

schools since their establishment, about the year 1856, must not be overlooked in considering this portion of the subject.

#### IMPORTANCE OF AWAKENING PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE MATTER.

Every one connected with the administration of criminal justice must earnestly desire to see public attention fully awakened to this vitally important question. Every well-disposed inhabitant of the city of Toronto must naturally feel a deep anxiety that our noble annual provision for free education in our schools, should be made to act with some practical benefit on the great mass of vagrant children that frequent our streets—a present reproach—a future punishment to the society that leaves them unchecked and uncared for. It has often been remarked, that the chief difficulty in grappling with this our great social evil, rests on the fact that every person who ventures to point out a defect, or suggest a change, is at once denounced as an enemy of the cause of Free Schools and general education. No apprehensions of this kind should deter men who take any interest in the well being of those around them, from doing their duty, in dealing with facts so painfully brought under their daily notice. Every year's experience increases the number of those who fear, that the heavy sum paid by the ratepayers of Toronto for free schools, is applied chiefly to the teaching of those whose parents are perfectly well able to educate their children without aid from the public purse—and that the class chiefly requiring help—the seventeen or eighteen hundred who attend no school whatever, remain quite untouched and unaffected by our munificently endowed system of education.

#### NECESSITY FOR A HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

I need not do more than notice the strong necessity that exists for a House of Correction for juvenile offenders, committed for short periods of imprisonment. Improved jail accommodations may of course mitigate one present evil, the contact with hardened offenders, but a totally different system from that of mere confinement as a punishment is required in dealing with young criminals. Of the success of Reformatory prisons in general, we have most cheering evidence. A noble institution of Mettrai, in France, for the reformation of young criminals, has attained a world wide reputation. Recent enquiries prove that "of 1,646 young criminals subjected to its discipline and restored to liberty, only 85 had relapsed into crime, or as the French Minister of Police shews, 5.43 per cent. of the whole." In 1860, 11,808 English and Welsh boys were committed to jail. In 1860 the number had fallen to 6,765. In the same year 2,308 English and Welsh girls were committed, in 1860 there were 1,269, and high authority states that this decrease has commenced with the commencement of Reformatory action in the population. In Ireland an act substantially like the English Act (17 and 18 Vic. ch. 86) has also been introduced with excellent effect. Comparing 1858 with 1859, the juvenile commitments have fallen, as to boys, 30½ per cent., and as to girls, 9½ per cent., and in 1860, from 1859, 13 and 11 per cent. respectively. These figures are most cheering, and are calculated to encourage the efforts of those who believe that if men desire to reform and purify society, they must begin with the young.

#### EXCELLENCE OF VOLUNTARY INSTITUTIONS.

Several excellent Institutions have been established amongst us to endeavour to mitigate the acknowledged evils. Boys' Homes,\* Girls' Homes, and Houses of Providence strive with small means and no legal powers to contend with the increasing array of vagrant or desolate children. Too much praise cannot be given to the philanthropic exertions of those who work for and in such Institutions.

It is neither my intention nor my desire to advocate in this place any particular scheme for meeting such a case, nor to urge the diversion of funds now used for one purpose to some other. I wish merely to invite your attention to the existence of evils—the mag-

\* **BOYS' HOME, TORONTO.**—From a recent report from this interesting charity we learn that since the opening of the institution one hundred and three boys have been admitted; during the first year sixty-three, and in the second forty, the greater number of them very young and very small, almost incapable of doing any kind of work. But this ought not to be regretted while the funds of the institution can meet the increased expenses; for admittance at an early age may prevent an unfortunate acquaintance with crime and want, and produce earlier fruit, from the good seed sown. Nine boys have had temporary lodging and food supplied them until provided with situations; two out of this number were boys sent from the Bloomsbury School, they had been employed by farmers during the harvest; after the occupation ceased they were left to shift for themselves; being found in the streets in a state of destitution, they were brought to the "Home" from which place they have been provided with situations. Of the 40 boys admitted into the Home during the year, 9 are total orphans, 20 have lost one parent; 6 put in by fathers on account of drunken mothers; 5 by mothers on account of drunken fathers; 8 have been admitted in the last month. Situations have been obtained for 15 boys. Nine have been taken out by their parents. Two coloured boys have absconded.

nitude and danger of which it is as useless to ignore, as it is pernicious to leave unnoticed and unreformed.\*

