by gardens, or orchards. Four existed at the time of our visit; they were like a little village, and had no communication with each other, save what the administration of the house required.

The discipline of the colony was firm and severe, but still we must say, tempered with paternal tenderness—moral reform was its aim; energetic and persevering work, and, at the same time, profoundly religious education, were the means. There is a journal kept, stating the progress of each pupil or his relapses; the tender solicitude of the guardians does not interfere with the severity, sometimes necessary, in an institution which maintains, in the main, its reformatory character, and you could scarcely imagine, without having witnessed it, the strong sympathy which attaches to the colony, those poor children who have become honest men.

It will be seen that the basis on which the colony of Horn rests, and to which it owes the accomplishment of these wonders, is the reconstruction of the family principle.

It was not the first time that these precious means had been employed for reformatory objects, and always with happy results. The Agricultural Penal Reformatory School, established by the London Philanthropic Society, in 1788, adopted with success the same system. Going back fifty years to this institution, incomplete doubtless, but designed with much wisdom, we find between it and the establishment at Horn, many singular and striking resemblances. The Swiss colonies, which have lived and prospered, also effected a division of their pupils into small distinct groups. They have even pushed this imitation of a natural family farther, for they have placed at the head of each group, besides the father, a house-keeper, and moreover, they have not hesitated to introduce into one family, children of both sexes, without, it is said, any inconvenience arising from this union.

The sight of the institution near Horn, and the attentive study of the excellent results produced there, gave us the light which we sought, and in our own minds, we had from that moment no doubt of the efficacy of the principle which presided at its formation. The division into families seems to us to be the fundamental principle of all penal and reformatory colonies, and we are happy to see that this conviction, which daily takes a firmer hold upon the public mind, makes fresh progress among the publicists.* Till now, unhappily, in France these convictions have scarcely gone beyond theory.

Already in the month of December, 1849, M. Corne, the organ of a commission named by the Legislative Assembly, considers, "the division of children into small groups as the most certain element of moral regeneration." All the men who, in various parts of Europe, have given themselves up to the study of these questions, profess the same opinions.†

* Writers on public laws.

† See, for instance, as regards the "publicists," of England, besides the testi-

The division into families renders the surveillance at once easier, more active and more devoted; easier because it extends to a smaller number; more active, because all the responsibility falls on one person, whose duties are carefully and exactly defined; more devoted, just because this responsibility, and the habits of the Family life, create on the part of the chief or father, sentiments of sympathy and benevolence. The influence of the division into families, is not less salutary for the colonist; the authority being less imperious and less burdensome, the children become attached in their turn to the master who loves them, they become accustomed to see in him a confident and a friend, they are more easily softened and convinced, and all this without discipline losing aught of its vigour; education finds in this mutual affection a lever of incalculable power. And shall we not consider the harm—less and salutary emulation which this multiplicity of families creates? In a large establishment, in the midst of a numerous population, the objects of common and general interest are rare and feeble, unless unhappily, there is formed among the colonists an "esprit de corps," leading them to oppose their chiefs in all things; the spirit of rivalry, on the contrary, which may arise between the different families, is full of advantages, and only exists to do good.

It has always been objected, that the construction of separate houses costs more than a single building would, and, that for the application of this system, a more numerous staff of agents is necessary. It has been preferred in general to make use of old buildings, but then that is in some degree letting the mortar make the law, forcing the locality to be subordinate, to the programme that has been traced out; so that the directors have often deviated from their first intentions, in matters of primary importance.

It is an unhappy tendency of our times, to economise too much in the staff of agents, where the education of childhood is concerned. Moral action cannot be efficacious, save when it is met person to person, heart to heart, intelligence to intelligence, with those whom we would initiate into the habits of love and goodness.

It is a singular combat to which we must give ourselves up, and if great efforts are necessary, do not let us be astonished; for we must acknowledge that the leanings of our minds, are all more or less towards evil.

If we have not seen much good come of education, it is because the disciplinarian system has been too often substituted for moral influences. You may manœuvre a regiment at the word of command, or a ship's company by means of the whistle, but that will not suffice for the improvement of a child's morals.

