

themselves in such matters. A few instances by way of illustration will suffice.

In England the proportion in 1858 was one insane person to every 535 of the population; in 1874 this had risen to one in 375.* In Scotland, during the same period, the ratio increased from one in 523, to one in 438.† In Victoria, Australia, in 1867, the proportion was one to 515, and in 1871 it had reached to one in 369.‡

Coming nearer home, we find in the Census returns for the Dominion of Canada, a marked increase in the numbers of the insane beyond that of the general population. This holds good in every Province, but is most clearly shown in Nova Scotia, where a retrospect of twenty years is had. In 1851, including idiots and imbeciles, there was one insane person to every 593 of the population; in 1861 this ratio had risen to one in 504, while in 1871 there was no less than one to 309. From 1851 to 1871 the population increased from 276,117 to 387,800, and the numbers of the insane of all classes rose from 465 to no less than 1254.

Assuming that the returns are approximately correct we have evidence here of a marked and steadily progressive increase, and although every allowance be made for imperfect returns in 1851, the fact remains, that while the advance in the population was at the rate of forty per cent. (40) in twenty years, the numbers of those of unsound mind increased one hundred and sixty-nine per cent. (169) in the same period.

PREVENTION OF INSANITY.

To counteract the liability to so serious an evil, is certainly an object worthy of our highest aim. Valuable suggestions on this point have been well advanced not long since by Dr. Duncan, of Dublin, President of the Medico-Psychological Association. In his address to the members in July last, he states: "Whatever steps are to be taken

* Report of Commissioners to Lord Chancellor, July 1875.

† Seventeenth Report of General Board, Edinburgh, 1875.

‡ Report of Acting Inspector of Asylums, Victoria, 1873.

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