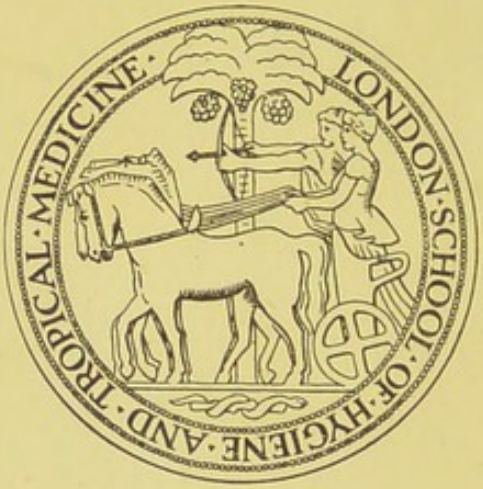

THE PROBLEM OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED

The Problem

OF THE

Feeble-Minded

An Abstract of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded

With an Introduction by the

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LONDON
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WESTMINSTER
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PREFACE

THERE are at this moment some 150,000 persons in the country, who, while not certifiably insane, are suffering from mental defect—unhappy in themselves, a sorrow and burden to their families, and a growing source of expense and danger to the community. Under proper care, in surroundings adapted to their needs, the majority of them can be trained to do work which supplies a stimulus and an interest to their limited intelligences and provides a substantial share of the cost of their maintenance. Left unprotected, they suffer moral and physical degradation. Mental defects are hereditary; the feeble-minded are prolific; and thus the relative amount of feeble-mindedness and insanity increases at an ever-growing rate and threatens the race with progressive deterioration.

The Poor Law Commissioners have dwelt in their Report on the gravity of the evil, and both the majority and the minority express their entire agreement with the recommendations of the Commission on the Feeble-minded. "If, as we hope," they say, "the recommendations of that Commission are carried into effect, a system of control over the feeble-minded will be initiated which will free the Poor Law administrator from one of his greatest difficulties."

To bring home to a wider public the urgency of the case, it was thought well to issue an abstract of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded.

The Committee responsible for the publication of this book have been fortunate in securing the help of Mrs. Walter Slater, who has prepared the abstract, and of Mrs. Hume Pinsent, one of His Majesty's Commissioners, who has read the proof-sheets. Their

thanks are also due to Sir Edward Fry for the Introduction, and to Mr. Francis Galton, the Rev. Professor Inge, Miss Dendy, and Professor Pigou, who have written on those aspects of the question on which respectively they can speak with authority.

HORACE DARWIN.

IDA DARWIN.

K. E. FARRER.

FLORENCE A. KEYNES.

CATHERINE D. WHETHAM.

W. C. D. WHETHAM.

CAMBRIDGE, *April*, 1909.

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INTRODUCTION

I HAVE been requested to say a few words by way of introduction to this book, and I have acceded to the request not because I supposed that any words of mine could add weight to the claim which the book made for serious consideration, but because I feel very strongly the importance of the subject.

Years ago the late Walter Bagehot in a brilliant and sad passage stated the case against philanthropy. "The most melancholy of human reflections, perhaps," he wrote, "is that, on the whole, it is a question whether the benevolence of mankind does most good or harm. Great good, no doubt, philanthropy does, but then it also does great evil. It augments so much vice, it multiplies so much suffering, it brings to life such great populations to suffer and to be vicious, that it is open to argument whether it be or be not an evil to the world, and this is entirely because excellent people fancy that they can do much by rapid action that they will most benefit the world when they most relieve their own feelings; that as soon as an evil is seen 'something' ought to be done to stay and prevent it. One may incline to hope that the balance of good over evil is in favour of benevolence; one can hardly bear to think that it is not so; but anyhow it is certain that there is a most heavy debit of evil, and that this burden might almost all have been spared us if philanthropists as well as others had not inherited from

their barbarous forefathers a wild passion for instant action."

Now I commend the work of the Commission on the Feeble-Minded, explained with a commendable brevity in the following pages, to the careful attention of all good people because it is free from many of the evils so forcibly presented to us in the passage I have cited. It has been done with deliberation, and not with "a wild passion for instant action." It does not tend to bring into life a "great population to suffer and to be vicious." It does not rest content with suggesting that "something" ought to be done, but tells us what that "something" ought to be.

