THE LUNACY LAWS.

The Government have assented to a motion made in the House of Commons for the appointment of a Select Committee to enquire into the operation of the lunacy laws. The following Select Committee was appointed, and is now taking evidence:—Mr Stephen Cave, Dr. Lush, Mr. Woodd, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Leighton, Mr. Tremayne, Mr. Herschell, Mr. Goldney, Mr. Joseph Cowen, Mr. Kavanagh, Mr. Butt, Mr. Birley, Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Dillwyn:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records. Five to be the quorum.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE DR. S. G. HOWE.

The Forty-Fifth Report of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, over which Dr. Howe presided since the foundation, has, as an appendix, an interesting "Memoir of Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, by his widow, Julia Ward Howe, a lady of high literary distinction." There are also memorial tributes from other hands, and a most excellent and characteristic photograph which recalls the venerable philanthropist most vividly to remembrance as we saw him, fully engrossed with his benevolent labours fourteen years ago.

The death of Dr. Howe took place on the 9th of January, 1876; on the ensuing day the Governor of the State of Massachusetts intimated the fact by a special message to the Legislature then in session. The funeral services, on the 13th, were attended by many members of the Senate and House of Representatives; and appropriate services were performed at the Massachusetts Blind Asylum and at the Church of the Disciples. A committee of the two Houses was also appointed to report resolutions in honour of the distinguished citizen. It was felt, however, that the usual funeral honours were insufficient to testify the respect and affection with which Dr. Howe was regarded by all classes of the community in his native city, and a committee was therefore appointed to arrange for a memorial service at the Boston Music Hall, in which the whole public could take part. This was held on the 8th of February, from 2.30 to 5.30 p.m., His Excellency the Governor of Massachusetts presiding; the spacious hall being filled in every part by an attentive audience. Brief eulogies in prose and verse were delivered by friends of Dr. Howe, and appropriate and pathetic music contributed by the blind pupils whom he had educated. Among the pieces produced on this occasion was an original poem recited by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, one of the medical professors of Harvard University. Ex-Governors of the State and the ex-President of Brown University were among the speakers, and testified in eloquent language to the high and influential position which Dr. Howe occupied in the estimation of his fellow-citizens.

Certainly few men have better merited a high place in the temple of fame for works of the highest benevolence, and for self-denying exertions on behalf of the most helpless and neglected of the human family. With abilities and force of character, and a most favourable combination of circumstances which could have secured a successful issue to any enterprise, Dr. Howe made his lot with the blind, the imbecile, the oppressed, the prisoner, and the slave. To them he gave his life, and he devoted himself to labours on their behalf at a time when public sympathy with the helpless was at a much lower ebb than it is in these days.

We can do no more than present the merest sketch of Dr. Howe's active life. Immediately on the completion of his medical studies he sailed for Greece, then in the throes of her life-struggle with her oppressors the Turks;

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