

On the treatment of Children mentally deficient. An Address to the Union of Teachers of the Deaf and Dumb on the Pure Oral System, 1895

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On the
Treatment
of
Children Mentally Deficient.

An Address by

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Pleasurements
to Shuttleworth
Aunt's House
Richmond Hill
Sunny

The Treatment of Children Mentally Deficient

In an ~~unhappy~~ moment I consented to the suggestion, flatteringly made to me, to deliver to the "Union of Teachers of the Deaf on the Pure Oral System" an address on the Treatment of Children Mentally Deficient. I fear that in the hastily-prepared remarks which I now have the honour to submit to you there will be but little worthy of your attention; but as your Honorary Secretary urged, with kind persistence, that my special experience in a line of work analogous to, though different from, your own, might be of some interest, I venture to ~~fulfilling~~ ^{fulfill} please to the best of my ability.

Castling backwards a glance on the early history of efforts to improve the imbecile, we find that those who had been connected with Institutions for the Deaf Dumb took a prominent part in the preliminary stages of that work. The story of the "Savoyage de l'Asyron" is

a case in point; & as this case is often
 referred to as having led to the
 investigation of the needs of the
 mentally deficient class, I shall quote
 from Séguin (himself the pioneer in the
 training of idiots). a few picturesque
 sentences. "In 1801 (says he) the citizen
 M. Bonnatue discovered in the forest of
 Arçayon, France, a wild boy. This naked
 boy was marked with numerous scars:
 nimble as a deer, he subsisted on roots
 & nuts, which he cracked like a monkey,
 laughing at the falling snow, and rolling
 himself with delight in this white blanket.
 He seemed to be about 17 years of age.

Bonnatue permitted this wild boy to
 escape, but afterwards recaptured him, &
 sent him at his own expense to the Abbé
 Sicard, director of the Asylum for the
 Deaf & Dumb at Paris. Sicard had just
 succeeded the illustrious Abbé de l'Épée,

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+ Bonaparte thought him to be the most
suitable man to perform the miracle of
which he dreamed — the re-creation of
this creature, the more inferior he had
ever seen under the form of humanity.
Sicard, however, seems soon to have tired
of this unaccustomed task, & after some
months, during which he had been exhibited
as a sort of aboriginal specimen of the
genus Homo, the wild boy passed into
the care of Mr. Itard, and to the Institution
& an annual ^{Physiologist} surgeon of considerable note. Itard
took him into his own house & provided a
governess for him, who for five years
unremittingly endeavoured to cultivate his faculties,
with however but little result. In the end
he was remitted to the Hospital for
Incurables, & although the result was
unsatisfactory, Itard's observations of
the mental & sensory deficiencies of the
case, made on scientific lines, and his

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follows /

†
~~It was his conclusion was that to succeed
in ameliorating the mental condition
of the little boy Victor, the ^{objects} principles
to be aimed at were:~~

~~1st To develop the senses~~

~~2nd To develop the intellectual faculties~~

~~3rd To develop the appetitive functions.~~

~~& this is really the basis upon which
all successful training of the
feeble minded is conducted.~~

Subsequent reflections as to the indications for treatment; bore fruit when his pupil Séguin undertook at his instance (in 1837) the training of a young idiot in the Children's Hospital of Paris. Itard's conclusions were that to succeed in ameliorating the mental condition of the wild boy (Victor) the objects to be aimed at were, -

1st To develop the senses

2nd To develop the intellectual faculties

3rd To develop the affection functions.

This is in fact the basis upon which all successful training of the feeble-minded is conducted.

(At a later period see p. 4) -

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reflections as to the
~~Subsequent Observations on indications~~
for treatment, bore fruit when his pupil
Séguin undertook at his instance (in 1837)
the training of a young idiot in the Children's
Hospital of Paris.

(1842)

At a later period, we find Saegert,
Director of the Deaf & Dumb Institution
at Berlin making a study of imbecile
children admitted amongst his other
pupils, & ultimately organizing a separate
Department of the Institution for the
Training of Idiots.