Writers in German Reviews have reproached the governors of Mettray, on account of their having raised the number of children composing a family to forty, and confined the direction of them to a single chief; to a certain extent they are right. They say that providence, always so Omniscient, never allows in the order of nature, a

mony of Lord Brougham, which we have already quoted, the opinion which he expressed in so remarkable a manner in the House of Lords, on the 11th of May, 1854. See, also, the speech of Mr. Adderley in the House of Commons, on the 1st of August, 1852.

family to reach so high a number, and besides that, these families have presiding at the education of the children, the heart of a father, and above all, the heart of a mother, who has been called justly the "chef d'œuvre" of nature. Some persons, who do not sufficiently take into account the moral results obtained at Mettray, think the education there is already too expensive; if the number of agents was augmented, the expense would be considerably increased. We are obliged, often unhappily, under many circumstances, to make concessions to public opinion, all blind though it may be. Few people understand this great truth, that as regards social economy, and above all, that part which relates to christianity, there are good bargains which ruin, and losses which enrich.

After our visit to Horn, we had no need to prolong our journey; our life-long meditation had convinced us, that agricultural labour, united with a very religious and moral education, could alone save from a life of disorders and crimes, that youthful part of the population, already engaged in a career of vice. The study of the Belgian and Dutch institutions showed us, that from a barren soil good fruits could not be expected; the examination of the establishment founded by M. Wichern, taught us that the family system was the salutary means for the regeneration of mankind. It only remained for us to act.

Alone, without doubt, our strength would not have sufficed for such an enterprise, but Providence came to our aid. We met M. le Vicomte de Courteilles, an old co-disciple. He adopted our views, offered us his assistance, and went even so far as to propose his estate as the spot where we might establish the institution which we were determined on founding together.*

We saw clearly, in setting ourselves to this work, that the care of forming men, of restoring them to a healthy moral condition, from the inferior one in which they were moving, could not be confided to the first comer. This important office required men with minds educated for the purpose, of complete self-sacrifice, and unassailable integrity. It is not ideas that are wanting among us, but men capable of applying them, and more particularly so when serious subjects are to be considered.

Convinced of this truth, we thought of instituting near the colony, before even a single child had been confided to us, a special school for training young men, choosing such as were of perfectly honourable and truly christian minds, and who might be destined to become in time the heads of our families.†

It is to this institution that the prosperity of Mettray must be attributed. We will on that account be pardoned for not having passed it over in silence. This school is becoming daily more developed, and of the excellent pupils which leave it every year, some who are

* I am writing the history of the agricultural colonies, and, in so doing, I would have failed in my mission, and more still the duties of friendship, if I had not paid a just tribute of regret to him who has contributed in the greatest degree to the success of these institutions.

† One of our "savants publicistes," has defined this school as a "Séminaire Laïque." The spirit of this institution could not be expressed in a more concise manner.

employed by us, perpetuate the good traditions of the colony—others spread them abroad; and being sought after by other charitable institutions, contribute towards the success of establishments similar to ours.*

It was with the assistance of such auxiliaries that Mettray was founded. On the 22d of January, 1840, it received its first guests. Since that date more than fifteen years have sped. Many happy efforts and much progress have been made during this period. Many establishments have been founded, which prosper and spread good around them. No one can feel a greater interest than we do in the hopes which the development of these agricultural colonies destined for the reception of orphans and foundlings give birth to.

Let us trace in a few words the history of the laws, which govern these institutions, and let us indicate, at least in its chief characteristics, the important law of the 5th August, 1850.

Before speaking of this law, we have to notice a circular of the 17th of February, 1847, which confides to the municipal authorities the patronage of the liberated convicts, and which raised delicate questions, into the discussion of which it is not possible for us to enter here.

The law of the 5th of August, 1850, is of primary importance. It is in a manner the charter of agricultural penal colonies. It has reference to all the children received at these institutions, young persons detained there for paternal correction, minors condemned for crimes or delinquences, and lastly children discharged under article 66. It proclaims the necessity of submitting them all to a moral, religious, and professional education.

Two principles prevail in this law, principles to the profound wisdom of which it is impossible to render too much homage, and from which it is impossible to deviate, without compromising those interests which it is impossible to protect. We find them detailed in the articles, 3, 5, and 10.

The first consists in the application of the young criminals to agricultural labour, and the principal occupations thereto belonging.

The second consists in the free and loyal acceptance of the assistance of private establishments. The law gives to private individuals a delay of five years, during which they may prepare and accomplish the foundation of penal colonies.

It is only in case of the insufficiency of private establishments, that the colonies of the state would be founded. The following is the last paragraph of article 10. "At the end of five years, if the total number of 'jeunes détenus' cannot be accommodated in the private establishments, they will be provided for at the cost of the state, by the foundation of penitentiary colonies."

