

Ten years ago, on the 30th of September, 1871, there were in residence in the Asylums of this Province 1,366 lunatics, idiots, and imbeciles.

To-day there are in residence in the Asylums of this Province 2,652 persons of unsound mind—idiots, imbeciles, and lunatics.

It would seem from these figures that the number of persons of unsound mind who require the protection and support of the State in this province, very nearly doubles every ten years. And not only in Ontario, but also in the other Provinces of Canada, in every state of the Union, and, as far as I know, in every country of the civilized world, is the same thing true in a greater or less degree. Year by year the number of lunatics, imbeciles, and idiots requiring to be supported and cared for by the State, is rapidly increasing. What is to be the end of this state of things? and where is a remedy for it to be found? Are we to build one Asylum after another, indefinitely, and be content to let the earnings of the country support forever this vast and constantly increasing accumulation of disease and misery? or shall we do something, or try to do something, to prevent its occurrence? Comparatively few States and Provinces in North America provide accommodation for all their insane, and avoid, or seem to avoid, by not taking it up, the heavy burden that we carry. But in these sections of the country, the lunatics either remain at home, each one paralyzing, by his or her presence, the energies of an entire family, or else they are sent to the County Poor-houses, and in either case the cost of their maintenance to the country at large is as great, or greater, than with us, where sufficient Asylum accommodation is provided for them all. No State can really avoid this burden by simply refusing to see it; all have to bear it, each in its own way. The hope that anything material will ever be done towards decreasing the aggregate amount of lunacy by the cure of those afflicted with this disease, if it still exists in any minds, should no