But in the effort to avoid haste and ignorance, philanthropy encounters a new peril, that of prolixity and bulk; and the most zealous philanthropist may give pause before attacking the seven folio volumes of Blue Book which contain the report of the Commission and the evidence taken by them. Those who are responsible for this book have, therefore, done a good work for the public in producing in a brief form the substance of the report so far as it relates to those of the feeble-minded who are not at present provided for, as such, by the State; and I heartily commend this volume to the careful attention of the public.

EDW. FRY.

FAILAND,
February, 1909.

THE PROBLEM OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED

OBJECT OF THE COMMISSION AND SCOPE OF THE ENQUIRY.

THE Royal Commission appointed in 1904 to consider the question of the care and control of the feeble-minded consisted of the following members:—

The Earl of Radnor, Chairman;
W. P. Byrne, Esq., Principal Clerk to the Home Office;
C. E. H. Chadwyck-Healey, Esq., K.C.;
C. E. H. Hobhouse, Esq., M.P.;
F. Needham, Esq., M.D., Commissioner in Lunacy;
H. B. Donkin, Esq., M.D.;
J. C. Dunlop, Esq., M.D.;
H. D. Greene, Esq., K.C.;
The Rev. H. N. Burden, Manager of Brentry Inebriate Reformatory;
W. H. Dickinson, Esq., M.P., Chairman of the National Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-minded;
C. S. Loch, Esq., Secretary to the Charity Organization Society; and
Mrs. Hume Pinsent, Chairman of the Special Schools Sub-Committee of the Birmingham Education Committee.

Their Report, which was issued in August, 1908, is a document that must appeal to everyone who is interested in social problems. The great length and minuteness of this Report, however, and the mass of evidence which the Commissioners found it necessary to hear, place it almost beyond the reach of the general public, and in view of the urgency of the case and the desirability of calling attention to the need of legislation, it has been thought well to reproduce the substance of the enquiry in a more accessible form.

It should be added that, though the Commissioners' task included an enquiry into the working of the Lunacy Commission, it is here proposed to consider only the portions of the Report relating to those classes of the feeble-minded for whom no provision is made at present by the State except as they come under control for some other reason, *i.e.*, as paupers, as inebriates, or as criminals.

A prefatory note states the object of the Commission, which, in the words of the Royal Warrant dated September 9th, 1904, was

> to consider the existing methods of dealing with idiots and epileptics, and with imbecile, feeble-minded or defective persons not certified under the Lunacy Laws; and in view of the hardship or danger resulting to such persons and the community from insufficient provision for their care, training and control, to report as to the amendments in the law or other measures which should be adopted in the matter, due regard being had to the expense involved in any such proposals and to the best means of securing economy therein.

It thus became the duty of the Commissioners to consider the existing methods of dealing with

(i.) Idiots, whether certified or uncertified under the Lunacy Acts or the Idiots Acts;

(ii.) Epileptics, whether certified or uncertified under the Lunacy Acts or the Idiots Acts;

(iii.) Imbecile, feeble-minded or defective persons not certified under the Lunacy Acts.

A further reference, dated November 2nd, 1906, authorised them

> to enquire into the constitution, jurisdiction and working of the Commission in Lunacy and of other Lunacy Authorities in England and Wales, and into the expediency of amending the same or adopting some other system of supervising the care of lunatics and mental defectives; and to report as to any amendments in the law which should, in their opinion, be adopted.

According to their interpretation of the new reference, it became their duty to enquire into the constitution, jurisdiction and working of the Central Lunacy Authorities in England and Wales, viz.:—

(i.) The Lunacy Commission;

(ii.) The Judge and Masters in Lunacy; and

(iii.) The Lord Chancellor's Visitors in Lunacy.

The Commissioners examined 248 witnesses, representing all classes of persons who could give information on the subject of the enquiry, and in addition they obtained particulars of the manner in which foreign countries and the colonies are dealing with the question. Five of the members of the Commission also visited the United States.