The system of the law, then, reposes entirely on the existence of the private colonies: it is from these colonies that the state demands the moral education of the young pupils, of whom it has taken the

* One of our old pupils, M. Guimas, who occupied an important post in the colony, has just been called to the direction of the colony of Ostwald, the very existence of which was menaced by the vices of its internal administration. M. Leteur, who held a similar position, had already been appointed to be sub-director of the colony of Montagny.

guardianship; it only wishes, so far as it is concerned, to assist and complete, should this be necessary, what may be insufficient in them.

The free and liberal spirit of this law received additional confirmation from the short discussion which it caused. A deputy had expressed the opinion, that the state should not confide to any one the education and reformation of young criminals, and that the law ought only to authorise public establishments; the commission hastened to protest against this system: "*the law incites to charity,*" the commission replied, "*it knows its power and hopes much from it.*" In another manner the government has sought eagerly to associate itself with the views of the commission. It was at the formal proposal of M. le Ministre de l'Intérieur, that the five years of delay were granted, for bringing to perfection the work of private charity. The commission had only asked two years. Such a manner of acting on the part of the administration, merits the greatest praise. Making thus a frank demand for the enlightened experience and assistance of the public, the government shows a sincere intention of preparing a better future for the country. Oxenstern said: "*on the proper direction of childhood, depends the prosperity of states.*"

Education, it must be confessed, is a difficult and complex work, more so perhaps than all others. It is a problem, which may be solved in various ways, and it has this peculiarity, that each of the solutions may in certain individual cases turn out to be the best. To found, then, this high science, that of making good men, the thoughts, studies, and experience, of many qualified parties, and the trials of numerous different methods, are all useful.

While a call was made by the administration on the devotion of private individuals, encouraging them to come to its aid in this great work of penitentiary reform, of which the education of the young criminals must be considered as the starting point, the government, itself, was not idle. This was the more desirable, as the private establishments were far from being able to contain all the children of this class, the number being always on the increase. We shall have occasion to return to this subject. An agricultural colony was then annexed to each of the "*maisons centrales*" of Loos, Gaillon, Foutevrault, and Clairvaux. These colonies have realised all the good that could have been expected from them.

Whilst this "*régime*" for the improvement of young criminals was being carried into effect, both by the administrative action, and by the intervention of the legislature of France, the public men of England gave, on their side, undiminished attention to this important question. The wound which our neighbours were seeking to heal, was not less deep than the one whose condition we were endeavouring to ameliorate. England, where so many ameliorations had already been realised, could not fail to follow us in the footsteps we had entered on.

A law of late date, which received the Royal assent on the 10th of August, 1854, authorises and encourages even private individuals to set themselves to the good work of founding agricultural colonies. Its aim was also to make more permanently useful, the private institutions which had been founded for this purpose, and to make them work also more in unison with each other. It authorised the minister of the

interior to confer on those institutions which should be found worthy, after instituting an enquiry, the title of "*Reformatory School.*"

We do not think a deep study of this law is necessary here, it being drawn out for the most part on the model of the French acts of administration; but it contains one point which appears to us too conformable with justice, and too worthy of imitation, to be passed over in silence. We refer to the pecuniary responsibility which it entails on the family of the delinquent.

The practical statesmen of England thought that it was unjust to exonerate the parents from the expenses which the laws of nature imposed on them, and especially where the conduct of the son was only too often the result of the bad example of the father.

The English legislation, otherwise resembling the Belgian, then determined that a sum of not more than five shillings in the week, might be exacted from the family of the young delinquent, as a sort of fine, so long as he was detained in the institution.

Such a measure would effectually defeat any sinful calculations which might sometimes induce unnatural parents to forget their most sacred duties.

The increase in the number of the young criminals in France, makes the application of this measure, which we have thought it our duty to mention, more to be desired than ever.

But let us finish what we have to say regarding the French law. This law (article 2) gives distinct and separate quarters, in the houses of confinement, to the general class of young criminals; it creates two orders of reformatory establishments—the penitentiary colonies, which are specially open to young delinquents, acquitted by the application of article 66, but confined to the guardianship of the administration (articles 4 and 5)—the correctional colonies (article 10), established by the state, either in France or Algeria, for the purpose of receiving young criminals, condemned to an imprisonment of more than two years, as well as young criminals from the penitentiary colonies, who might be declared insubordinate.