In America also efforts were early
made in connection with Deaf & Dumb Schools
to improve the condition of "feeble-minded"
children; & it is recorded that one was
subjected to training, ^{for}
~~received~~ into the Hartford Institution
as early as 1818.

While, however, there are some analogies
in the two classes of infirmity, there
are distinct differences; & the system

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appropriate to the one requires to be modified for the other. Deaf-mutes & children mentally deficient are both abnormal in their relations with the world around them, but whereas with the former it is a case of "Knowledge at one entrance quite (or partially) shut out", with the latter there is an incapacity for mental action due to imperfection - or at any rate imperfect action - of the nervous centres, sometimes indeed of the whole nervous system. When a mentally-faulty child is "dumb" it may be from one of several causes. It may, of course, be from defective hearing, & then we have the difficult case to deal with - (of which more anon) - of the "deaf idiot" or the "idiotic deaf-mute". But more frequently the defective child lacks language, because he lacks ideas & sometimes, indeed, there is a want of power to co-ordinate the complex

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Muscular movements necessary for speech;
at others there is mal-development of the
parts essential for speech production. Dr.
Langdon-Down has remarked that of 276
children at one time under his care, as
many as 118 were "dumb from the absence
of mental power to co-ordinate the vital
mechanism of speech into an aptitude
for articulate sounds". We meet also
with cases of inability to speak from
(aphasia) from disease or imperfect
development of the third left frontal (Broca's)
convolution (situated above the left ear),
& this is often associated with evidence
of want of power of other portions of the
brain, & with paralysis of some of the
muscles. Classifications of mentally
deficient children have been made upon
the basis of powers of speech; but though
speech is an important factor, it is not the
sole standard of discrimination between

And in practice we find we have at the
two extremes two very different classes
of children to deal with, the dull
apathetic child, who does not speak
because he has not the energy to do so,
& the restless excitable child, deficient
in self-control, but not necessarily deficient
in speech.

See back of page 6.

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varying degrees of intelligence.

The physical characteristics of different types, & especially the form & size of the skull, will often aid us in gauging the capacities for improvement of defective children. A brief reference to these may not be out of place, especially as you may glean some hints serviceable in the identification of mental feebleness resulting therefrom amongst deaf children. An abnormally small skull denotes as a rule defect of brain development; and at the school age a head measuring in its greatest circumference less than 18 inches goes with mental deficiency, while I have had under my care patients with heads measuring no more than 14 & 15 inches. I show you a cast of the brain of one of 29 with such a head: it weighed but $12\frac{1}{2}$ ounces, just one fourth of what

* As old Fuller quaintly puts it: "Heads
are sometimes so little that there is no
room for wit: sometimes so long (or as
I should say, large) that there is no
wit for so much room."

would be normal! Then by way of
 contrast to the last (called microcephaly)
 we have the overlarge head with spreading
 globular outline, the result of inflammation
 of its contents in early life leading to
 what in popular parlance is called
 "water on the brain", or hydrocephalus.
 A circumference of 23 inches is not
 an uncommon measurement for such - it
 may run on to 28 or even 30 - , & if the
 contents were good brain matter we
 should expect gigantic genius! But
 unfortunately there is but little brain
 matter: the head is filled up with
 inflammatory products, not necessarily
 fluid, but at any rate a lumpy-organised
 form of tissue⁺. Another type has been
 named "Mongol" from a physiognomical
 resemblance to the Eastern Asiatics, though
 our highly intelligent Japanese friends
 might take exception to this designation.

back of 2.

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A rare but remarkable variety is that called sporadic cretinism or myxoedema. (To which my friend Dr. Sykes Thompson referred in his inaugural address). I mention these selected types because they have well-marked ^{physical} characteristics, but there are many others such as those of paralytic, epileptic, & highly-nervous children, such as upon which I cannot now enlarge. From the little I have seen of deaf children I imagine that some of the characteristics I have mentioned may occasionally be traced, & probably the presence of such abnormalities may help in the difficult discrimination of those who require instruction separately from the ^{deaf} child of normal configuration. Defects of development, abnormal nervous system, & defects of nutrition are the criteria upon which my friend Dr. Francis Warner has based his