"Almost at the outset of our enquiry," the Commissioners say, "we found that there were no available statistics from which any trustworthy estimate could be made as to the number of persons who might be said to fall within one or other of the categories named in our reference. We decided, therefore, that an expert investigation of the question was indispensable, and having obtained the authority of the Treasury for the expenditure, which was necessarily considerable, we appointed medical investigators to make a thorough enquiry in regard to the number of mentally defective persons (including 'epileptics') in sixteen separate typical districts, both urban and rural, in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, in the hope that from the particulars thus ascertained we might be able to form at least a rough estimate of the whole number, and of the provision that it would be necessary to make for their proper treatment."

The investigators were instructed to examine the following groups of persons:

A. Children in Public Elementary Schools.
B. Children and Adults in Poor Law Institutions.
C. Children and Adults in Receipt of Outdoor Relief.
D. Persons known to Sanitary Authorities.
E. Persons relieved by Medical Charities.
F. Persons known to General Practitioners.
G. Children and Adults in various Charitable Institutions and Common Lodging Houses, Training Homes, and Reformatories and Industrial Schools.
H. Persons to be heard of from other sources.
I. Known to the Police.
J. Idiots of the District in Idiot Ayslums.
K. Inmates of Prisons.
L. Inmates of Inebriate Homes.

As a result of the enquiries made in the sixteen typical districts, it was estimated that in the whole population of England and Wales (32,527,843) there would be 149,628 mentally defective persons (·46 per cent.), not including certified lunatics. Of these 66,509, or 44·45 per cent., are estimated to be "at the present time urgently in need of provision, either in their own interest or for the public safety." The Commissioners add that there may be many others for whom the present accommodation is not ideal, but that they only include here "such cases as were improperly, unsuitably or unkindly cared for, or who, by reason of particular habits and characteristics, are a source of danger to the community in which they live." The total number of the mentally defective, including certified lunatics, may be estimated to be 271,607, or ·83 per cent. of the population.

It should be explained that throughout the Report the words "mentally defective" are used to represent the whole group of cases that come within the scope of the investigation, whether lunatics or idiots or those generally included under the term "feeble-minded." The different kinds of cases are thus classified by the Commissioners:

(1) "Persons of unsound mind," *i.e.*, persons who require care and control owing to disorder of the mind, and are consequently incapable of managing themselves or their affairs, and not included in classes (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8) and (9), below.

Note.—The term "unsound mind" is equivalent to the word lunatic.

(2) "Persons mentally infirm," *i.e.*, persons who, through mental infirmity, arising from age or from the decay of their faculties, are incapable of managing themselves or their affairs.

(3) "Idiots," *i.e.*, persons so deeply defective in mind from birth or from an early age that they are unable to guard themselves from common physical dangers, such as, in the case of young children, would prevent their parents from leaving them alone.*

* Definition suggested by the Royal College of Physicians of London.

(4) "Imbeciles," *i.e.*, persons who are capable of guarding themselves against common physical dangers, but who are incapable of earning their own living by reason of mental defect existing from birth or from an early age.*

(5) "Feeble-minded," *i.e.*, persons who may be capable of earning a living under favourable circumstances, but are incapable from mental defect existing from birth or from an early age: (*a*) of competing on equal terms with their normal fellows; or (*b*) of managing themselves and their affairs with ordinary prudence.*

(6) "Moral Imbeciles," *i.e.*, persons who from an early age display some mental defect coupled with strong vicious or criminal propensities on which punishment has little or no deterrent effect.*

(7) "Epileptics," *i.e.*, persons who, being epileptics, are also mentally defective.

(8) "Inebriates," *i.e.*, persons who, being inebriates, are also mentally defective.

(9) "Deaf and Dumb" or "Blind," *i.e.*, persons who, being deaf and dumb or blind, are also mentally defective.

Speaking generally it may be said that Class (1), that is, certified lunatics, is at present the only class of the mentally defective adequately provided for by the State on account of their mental deficiency. Of the remainder some come under the Poor Law, others under the Education Authority; others are in prison or in inebriate reformatories; but there still remain a very large number needing control for whom there is no provision at all, so far as the State is concerned. The Commissioners say:

> Of the gravity of the present state of things, there is no doubt. The mass of facts that we have collected, the statements of our witnesses, and our own personal visits and investigations compel the conclusion that there are numbers of mentally defective persons whose training is neglected, over whom no sufficient control is exercised, and whose wayward and irresponsible lives are productive of crime and misery, of much injury and mischief to themselves and to others, and of much continuous expenditure wasteful to the community and to individual families.
>
> We find a local and "permissive" system of public education