Let us be permitted here to express a regret, that, by some conception, little in harmony perhaps with the general spirit of the law, the legislature has authorised the mingling in the same colonies, those young criminals condemned in virtue of article 67, to an imprisonment of more than six months, which does not exceed two years, with those other children declared not guilty, and acquitted in virtue of article 66. This confusion, which, at first sight does not seem to be of great importance, presents, nevertheless, more than one inconvenience. In the first place, it troubles the conscience of the young acquitted criminal, overturning in his mind the sentiment of justice; for he is astonished, that the law declaring him innocent, imposes on him a detention of four or five years, whilst it confines only for a short time, generally a very short time, those regarded as guilty. We would add that it tends to foster in the public mind, and in the minds of those who may be called on some day to be in handicrafts—the masters of the former delinquent, unhappy prejudices against him.

Jurisprudence, it is true, has tried to lessen so far as was in its power what we take the liberty of calling the vice of this law. The magis-

trates, convinced of the inconveniences arising from mixing in the same establishments children of different characters, only apply article 67 of the penal code with great reserve. On the 31st of December, 1852, the total number of young criminals amounted to 6,443, and of this number, only 197 were condemned in virtue of articles 67 and 69.

In stating the number of the young criminals at such a high figure, when in 1837 they only amounted to 1,493, we cannot disguise the unhappy impression that such a revelation must make.

"But be assured," said M. le Ministre de l'Intérieur, in his last report, "that this progression does not present a co-relative movement in the criminality of youth. The existence of penitentiary establishments, destined entirely for the use of the young, provokes and multiplies decisions, at the idea of which the tribunals recoiled at a time when a companionship and sojourn in prison exposed the young criminals to an example worse than they would be exposed to in freedom."

In concluding this examination of the legislation, which has to exercise a considerable influence on the agricultural colonies, we would invite the attention of the public to one of its characteristics, which notwithstanding its high importance, has not been noticed till now.

The legislator, in laying the foundation of agricultural colonies for young criminals, was right in thinking also of those children whose vicious inclinations, or obstinate characters, resist all instruction, all efforts of domestic discipline, and who, without having been guilty of an infraction of the penal laws, merit, nevertheless, a severe warning; we would speak of those children detained for paternal correction, in virtue of articles 375 and 376, of the civil code.

If we wish to reach the most complete reform possible, we must come to the aid of youth, whatever be its social position, and combat its evil propensities wherever they may be manifested.

In France, the detention for the purpose of paternal instruction, is the only means of repressing the waywardness of youth. At Paris alone, there is an establishment which offers to fathers of families some certainty of success, but even there the security is not sufficient.

In the provinces, there exists no establishment of this description. Children yet in minority, whom the parents wish to reform by removing them out of the way of the bad examples, and evil councils, which are destroying them, would be shut up promiscuously with the "prévenus," and even those condemned for crimes, exposing them to greater dangers than those from which they wished to guard them. What father of a family would dare to expose his son to the companionship of criminals, or those whom the lenity of the law would save?

The impossibility of having recourse to such a mode of correction, is so universally acknowledged, that there is no family in easy circumstances which would not reject any such means—a poor, but respectable family, would even hesitate to make use of it. Is it not to be feared, in truth, that the boy made to cross the threshold of infamy, would look on himself in future as vowed to a life of shame?

The families of the rich sometimes make those children, of whom they have to complain, travel to a distance, at a great expense to themselves; but this means has generally only the effect of substituting one form of dissipation for another. Then their studies are interrupted,

the habit of working is lost. Those young people find at a distance seductions from which it was wished to tear them in their own country, to which they give themselves up with the less reserve, as they are free from all surveillance; they learn ideas of independence, and insubordination, and after having distressed their families, they sometimes tend to create disorder in the country.

The legislator thought it possible to remedy this sad state of things, of which we have been speaking, by authorising the sending these children to receive paternal correction at the agricultural colonies; but we fear much, that the true remedy has not yet been discovered.

In terms of the articles 375 and 376, of the civil code, a child below sixteen might be detained a month, and six months from the age of sixteen to twenty-one. It would be necessary, if one wished to impress on the mind of the child a salutary intimidation during so short a period, to make use of some regime, which would punish much at a time, if we may make use of such an expression.