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Industrious researches for feeble-minded
Amongst 100,000 children in attendance
at Elementary schools. ~~Dispersed~~

Our time will not however permit
us further to pursue the details of the
Subject. I promised to thank you
especially of the mode of Treatment of
Children Mentally deficient. And
perhaps in approaching this I may say
a few words as to preventive treatment.
This will necessarily take us back to the
consideration of some of the more common
causes of Mental Deficiency. Some years
ago I published (in conjunction with Dr.
Hutchen Beach) an article on the Causes
of Idiotcy & Imbecility, based upon an
experience of 2380 cases. We found
that of hereditary causes, the most common
was a ~~hereditary~~ ^{physical or scrofulous} family history, then came
hereditary mental weakness (usually of
idiotcy in the family history), epilepsy & other
physical or scrofulous family history

Compare Bentham Thomson p. 2.

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nerve afflictions, parental intemperance, maternal ill health, accident, or shock (prior to the child's birth). The influence of marriages of consanguinity was noted fact that parents were consanguine was noted in 5.83 of my cases, & in 2.54 of D-Beach's, the latter being of a lower social class than the former. Convulsions, Epilepsy, accidents & illnesses to the child itself were the assigned causes in a large number of cases, but many of these were probably associated with an innate predisposition to mental instability, & often the breakdown occurred at critical periods of the child's development, such as at the first or second dentition or the approach of puberty. We have therefore the classification of cases on the basis of causation as Congenital (or original), Noncongenital (or acquired); with the

Butler Horton 11-2.

intermediate group of Developmental Cases.
 The congenital cases from hereditary causes
 are doubtless the more numerous class; though
 if we accept the statement of the parents as
 the subject the reverse would be apparently
 true. Speaking generally we may say
 that hereditary tendencies to nervous
 disease & to certain constitutional
 weaknesses, intensified as they too often
 are by ill-assorted marriages, are the more
 frequent causes of mental defect in
 the offspring. I think there are signs
 of public opinion awakening gradually
 to a sense of the impropriety of such
 marriages; & I have even heard talk
 in advanced circles of the "right of
 a child to select his own parents". I
 have said enough to emphasize the
 importance of a healthy temperate life
 on the part of parents; for although our
 figures do not give that preponderating

influence to alcoholic intemperance as a cause of idling which has been sometimes claimed for it; it is no doubt a frequent factor in the ill health and nervous disorders noted as parental causes -

General Treatment. Mentally feeble children are commonly also physically feeble, ^(often scrofulous or rickety) and consequently it is especially necessary to build up their health by judicious feeding & placing them under the best hygienic conditions possible. The body must be toned up, so as satisfactorily to perform its functions, & the habits improved by sedulous attention. The parents of mentally deficient children are unfortunately often very unsuitable guardians of their own children, being themselves highly nervous & apt to react injuriously upon the sensitive nature of their offspring. Sometimes too much fuss is made with the deficient child:

if not, he is hidden away and neglected -
 For ameliorative treatment, therefore, the
 child has a better chance when removed
 from home & placed under some one
 familiar with ^{appropriate} methods of training.

As long ago pointed out by Seguin,
 all successful teaching of mentally
 deficient children must proceed on
 physiological principles. In other
 words the training of imperfectly
 developed intellects must be conducted
 in as close imitation as possible of
 the mode in which nature herself
 proceeds in the development of the
 faculties of perfect children. I do not
 are, indeed, in many respects in the
 condition of imperfectly developed
 infants; & valuable hints as to the
 steps whereby improvement may be
 obtained in the former may be gained
 by careful observation of the evolution

of the senses & perceptions in the normal child.

Those conversant with babies will be familiar with the important ^{role} ~~relation~~ of the sense of touch in the development of infantile intelligence. Dr. Séguin says truly that the young baby on waking explores his surroundings "not at first with staring eyes, but with searching hands: he seeks first not for sight, but for contacts". A young child will amuse himself for hours in experiencing the "hard or soft", warm or cold, "contacts of his various surroundings". Thus by comparison of contacts, perceptions of differences ^{are evolved;} ~~gradually develop;~~ and so ~~a~~ ^{the} rudimentary reasoning processes are gradually established. Later the impressions derived through the sense of sight check off those of the sense of touch; & in due course a chain of

information as regards the outer world is formed by co-operation of the various senses. The intelligence of the normal child is constantly growing with the evolution of its senses & perceptions.

