

this Journal, is to attract observation to the very large number of Lunatics and Idiots in this Province, and to the urgent necessity which exists for the adoption of suitable measures on the part of Government for their relief; and we may here not unfitly express our surprise, that a fact of this nature, so vitally important as it in reality is, should have been passed over by the Committee who have reported on the Census returns of the last year for Lower Canada, without comment, while some industry appears to have been displayed in furnishing a few statistics of the Deaf and Dumb, two infirmities, the magnitude of which we by no means wish to undervalue, but which yet shrink into comparative insignificance, when contrasted with Insanity, a disease in which man's mental powers, his highest attribute, are prostrated, and himself degraded in the scale of created beings.

The per-centage of insane to the population in the two Canadas, and in other countries, from which we have been enabled to obtain data, shews a large preponderance in our own :—

	Population.	No. of Insane.	Proportion.
England, ...	12700000	16222	1 in 793
Scotland, ...	2093503	3652	" 563
Ireland, (Mr. Farres' Report for 1841.)	8175273	3382	" 2417
France, ...	32000000	32000	" 1000
Norway, ...	1051300	1909	" 551
Belgium, ...	3816000	3763	" 1014
Holland, ...	2302000	2300	" 1046
Italy, ...	16789000	1441	" 4879
Spain, ...	4085000	569	" 7181
United States, ...	12866020	16000	" 800
Westphalia, ...	—	—	" 846
Saxony, ...	—	—	" 968
Malta and Gozo, ...	120000	130	" 920

And in the following States of the American Confederacy, from which accurate returns have been obtained :—

New Hampshire, ...	280000	600	1 in 466
Massachusetts, ...	612000	1000	" 612
Connecticut, ...	298000	700	" 425
New York, ...	—	—	" 887
Pennsylvania, ...	1348233	2000	" 674
Virginia, ...	1200000	800	" *1500

And in our own Provinces—

Lower Canada, 1844,	693549	1258	1 in 551.31
Upper Canada, 1842,	506055	1118	" 452.64
United Canada, ...	1199604	2376	" 504.88

From the foregoing statistical table, it appears that Canada stands third in the list with reference to the number which her insane bears to her population, being only exceeded in this respect by the States of New Hampshire and Connecticut.

Investigations into the multiplicity of causes which

conduce to insanity, are from their very nature surrounded with difficulties, and howsoever well we may be acquainted with their general operation, we experience considerable difficulty in localizing them, as it were; and accounting satisfactorily for the disproportion in which the cases occur in different districts. This is especially the case with the Province of Canada, especially the lower section of it, as influencing which we are compelled to reject numerous active agencies, operating powerfully in other countries, some among which, and by no means the least powerful, are the *particular profession or avocation* of the individual, and *religious excitement*: for the Canadians, who constitute five-sixths of the population in this section, are almost exclusively engaged in agricultural pursuits, than which no other employment seems less disposed to develop the disease; and they are little disposed to religious excitement, a fertile source in other countries. Nor can we with greater propriety attribute it to *education*; for as the great majority of the population are uneducated, they cannot be influenced by anything like an over-exertion of their mental faculties, while their well-known peculiar temperament is not that which would conduce to unbridled or uncontrolled licentiousness, so generally met with in the choleric and nervous.

To what extent *civil condition* may operate in the induction of the disease, it is impossible to say with propriety, in the absence of proper statistical information on this head. The simple division into males and females, adopted in the census returns, affords no clue whatever as to the operation of this cause. In the Lower Province there is a small majority of males—in the Upper Province there is a preponderance of females. Taking the whole Province into account, the females slightly preponderate, to a less degree, however, than is generally met with in European countries, but in accordance with what has been observed in the United States. It is a matter of regret that we can arrive at no conclusion, from the mode in which this part of the census has been effected as to the prevalence of the disease among the Anglo or Franco-Canadian proportion of the population, in contradistinction to the European. But although all information on the civil condition of the insane has been negatived, analogy forbids us from not entertaining the idea that it does not operate, and that, too, as a very powerful agent. Of 1823 insane persons admitted into nine of the principal Asylums in the United States, there were of—

Males,	{ Single,	632
	{ Married,	341
	{ Widowers,	59
Females,	{ Single,	358
	{ Married,	317
	{ Widows,	116

* A visit to thirteen Asylums for the Insane in Europe, by Pliny Earle, M.D., Philadelphia, 1841.