

—we have little fear but that many of those institutions would become self-supporting, or at least very nearly so. The country would still have to bear some of the expense of what has been well termed its heaven-ordained poor,—the halt, the maimed, and the fatuous ; but be it remembered that these always bear a definite proportion to the population ; and that the present alarming increase in the country's pauperism is not a consequence of any disproportionate increase in that modicum of its amount which the heaven-ordained poor composes.

So much for the country's adult pauperism. With regard to its juvenile pauperism, the labour scheme is more important still. The country has many poor children living at its expense in workhouses, or boarded in humble cottages in the country ; and there are many more that either want parents or worse than want them, that are prowling about its larger towns, and scraping up a miserable livelihood by begging or theft. Unless in the season of youth,—ere the mind becomes rigid under the influence of habit, and takes the set which it is to bear through life,—these juvenile paupers and vagabonds be converted into self-sustaining honest members of society, they will inevitably become the adult paupers or criminals of the future, and the country will have to support them either in poor-houses or penal settlements, or, worse still, to pay executioners for hanging them. Of all non-theological things, labour is the most sacred ; of all non-ethical things, labour is the most moral. The working habit,—the mere homely ability of labouring fairly and honestly for one's bread,—is of more value to a country, when diffused among its people, than all the other gifts,—be they hills of gold or rocks of diamonds,—that can possibly fall to its share. And if its people, or any very considerable part of them, possess not that habit and ability, it matters not what else it may possess : there is an element of weakness in its constitution, for