But with the idiot (to interest agree with the mentally feeble child) there is some hindrance to this normal evolution. The obstacle may be superficial, that is, dependent upon dullness of sense organs: more often it is central, that is, defect in formation or action of the brain renders it incapable of registering the impressions sent to it. Sometimes the intervening nervous fibres are at fault, so that impressions are not properly conveyed. Whichever the fault, our approach to the brain must necessarily be through the organs of sensation, & Legrain argues that the organs of sensation being within our reach, & those of thought out of it, the

From the 78th to 80th of 1900

Exercise the organs

174 months after birth

For both dull apathetic cases, with
blunted sensation & feeble reaction,
training is commenced by what has been
termed a "bombardment of bean bags". These
missiles are of bright-colored flannel bags,
some 5 inches square, loosely filled with
beans or maize, so that their impact is
not hurtful. ^{A bag is} ~~These are~~ hurled by the
teacher towards the child, who will not
at first put up its hand, even to ^{guard} ~~protect~~
its face; gradually however ^{in self-protection} he learns to
ward off the missile. The second step
to catch the bag, & the third, to throw it
back to the teacher, mark successive steps
of improving mental activity as well as
of sensibility.

former are the first that we can set in action", so that in practice, "the physiological education of the Senses must precede the psychological education of the mind".

Following nature's example we tackle first the sense of touch, and we present to the child balls, cubes, objects with rough & with smooth surfaces, ~~so~~ which he may handle so as to gain contrasting tactile impressions. We exercise his tactile sense by means of "seq. boards" & simple puzzles, by building bricks, threading beads &c; & of course all such exercise must be rather of the nature of play than of a scholastic lesson. (See back of v. 16 run on line)

The sense of sight comes next in importance to that of Touch, as regards training. And in the first place it is essential (as no doubt is also the

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Guggenbuhl writing letters of
phosphorus in a darkened room,
showing the rising sun to the children
on the Abendberg.

Case with deaf mutes To make sure that
 the eye itself is all right, & if not, To correct
 defects by means of glasses. Then comes the
 task of fixing the wandering gaze, & for this
 purpose much may be done by the influence
 of the teacher's own eye - (as Séguin quaintly
 puts it "The main instrument in fixing the
 regard is the regard"). Guggenbühl, the
 earliest imitator of Cretino, is said to have
 gained his pupils' attention by writing in
 letters of fire [by means of phosphorus] in
 a darkened room. For quite young children
 dazzling objects such as the silbo and glötes
 seen on Christmas trees, & for older ones the
 changing lines of the Kaleidoscope, are of use
 in this respect. Subsequently the exhibition
 & matching of brightly coloured beads, rubbings &
 the arrangement of colour blocks & tiles in
 patterns, help with discrimination of colour.

Taste & Smell being essentially animal
 rather than intellectual senses & do not as a rule
 require much

Culture in the mentally-deficient class.

But Discrimination may be increased by offering to the pupil substances of similar appearance such as salt & sugar to be distinguished by taste, ground coffee & snuff to be distinguished by smell &c.

Perverted & abnormal states of these senses are occasionally met with in civils: we have known one whose peculiar "taste for literature" was manifested by his "doom-ing his book", cover & all; and another who distinguished his own & his comrades' clothes, solely by the sense of smell!