* Definition suggested by the Royal College of Physicians of London.

which is available, here and there, for a limited section of mentally defective children; and which, even if it be useful during the years of training, is supplemented by no subsequent supervision and control, and is in consequence often misdirected and unserviceable. We find large numbers of persons who are committed to prisons for repeated offences, which, being the manifestations of a permanent defect of mind, there is no hope of repressing, much less of stopping, by short punitive sentences. We find lunatic asylums crowded with patients who do not require the careful hospital treatment that well-equipped asylums now afford, and who might be treated in many other ways more economically, and as efficiently. We find, also, at large in the population many mentally defective persons, adults, young persons, and children, who are, some in one way, some in another, incapable of self-control, and who are therefore exposed to constant moral danger themselves, and become the source of lasting injury to the community.

The work, then, to be carried through by the Commissioners was to hear evidence regarding the extent of the evil and the methods which have hitherto been employed in dealing with the feeble-minded, and to decide upon the adequacy or inadequacy of such methods; to consider the case of those for whom no provision is made, and in accordance with the evidence and their own observation to suggest a workable scheme by which at least some of the evils could be mitigated. It will, perhaps, be convenient to consider this evidence under different heads, taking first that part of it which deals with the extent and gravity of the problem, and next that which deals with the existing provision for the mentally defective. We shall then be in a position to understand the principles on which the Commissioners base their recommendations for legislation.

MENTAL DEFECT AND CRIME.

In reading the portion of the Report which deals with the mentally defective in prison, it is impossible not to be struck with the early age at which many of them have begun their criminal career. A large proportion of the evidence points unmistakably to the fact that mentally defective children often have immoral tendencies; that they are greatly

lacking in self-control; and moreover are peculiarly open to suggestion, so that they are at the mercy of bad companions.

Dr. Kerr, Medical Officer (Education) to the London County Council, gave notes from the Bath Street Special School "to illustrate cases selected as suitable for custodial treatment," of which the following may be quoted as typical:

(Boy). Strong tendency to wander and little idea of right and wrong. Deteriorating and will probably be better in an asylum.

(Boy). Not cared for, constantly about in streets, certain to come to some harm.

(Girl). Dangerous moral imbecile. Has made two murderous attacks recently upon other members of the class.

(Boy). A perfect terror. Steals off the vans in the streets and takes sweets or toys from the other children.

(Boy). Morally depraved. Very disobedient and unmanageable; corrupts the younger members of the class.

These children were all considered unfit for the Special Schools. Unless their parents are paupers they are, says Dr. Kerr, "greatly neglected, constituting a very serious social danger, developing in many cases into dangerous criminals who only come into the care of the law after they have committed crimes, such as assault, theft or arson." Dr. Kerr "would like to take fingerprints of every Special Class child, and it would probably be found that in the succeeding ten years very many would be found under different names in the hands of the police or in maternity hospitals. He has often actually recognised mentally defective children known to him in police reports in the newspapers."

The late Dr. Ashby, Medical Officer of the Manchester Special Schools, thought that, without doubt, "this large, unguarded, unprotected class of idiot and imbecile children and older people for whom no supervision exists, and who are not under any kind of discipline or control, tends to an increase of the criminal and immoral classes, as well as, of course, of the pauper class." And Dr. Whitwell, Medical Superintendent of Suffolk County Asylum, speaking of the feeble-minded who were capable of a considerable degree of education, both intellectual and moral, said that they were

usually retained at home until after puberty at least; and the natural and physical evolution taking place at that time, but on a lower plane, in the absence of intellectual control, and accompanied by defective education, was apt to result in acts of theft, cruelty, incendiarism, homicide and various offences of a sexual or perverted sexual nature. Experience seemed to show that the degree of education possible in this class was an element that might, under proper care, be made use of as a factor worthy of consideration in providing for them on economical lines. But education on the usual lines, amongst other children and associated with them, was so entirely erroneous as to result in their spending their lives alternately in the prison, the workhouse, and the asylum—an outcast from each. Dr. Corner, Lecturer on Mental Diseases in the North-East London Post-graduate College, says, "One of the *most* common and dangerous characteristics of the feeble-minded is that they tend to sink socially; they will associate with their inferiors for preference, and it is common for parents to say that their child seems to have a peculiar instinct for finding out and associating with the worst character in the village. This, coupled with the fact that they are easily influenced and readily receive suggestions, shows how highly dangerous it is to leave such cases without supervision, and how it is that so many weak-minded people get into prison or become the dupes of designing persons."