The regime of the penitentiary colonies, to which young criminals are subjected, would not be of a sufficiently repressive character: the children in these establishments enjoy a certain degree of liberty. Work in the fields would appear preferable to these sons of rich people, to the study of Latin, for which the greater part have a profound aversion. Mettray offers us at the present time an example. One of our colonists having been unable to prevail on his parents to withdraw him from the college, did not hesitate to set it on fire; besides, the life in common exposes them to contract intimacies, which afterwards in the world might seriously injure their future life.

Solitary imprisonment, we do not hesitate to say, can alone act in such a manner as to be effectual for their improvement. It is necessary to have witnessed its effects, to obtain an exact idea of the happy influence it exercises on the mind and manners. A complete transformation takes place in the individual subjected to it. As he finds then neither pleasures, nor distractions, nothing causes him to lose sight of the exhortations and advice which he receives. Reflection brings unceasingly before his eyes the picture of his past life. In solitude, the child is led forcibly to fall back on himself; he no longer blushes to allow himself to be guided by his conscience, which has justly been called the voice of God. Gradually he becomes accessible to religious sentiments: work is for him an occupation, and soon becomes a pleasure, he gives himself up to it with ardour, and what he had till then considered a painful task, becomes a consolation, such a necessity, that the greatest punishment that could be inflicted on him, would be to deprive him of all occupation.

The short duration of the confinement relieves all the fears that the solitary system might raise in some minds. Those effects of solitary imprisonment, which we have just enumerated, I have had it in my power to observe at Mettray, where for some time they have been in the habit of sending to us children for the purpose of paternal correction. A penitentiary, constructed entirely on the model of that at Philadelphia, raised by the care of M. Blouet, architect, is particularly set apart for this class of individuals.

The chapel is so arranged that the children can join in the divine service without seeing each other. Each child has two cells at his disposal, one in which he sleeps, and another in which he works, whether he is employed in manual labour, or in his mental education. The neighbourhood of the "lycée de Tours," enables us to procure the instructions of its professors, for the children of those rich parents who may desire it; in this manner their studies are not interrupted; walks give them healthy exercise. All these advantages, which we have procured at the expense of considerable sacrifices, could not be reproduced in the generality of private establishments. Mettray is, then, an exception, and thus the inconveniences which we have been speaking of still exist. This is the last objection that we allow ourselves to make to the law of 1850, the wise dispositions of which, as we remarked at the outset, cannot, on the whole, be too much praised.

We have dwelt on the subject of the penitentiary colonies, and on the law which consecrates their existence, because they appear to us to be of two-fold interest, as regards agriculture, and as regards other branches of industry. The improvement of man by the soil, and of the soil by man, these are the advantages that may be drawn from such institutions.

There are twenty-three penitentiary colonies in France. They are subdivided into colonies of the state, and private colonies. These institutions have been fully described in the works of M. M. de Lamarque, and Dugat, and also in that of M. Bucquet, the Inspector-General of Prisons. The publications of these gentlemen make known the material and moral condition of penitentiary institutions since their foundation. Statistical researches enable us to trace these effects to their causes, and to discover what are the points that ought to engage particularly the attention of the "publicistes." We do not think we can add anything to such documents.

We could wish that a similar work had been undertaken with regard to the colonies for orphans and foundlings. Notwithstanding the investigations we have ourselves made, and the documents with which we have been furnished, we still find it impossible to give anything like a perfect account of these institutions. Besides, it is only on the spot, and in watching their workings, that it is possible to prove their advantages, and appreciate their merits. Let us adjourn, therefore, this new publication which we are thinking of, till we have perfectly finished the examination of these numerous establishments, on which we are at present engaged.

We hasten, however, to place on your desk, all those documents which have been addressed to us. There will be found in them facts of great interest, and some excellent ideas for consideration.

We shall esteem ourselves happy, Messieurs, if, in the simple exposition we have made, we have been able, in meeting your wishes, to point out certain defects, which it would be desirable to see remedied—to indicate some natural facts, suitable for the purpose of fixing public attention on certain points, still undecided—to meet certain questions, the solution of which may have a happy influence on the legislation, and on the regime of the agricultural colonies.

The discussion which is about to commence in this body, on the different subjects enumerated in your programme, and in which those

learned writers on the public laws, who have answered your call, are about to take part, cannot fail to excite a lively interest. It is thus that you study, in all their aspects, those different problems of the social state, that you pursue without relaxation, and with indefatigable zeal, those meliorations which the lot of the poorer classes demands. It is to the holy initiative which you have taken in the matter, that they will owe these benefits: the country, believe it, Messieurs, will remember your generous efforts.

VCE.