With regard to hearing, my own experience has been - (though in my class were selected ones at the Royal Albert College, deafness being a bar to admission, I do not lay much stress upon it) - that in the majority of cases mentally-feeble children are not so often deficient in hearing as in the hearing

power of listening. They require, indeed, to be coaxed to listen by presenting to them agreeable sounds. Fortunately music has for this class special charms; & a simple song will often attract attention when mere speech is disregarded. Our old-world nursery ditties containing repetitions of simple sounds, such as "Bee bee black sheep &c" "Dickory dickory dock" &c set to attractive tunes, are not without use in the education of such children, acting as they often do as stepping stones to speech. Both songs even low grade imitations of them will be correctly hummed long before any attempt at articulation; and the divine gift of music sometimes prevails when there is but little manifestation of mental power in other directions. As Southey satirically remarks (in his "Doctor") "Providence has given to some

At the Western Council School at
(Harcourt) the Late Medical Officer
Mr. Pyeroff reported the case of a
stone deaf imbecile of 18, who could
sing in time, & picked up new tunes
learned by the other boys.

Pyeroff, 1893

men wisdom & understanding, & to others
 the art of playing on the fiddle. Instances
 are not uncommon (I have one at
 present under my own care) of mentally
 deficient children being able quite
 correctly to reproduce on the piano any
 tune they have heard, & feeble-minded
 instrumentalists have even figured on
 the concert platform.

More or less imperfection of speech
 is extremely common with mentally
 deficient children. Thus of 589
 patients in the Royal Albert Asylum,
 Lancaster, at the close of my connection
 with it in 1893, it was recorded that
 13 made no attempt at speech, ~~that~~
 55 made slight attempts only
 40 made a few articulate sounds only
 88 spoke indistinctly
 166 spoke fairly
 227 spoke well.

by percentage
The ~~number~~ of deaf children was ^{very} ~~comparative~~
^{small} insignificant: not more than ~~four~~
^{absolutely deaf}
were ~~noticed~~ ~~absolutely deaf~~
and about 40 others had been noted
as being below the average of hearing
power. It was not always the deaf
children who were most behind in speech
however.

At the "Scottish Socy" for Imbecile Children
(Glasgow) Dr. Leslie reports that the
speech was absent in 36 per cent, imperfect
in 24 per cent, & good in only 42 per cent.
(Glasgow)

So that in the majority the speech was defective & in about one-third marked so. The percentage of deaf children was comparatively small: not more than four were absolutely deaf, and about 100 others had been noted as being below the average of hearing power. It was not always the deaf children who were most backward in articulation, however.

At the Scottish Institution for Deaf Children the Late Medical Officer reported that speech was absent in 34 percent, imperfect in 26 percent, & good in only 42 percent.

Further assembly be —

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1. Without the majority the speech
was defective, & in about one-third
markedly so.

In this assembly of experts in
the art of teaching articulation I
shall not venture to enlarge upon
the Doubtless imperfect methods we
employed for the amelioration of
Speech. Suffice it to say that oral
lingual & labial abnormalities
were looked for, & if practicable
corrected. According to Dr. Clouston
(Memories of Development p. 47) "there are
over three times more deformed palates
among ~~idiots~~ & congenital imbeciles
than among the sane, & only one tenth
of the idiot palates ^{examined} were typical, while
over two-thirds of them were deformed.
The deformity consists of the arch of
the palate being high & narrow, approxi-
mating in form to an inverted V, or a narrow

Gothic arch, instead of the normal
~~harp~~ horse-shoe contour. In a few
 extreme cases there was actually cleft
 palate. In cleft types ^{(2-31) porous, cleft} the tongue
~~was~~ is found thickened at its tip,
 & coarse in its development generally, so
 that its fine adjustments are made
 with difficulty: moreover there is often
 want of power of co-ordination of
 the lingual muscles. Then the lips
 are as a rule loosely held, often so
 loosely that there is overflow of saliva.
 To improve the power of closing the
 lips, a flat piece of boxwood, or an
 ordinary ^{bone paper} ~~holder~~ ^{holder} stick, may be
 held by the child between his lips
 for a few minutes at a time. Blowing
 a whistle is also of service. Opening &
 closing the mouth so as to bring the teeth
 together: putting out the tongue, & drawing
 it to the right & to the left, & touching

I with it the Teeth of the upper & lower Jaw respectively, also the Roof of the Mouth, are other forms of oral exercises serviceable in overcoming defects of Co-ordination interfering with clear articulation.