These opinions are confirmed by observations on children in Remand Homes. Miss Turner, Medical Attendant to the Metropolitan Asylums Board, says: "It appears to me that the charge of 'wandering' is often preferred to a graver one for placing on the charge-sheets, but as a rule it covers some petty offence, such as pilfering, begging, playing truant, etc., and it was consequently impossible for me to find out the number of cases of 'wandering' in its simplest sense of aimless straying or loitering. These are evidently few."

A significant table is given showing the results of medically examining 100 boys and 28 girls taken at haphazard from Remand Homes:

——	Boys.		Girls.	
Above the average	2		1	
Eccentric (not feeble-minded) . .	5		0	
Normal	56		11	
	—	63	—	12
Backward	18		7	
Slightly mentally deficient . .	10		5	
Mentally deficient	9		4	
	—	37	—	16
		100		28

These children are generally too deficient for Reformatory and Industrial School training, so there is nothing to be done but to discharge them to their homes, where the surroundings are often as bad as they can be for children requiring care and training. As they grow older they are frequently in trouble, says Dr. Scott, of the House of Detention at Brixton,

for breaking the law, and it is difficult to know what to do with them. The Judicial Authorities do not like to treat them as fully responsible, or to punish them severely. If they are sent to prison, it is usually for short periods only, so they soon return to their mischievous ways again. They are not amenable to penal discipline, and require to be treated differently from the other prisoners. When they break the rules, they cannot be adequately punished. This is rather subversive of good discipline in a penal institution. Punishment has little effect upon them. Reforming influences also fail with them usually. As they have very little self-respect, and home ties, if they have any, do not weigh much with them, they do not fear coming to prison. Indeed, to many of them prison is rather a harbour of refuge, as they are spared the trouble of thinking how to get food and lodging.

When they are at liberty, their friends do not usually welcome them, and they are quite unfit to compete with better endowed individuals in the struggle for existence. It is not at all uncommon for them to break windows, or commit a petty theft, in order to get back to prison again. They are thus a cause of great expense to the country, with little, if any, improvement to their moral natures, and without the public being adequately protected against their depredations. By their proneness to commit larceny, arson, indecent assaults on children, etc., they are a constant source of annoyance, expense and danger. Many of them are quite unfit, if left to themselves, to lead decent, inoffensive lives; they require care and discipline.

The evidence of Dr. Parker Wilson, Medical Officer of Pentonville Prison, contains some significant facts about these young criminals. He says:

> I find that from October 1st, 1903, to September 30th, 1904, there were admitted to our prison 389 juvenile offenders, of whom 26 could neither read nor write, 328 only averaged the second standard, while only 35 were able to read and write well.
>
> This very low standard speaks for itself, and I think I may safely assign 40 per cent. to be feeble-minded.
>
> Large numbers of boys belonging to the criminal classes pass through here annually, and from circumstances of their bringing up and surroundings make up a large percentage of the feeble-minded. From a rough estimate taken of those who passed through here during one twelvemonth, and as the result of a consultation with our chaplain and schoolmasters, we came to the conclusion that at least 40 per cent. were feeble-minded. The circumstances which sent them to prison and the wisdom of sending them through police courts and to establishments of this kind are well worthy of consideration, as a large number of them drift into the ranks of the habitual criminal, a result which might be avoided if some steps were taken in the beginning of their criminal career.
>
> I have made this a subject of special study, and am acquainted with whole families of professional criminals, various members of which I have known as juveniles, and who were undoubtedly of very feeble mental calibre when they commenced their downward career.

Dr. Treadwell, Medical Officer of Parkhurst Prison, compiled a table giving statistics of the criminal career of 100 feeble-minded convicts at Parkhurst, of whom 60 were "cases of probable congenital deficiency or of deficient development during early life," and 40 "cases of probably early partially developed state of insanity or of defect persisting after attack of insanity." The ages of these convicts ranged from nineteen to sixty-two, and the crimes for which they were convicted from larceny to wilful murder. Two had begun their career at seven years old, and all under the age of twenty.