### 3. DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION, TORONTO.

From the recent report of the Committee of this institution, we gather the following interesting items:

"The number of pupils resident in the school was at present twenty-one, an increase of nine over the number at the last annual meeting. The number of day pupils remained the same, namely, six. The number of applicants had increased in Feb., 1861, to 86 at the present time. Nothing but the want of adequate funds stood in the way of these causes being provided for, and but very slight encouragement would, there could be no doubt, very largely increase the number of applicants. Within the past few months the Superintendent (Dr. Morris) had succeeded in commencing the instructions of the blind, and had now three girls and one boy under tuition. The progress they had made was a satisfactory proof of the capability of the teacher engaged in the instruction. The committee had sent Dr. Morris to Quebec to urge the government for additional aid, and the mission had so far been satisfactory as to secure the doubling of the annual grant, and would have obtained the use of the Parliament buildings had they not been subsequently required for military purposes. It was much to be regretted that this disappointment had occurred, for every day showed more forcibly the desirableness of buildings larger and better suited to the purpose than those now occupied by the school. The committee alluded to the fact that eight or nine years ago the Legislature voted \$80,000 for the express purpose of erecting an Asylum for the deaf and dumb and the blind in Upper Canada. This showed that Parliament was not only willing but desirous that something effectual should be done for these unfortunate classes. During the past year the superintendent, accompanied by the head-master and some of the pupils, visited and held meetings in several towns and villages. Much interest had been excited by the efforts of the Society, and a considerable sum of money had been paid over to the Treasurer. At Whitby the sum of \$37 35 had been realised; at Oshawa \$21 40; at Berwick \$7 73; at Brampton, \$36 94; at Rockwood \$13 67; at Guelph \$90 71; at Georgetown \$32 41; at Norval \$21 03; at Lindsay \$13 86; at Peterboro \$34 97; at Stewarttown \$23 78; at Bowmanville \$15 83; at Port Hope \$24 18; at Cobourg \$11 50.—Total, \$388 06. In addition to these sums various amounts had been since collected and sent in from other places previously visited by the deputation, in all \$324 82. Another very considerable sum had also been paid in, collected by the pupils of various Grammar, Union, or Common Schools. Thus, the pupils of the Union school, Port Hope, sent \$40; Norval school \$12 25; Berwick common school \$20 10; young ladies of Bowmanville Grammar School, \$13 60; Richmond-hill Grammar School, \$8; Hamilton Central School, \$97; Rockwood School, \$25 40; Grimsby Grammar School, \$10—Total, \$311 99. The following County Councils continued to evince their good-will towards the school by still voting money for the support of poor children within their respective bounds:—York and Peel, Simcoe, Norfolk, Wellington, Peterboro' and Victoria. The committee having incurred liabilities beyond their power to meet at present, trusted the clergy of all denominations would bring the matter before their congregations; and, in conclusion, desired to express their heartfelt gratitude to the Giver of all Good, not only for the general success and prosperity of the school, but especially for its exemption from the visitation of sickness, when almost every house in the vicinity suffered severely, particularly from the recent malignant and wide-spread epidemic of scarlet fever. From the Superintendent's report it appeared that there was a great want of accommodation in the present building. The impossibility of separating the girls and boys was a serious evil, and caused much trouble and anxiety. Notwithstanding the want of drainage in the yards, no serious illness to the Institution had been experienced. The conduct of the pupils had been very good. The progress of the Deaf and Dumb was satisfactory, and would have been much greater were there a resident male teacher. The education of the Blind, four of whom were now under the tuition of Miss Cody, was satisfactory. There was a scarcity of apparatus, however, but still their progress was solid. The Blind were learning music, but not yet geography. Soon a map of the Holy Land would be prepared for them.

\* *Presentment of the Grand Jury on this part of the Charge*:—"The attention of the Grand Jurors has been directed in a particular manner to that portion of his lordship's charge which points out the intimate connexion between a defective school law and the progress of crime; and more especially to the fact that the school law is not adapted to meet the wants of the poorer class of the population for which gratuitous education ought to be provided. Between the two alternatives, on the one hand of erecting an expensive supplementary machinery of reformatories; and on the other, altering the defective school law so as to make it do the work for which it was designed, namely, educating the classes requiring gratuitous educational aid, the jurors recommend the latter, especially in so far as it can be done with reference to cities, towns, and incorporated villages."