This preliminary drill is however dull work, & the imbecile child requires to be interested in the successive stages of his speaking lessons. Owing to the extreme difficulty of sustaining attention with this class, lessons must be made ~~very~~ ^{partially} ~~made~~ of the nature of play for the child, & the methods of the nursery of imitating the cries of animals, naming toys, articles of clothing & common objects, have to be followed by the teacher. When at the Royal Albert College I drew up a table to help the teachers in the identification of defects of articulation, & in exercising the

Children in simple articulatory sounds; & I am glad to hear that the principal Instructress has recently had the benefit of a course of training in the oral method at the Old Deaf and Dumb Institution. I shall merely add that in our untutored way we strive to inculcate speech, whenever practicable, rather than mere signs or gesture language, being convinced that notwithstanding the difficulties of the former, the cultivation of speech carried with it the cultivation of the intelligence. But in some cases the intelligence was so feeble as not to justify much expenditure of energy in articulation lessons.

From the cultivation of speech, which occupies an intermediate place between manual training & the co-ordination of muscular movement, we pass to the subject of physical training generally. Drill, starting with the simplest movements, is valuable not only for the purpose of

Muscular Development,

~~is~~ but more especially for the salutary effect it has in calling forth the faculty of attention & the prompt exercise of obedience. Made attractive, as it may be to this class, by means of music, it often forms the first step ^{forward} in Educational work. And it is of special value to that large class of nervous children who suffer from spasmodic, purposeless movements, the grasping ^{twiddling} of wands, dumb-bells &c exercising ^{with these will} ^{& the muscles.}

Having thus cultivated the Senses, & exercised the muscles, we naturally proceed to what is more commonly understood as the Scholastic Education of the child with a view of promoting general intelligence & mental ^{training} in the earlier stages. This partakes to a considerable extent of the Kindergarten Character, the child's observing powers & activities being pleasantly exercised

into educational channels. The handling & threading of beads, in series of number & colour, the ~~the~~ ^{per-}foration of outline pictures afterwards to be ~~marked out~~ ^{stitched} with coloured worsted, various forms of paper-weaving, embroidery & macramé work are useful not only in overcoming spasmodic finger twitches & growing dexterity, but in the hands of a judicious teacher form the basis of intellectual exercises. Children with no knowledge of figures, will ~~count~~ ^{reckon} correctly beads threaded in series, or threads ^{used} in macramé work, & the practical matching of colours is often acquired before their names. Everything must be objectively demonstrated to weak intellects: nothing ^{abstract} left to the imagination, which is apt to ~~lead~~ ^{go} astray. Calculation is usually the crux of the

Words are men's daughters, but God's
Sons are things.

imbecile, & though counting by rote
 may be acquired to a considerable
 extent its ~~express~~ practical application
 in enumerating objects is not in
 many cases not understood. To
 end in the appreciation of the value
 of money, weights & a shop-lesson.
 (Which is an extension of the old
 nursery game of shop) is in use in
 most Imbecile Institutions, the
 pupils taking in turn the rôle of
 Shopkeeper & customers, weighing
 measuring, & paying for in real coins,
 genuine samples of grocery and
 drapery merchandise. In this &
 all other lessons the old Horatian
 maxim is borne in mind: -

Sequitur irritant animos demissa personam
 Quam quæ sunt oculis subjeta ^{visum} ~~fidem~~ ^{visum} ~~fidem~~
 or in brief prose

Facta non verba. Things done or seen
 make more impression than things ^{perhaps} heard.

The usual School Subjects are, therefore, taught as far as possible objectively & by illustration. Reading is best put before the child in connection with pictures or objects, the printed & written names of which are learned by association rather than by the laborious system of acquiring the names of letters of the alphabet first. There is comparatively little difficulty in the imitative acts of writing & drawing.