Dr. Smalley, Medical Officer, Prison Commission, Home Office, spoke hopefully of the Parkhurst system of dealing with feeble-minded male convicts, who have been concentrated there during the last few years. They are practically in a separate prison and are kept at work, the greater number at garden work—indeed, it is actually a sort of colony. The

effects appear to be satisfactory; "very few breaches of the rules occur. Most of them work willingly and industriously, taking an interest in their occupation." But the difficulty begins again when the sentence is completed.

When such convict has been discharged from prison, and his friends are unable or unwilling to take charge of him, or in the event of his being without friends, the Parkhurst authorities have to do the best they can. Perhaps one of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies will accept the case, and endeavour to give some after-care. But the view of Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies is generally adverse to accepting them, and probably rightly, because these friendless cases are hardly persons who, with a little help, can help themselves. Many of them are hopeless recidivists. Others are not capable of retaining any employment or position which may be found for them. Practically, therefore, all they can do is to take charge of the gratuity and give advice.

Dr. Smalley collected statistics of feeble-minded prisoners from the Medical Officers of the various local prisons. Particulars as to degree of mental deficiency, age, nature of offence, and previous convictions were given. In one instance 105 previous convictions were recorded. Dr. Smalley comments on the cases as follows:

Age.—No age between late childhood and extreme old age is without examples, whilst 73 per cent. were in the procreative stage of life with its obvious corollary.

Offences.—Minor offences stand out prominently. Many beggars and vagrants.

Though the less grave forms of crime predominate, there is a potentiality in the feeble-minded class for crime of a more serious character.

Though not invariably the case, yet, in my opinion, it is not infrequently owing to the mental deficiency that these persons are offenders against the law. The offence may be the direct outcome of, though more often it is indirectly due to, mental weakness. For these individuals are easily led either into evil or good ways. They are less able to earn their own living both from physical and mental reasons. They are the least efficient in every trade or workshop, consequently they are the first to be discharged when work is slack, or from their inefficiency they lose one job after another, and take to tramping; in the first instance, *bonâ fide* in search of work, but soon to join the ranks of the professional tramp. It is to be noticed how many belong to this class, begging, vagrancy, sleeping-out, petty thieving, etc., being prominent offences.

Although 130 out of 333 have no previous convictions recorded against them, the nomadic habits of these persons may account for none being recorded.

The bulk of them become habitual criminals. Their tendency

to recidivism is strongly marked, and it would seem, from a consideration of individual cases, to be almost an invariable rule for persons of this type who have once manifested criminal inclinations to become prison *habitués* and to steadily deteriorate morally and intellectually under the present *régime*.

The same witness thus enumerates the main "defects in the existing methods of dealing with feeble-minded persons, so far as they affect those who come to prison":

1. Feeble-minded persons drift into prison for want of attention in early life.
2. Feeble-minded persons sometimes are sent to prison because there is no other place in which to compulsorily detain them.
3. Possibility of increasing mental defect by being in prison.
4. That as ordinary prison discipline cannot be observed they interfere with ordinary prison routine and discipline.
5. Expense of providing officers to look after them in prison.
6. Difficulty of knowing what to do with them on expiration of sentence.
7. Measures taken to prevent their recommitment to prison *ineffectual*.
8. There is a tendency for these persons to become *habitués* of prison, and for their crimes to increase in heinousness.
9. Great expense to the country, involved in continually sending these persons to prison.
10. Tendency, by procreation, of their number increasing, thus adding to the criminal and immoral classes.

All the witnesses who gave evidence on this subject agreed that feeble-minded criminals are practically incapable of understanding the moral aspect of their conduct. They have some understanding that it is wrong from a legal point of view, mainly from their experience of the consequences of being caught, but it is clear that they ought not to be held responsible in the ordinary sense. Mr. Troup, Permanent Under-Secretary of State to the Home Department, says: "There are cases where weak-minded persons commit crimes, and they are not certifiably insane. They cannot, strictly speaking, be found insane under the law as laid down in Macnaghten's case, or under the law as ordinarily administered, and yet they are from weakness of mind really not wholly responsible. You cannot say that they are insane, and yet the state of their mind is such that they ought not to be set at liberty and allowed to commit further crimes of the same sort."

On the general question of feeble-minded criminals the Commissioners express a very strong opinion. They say:

> Many competent observers are of opinion that if the constantly recurring fatuous and irresponsible crimes and offences of mentally defective persons are to be prevented, long and continuous detention is necessary. The experience of the prison authorities fully confirms this opinion. From the earliest age, when they appear before the magistrates as children on remand or as juvenile offenders, until and throughout the adult period of their lives, the mentally defective, at first reprimanded and returned to their parents, then convicted and subjected to a short sentence and returned to their parents, and then later continually sentenced and re-sentenced and returned to their parents or friends till, for crimes of greater gravity, they pass to the convict prisons, are treated, as this reiterated evidence shows, without hope and without purpose, and in such a way as to allow them to become habitual delinquents of the worst type and to propagate a feeble-minded progeny which may become criminal like themselves. This, as has been said, is an "evil of the very greatest magnitude." The absolute and urgent necessity of coping with it is undeniable.

MENTAL DEFECT AND DRINK.

It has long been known that habitual inebriety is often associated with mental defect, and since the passing of the Inebriates Acts, especially that of 1898, it has been possible to make such observations as enable experts to compile statistics. At a rough estimate it appears that some 60 or 70 per cent. of the habitual inebriates who are dealt with under the Acts are mentally defective. Much evidence was given as to the working of these Acts, and the general opinion appears to be that very little has been accomplished in the way of reform of the individual drunkards, owing to the insufficient period of detention. The system of voluntary detention is practically a dead letter; there is a want of co-operation between judicial and administrative authorities; the inebriate reformatories are wholly inadequate in number; there is no provision in the retreats for destitute cases; the habitual cases which are dealt with by short terms of imprisonment or are handed over to the care of friends nearly always revert. All the evidence, in short, points to the conclusion that temporary or merely punitive measures

are futile. "It seems to me," says Dr. Branthwaite, Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, "more or less useless to treat drink-caused crimes with punishment only, leaving the original cause as active as ever." The question of the connection between habitual drunkenness and mental defect is dealt with by several witnesses.

Dr. Branthwaite asserted that two-thirds of the persons committed to reformatories were irreformable or probably irreformable, and that the main factor determining their irreformability was their mental condition.

> Very many of the cases sent to us from courts under this Act are none other than just feeble-minded persons, drunkards simply because they are feeble-minded, their drunkenness being merely one evidence of their mental condition. The removal of liquor from some of these persons, even for long periods, does not greatly improve their mental state, and this is especially so in the congenitally defective who are the progeny of feeble-minded, lunatic, epileptic or drunken parents. Some do show improvement so long as they remain under conditions of regular life, good feeding, with hygienic surroundings and enforced work. They become quiet, amenable, good workers and apparently desirous of reformation. But in many of these cases this improvement is only superficial and is soon lost on reversion to liberty and freedom of action under bad surroundings. With an ill-balanced or congenitally defective brain there is little hope of reformation from habits of intemperance, because, in the first place, there is no appreciation of the value of sobriety, there is no desire whatever in many of them to live a sober life, and certainly no intention of attempting it. The majority of persons classed by me as practically irreformable are persons of this type.

These persons are not drunkards in the sense of suffering from the drink crave. "They are primarily feeble-minded . . . Their drunkenness is only one evidence of their feeble-minded condition and comes out in this way," and if they had been placed and kept under control earlier they would probably never have acquired the vice. The women inebriates of this class, when out of control, go to swell the immoral classes.

Similar evidence was given by Dr. Mott, Pathologist and Director of the Pathological Laboratory of the London County Asylums, who said:

> Alcohol is a poison to the epileptic, feeble-minded and poten-

tially insane (persons in whom there is but a narrow physiological margin between sanity and insanity) of all classes; a quantity of alcohol which would produce little or no deleterious effect on the normal individual serves as an exciting anti-social factor, causing the epileptic to have mental or motor fits, the feeble-minded to lose what little intelligence or moral control he or she possesses, and the unstable to become actively insane.