For the Mentally deficient Child especially (though I think for other children too) - mere book learning is not the most important part of training. As has been well remarked by Froebel, "In primary education the doing, the thing done, the teaching & the learning must, in every case, rest on actual fact & on real existence;" & that which gives a tangible result, to be grasped in the hand as well as in the mind is especially

helpful to exceptional children. Thus
 comes in the great value of manual
 training & of suitable industrial
 occupation. ^{The testimony} ~~It is stated~~ of some
 good Spanish monks who several
 centuries ago treated with success
 cases of mental disorder, & even of mental
 deficiency, by what we may call moral
 methods ^{is the point} ~~that~~ ^{we} cure almost
 all our patients, ^[they say] except the nobles,
 who would think themselves dishonored
 by working with their hands. So with
 the imbecile, if it can only be discovered
 in what direction his abilities lie
 (& this will be often ^{done} in the course of
 his kindergarten instruction) a
 modicum of manual work will have
 most salutary influence. So in training
 institutions it is usual for pupils to
 spend half day at school & half day
 at work, & at the Royal Albert Lying-in

We had a series of workshops where
 mat & basket making, Tailoring shoe-
 making & carpentering were practiced.
 Many of the boys showing considerable
 skill. What was still better a farm
 of 160 acres where there was ample
 healthy outdoor employment in the
 cultivation of the land & in tending
 the cows, pigs, horses &c. The girls
 were employed in the Laundry, Sewing
 rooms & other domestic departments,
 & did much of the cleaning work of
 the Establishment; & very proud
 they were of their cloings. The old
 saying that ~~all work~~

all work & no play makes Jack a dull boy"
 was however not lost sight of, & besides
 frequent set entertainments, active
 outdoor games were encouraged, &
 loafing very carefully discouraged.
 If good moral training be a prime

Essential in every System of Education,
 it is especially so in the case of mentally
~~deficient~~ feeble children. Not that the mentally
 feeble child is by nature worse than the
 ordinary child but his weakness makes
 him more pliable, & an evil example, not
 to say precept - may in his case be especially
 injurious. Hence the necessity for a
 good moral atmosphere surrounding
 him, & a good example on the part of
 those in charge of him, for he is peculiarly
 imitative. As a rule moral discipline
 may be easily enforced, by one who has
 tact, on a system of mild rewards or
 punishments - of the mind is many cases
 being reached more easily through the
 stomach - & adapted to the capacity of
 each case. The religious feelings are
 not necessarily in abeyance in the
 mentally-deficient child; and a
 simple confidence in the immortal

Father, & an idea of duty towards
 one's neighbour on the lines of the
 Golden Rule should be inculcated.
 We can spare but a few words
 for the results of training. Experience
 has fully justified the early state-
 ment of Seguin on the subject. Writing
 in 1866 he says "Idiots have been
 improved, educated & even cured —
 more than 30 per cent have been taught
 to conform to moral & social laws, &
 rendered capable of good feeling & of
 working like the third of a man;
 more than 40 per cent have become
 capable of the ordinary transactions
 of life under friendly control, of
 understanding moral & social abstractions,
 & working like two-thirds of a man;
 & 25 to 30 per cent have come near and
 near the standard of manhood, till
 some of them will defy the testing of

Good judges when compared with
ordinary young men & women. At the
Royal Albert Hospital we have a record
of nearly 20 per cent of patients discharged
after full training "competent to con."

tribute to their own maintenance (about
half actually maintaining themselves),
& of 22 per cent more or less useful to their
friends at home. But of course with many

"It is not enough to help the feeble up
But to support him up"

& there is still room for much benevolent
work in the after care of the feeble minded.

I fear I have wearied you already,
but before closing I should like to say
a few words about 2 classes of children
~~whom I have~~ the very interesting
to teachers of the deaf. I have already
alluded to the borderland class of
mentally feeble deaf mutes or deaf
imbeciles. It seems to me that all

The Lady in Cornus
Lockwood is Alabaster

uneducated deaf children, from the fact
 of the isolation in which the deprivation of
 this sense places them, resemble in some
 measure the imbecile class, & it is in
 proportion to the impressibility ^{of reaction} of their
 brain through the other senses that they
 rise above it. If, unhappily, the brain is
 defective or a damaged one, & the
 sense of hearing is absent, we have a
 case in which not only normal ^(normal stimulus) stimulus
 but normal reaction is lacking, & con-
 -sequently progress must be exceedingly slow
 & the results of training meagre. This is
 however no reason why efforts should not
 be used to improve the condition of such
 a pupil, & sometimes a capacity for simple
 industrial occupation may be discovered
 which will render his existence much more
 happy, if not to some degree more useful.
 For long grade cases I doubt the advisability
 of long continued scholastic education, &

with due deference I would submit that
 oral teaching, after a sufficient ~~unsuccessful~~
 trial, is inappropriate for such. If ^{however} such a
 child can be taught to express his wants by
 gesture, & encouraged to do something
 useful with his fingers it will be worth
 the effort. The presence of such children
 is no doubt a hindrance to the progress
 of the brighter children in classes for the
 deaf, & now that Education for all is
 compulsory, it seems highly desirable
 that separate provision should be made
 for the teaching of the more mentally
 feeble amongst the deaf mutes, as you
 soon-see informs me is already the case
 in Germany. What ^{number} proportion of such
 children there will be to provide for depends
 somewhat upon the standard of mental
 feebleness adopted; & I read in ^{Mygind} ~~the~~
 that the frequency with which Deaf-mutism
 is reported as being complicated with

1
which varies greatly, the two extremes
being represented by the N. American
Statistics of 1880, & the Danish Statistics
of the same year. According to the former
no less than 3,339 out of 33,378 deaf mutes
were also feeble minded, or idiotic & blind,
i.e. about 10 per cent, while according to
the latter there were only 17 such idiotic
individuals among 1,243 deaf mutes, i.e.
1.3 per cent. Perhaps the American term
"feeble minded" covers the case of any whom
our go-ahead Yankee Transatlantic Comers
don't consider quite "ente", & I was ^{soberly} warned
by an American friend when I was about
to make the tour of the Instⁿ for the Feeble
Minded in the States in 1876 that "he
guessed I should find their feeble minded
children about equal to the average British
School boy!"

Then with regard to the ^{myxomatosis} myxomatosis
children or sporadic cases referred to by

Dr. Sydenham Thompson in his address. Having the
 experience now ~~has~~ of the last few years
 has conclusively demonstrated that the
 administration of the Thyroid gland of the
 sheep quite changes their nature both
 physical & mental, & that from being dull
 & apathetic they are transformed into
^{comparatively} active, sprightly, children capable of
 improving by education. It is true that
 owing to the brain having been in a state
 of stagnation, they are necessarily backward
 children, & they will require special
 teaching, but their learning power is not
 specially at fault, & in London at any
 rate ^{of the time} their place would be not in the classes
 for the Deaf, but in the Special classes
 for defective children, which are doing
 such useful work in as many as 20
 Metropolitan centres.

If there be any here who would like
 to see practical illustrations of the

methods which I have been endeavouring to set forth, I should by all means advise them to visit one of these centres of special instruction, organised for the London School Board, by Mr. Buzwin, & see for themselves the beneficial effects of appropriate teaching & increased teaching power in the case of mentally exceptional children. And the benefit is not only to the ^{and} children thus provided for, but also to the pupils & teachers of the ordinary classes from which they have been withdrawn.

Let me close with one more quotation from Séguin which I feel is appropriate to the labours not only of those who, like him, have helped the imbecile, but equally to those engaged in the benevolent but trying task of giving speech to the dumb. "Our work," says he "is one ever changing in form, never changing in object: it is a work in which ^{the teacher, the nurse,} the physician, the philosopher, the moralist have all something to do, but all that

Each does must be done in the spirit
 of affection & that of the dearest kind...
 ... Moral associations, sociability,
 family affinity, all these have to be
 created in the idiot; his sense of
 affection stands in need like all his
 other senses, of development. All of these
 poor children may be taught to love
 by being loved - - - We may bring
 skill, even genius to our task, we may
 understand all mysteries & all knowledge,
 we may speak with the tongues of men
 and of angels, & if we have not love it
 will profit us nothing." This divine
 Charity, in humble imitation of the
 Great Master, is indeed the Key-note,
 as it will be the Key-stone, of all
 successful work for the amelioration
 of the afflicted classes.