In support of this statement the witness adduces the following facts: Quite 20 per cent. of the admissions to the London County Lunatic Asylums have a history of drink, yet in a very large experience of asylum post-mortem examinations he has only seen one case of hob-nailed liver with dropsy—an indication of long continuous intemperance—this was in a notorious police-court character, who was convicted nearly 400 times for drunkenness before she was found incapable of taking care of herself. Witness has, on the other hand, in a much less extensive hospital experience met with many cases of hob-nailed liver with dropsy in persons who have shown no other mental symptoms than the loss of moral control incidental to long-continued intemperance. The inference is that persons suffering with mental deficiency or mental instability are never able to drink long enough (without their nervous system breaking down) to arrive at a condition of advanced hob-nailed liver. These facts coincide with the fact that drunken parents who are free from a neuropathic or psychopathic taint will possibly have healthy children who are often spoiled and rendered morally defective by the evil surroundings of the home life, with its necessarily insufficient nurture from inadequate food, clothing, and ventilation. They would in all probability belong to the *improvable* class of defectives if they were early removed to suitable homes. Whereas the experience of the witness shows that, where there is at the same time as intemperance of the parents a family history, direct or collateral, of epilepsy, feeble-mindedness or insanity, the offspring, if defective, will belong to the *unimprovable* class.

It is commonly assumed that a tendency to drink is inherited. The general opinion of the witnesses seemed to be that "alcoholism in one or both parents exerts its influence mainly by impairing the vitality of the children. . . . It has not any special tendency to beget a proclivity to drunkenness in the offspring, but in the manner indicated it has a distinct influence in the production of feeble-mindedness and epilepsy, and also, by lowering the normal resistive power in the offspring, renders them liable to break down under various stresses later on in life, and to become insane."

Again, upon neuropathic persons alcohol acts quickly as a poison. "If a person possess a congenital mental defect or be already epileptic, either he is unable to take it or, if he

does take it, a moderate quantity is sufficient to precipitate insanity or greatly increase the number and severity of the fits; again, it incites ungovernable rage, followed by dangerous and criminal acts. The weak-minded, the epileptic, and every person with a faulty neuro-psychopathic family history should be taught to look upon alcohol as, to them, a poison." Thus many recidivists are detained in asylums not because they are "continuously and actively insane," but because it is proved that access to alcohol necessitates a quick return to the asylum. Dr. Carswell, formerly Chairman of the Inebriates Committee of the Glasgow Corporation, says: "Inebriety is more an incident of the mental life of the mentally defective than the cause of their mental condition"; and Dr. Tredgold, Physician to the Littleton Home for Defective Children, examining 150 cases of mental defect in regard to which he was able to satisfy himself that he had collected historic data, found in 46·5 per cent. of the families a history of well-marked alcoholism; in 38·5 per cent. of these cases, the alcoholism was combined with neuropathic inheritance; in 8 per cent. of the cases only was it irrespective of any neuropathic inheritance.

Sir James Crichton-Browne, one of the Lord Chancellor's Visitors in Lunacy, defines a morally insane person as "one who, by reason of disease or disorder of the brain, has undergone a change of character manifested in a course of vicious or criminal conduct without obvious impairment of intellect," and quotes the dipsomaniac as an illustration: "A morally insane person, in whom the change of character is manifested in the drink craving, and in loss of control over it." Dr. Quin Donald, Medical Superintendent of the Invernith Lodge Retreat, accepts this view. He believes that inebriates are mentally defective, "that is, they are not at times able to control themselves. It is a disease in which a loss of mental balance takes place and the fear of consequences does not deter; under its excitement judgment and will-power are completely swept away and natural affection is lost."

Statistics of the proportion of the mentally defective among habitual inebriates show how much ground there is for connecting inebriety with feeble-mindedness. Of 771 cases admitted to the Brentry Reformatory the superintendent states that only 30 per cent. were of fair mental capacity, and capable, but for their drunken habits, of earning their own living. With regard to the remaining 70 per cent. he says: "I cannot conceive the possibility of their ever acquiring sufficient self-control to be able to keep them from drunkenness and support themselves." A small percentage of them have been found "certifiably insane"; another small percentage are epileptics, and in the rest the actual defect is undoubted, but it shows itself in many different ways in different individuals. Dr. Gill, of the Langho Inebriate Reformatory, estimates the mentally defective at 50 per cent. Dr. Winder, of the State Inebriate Reformatory at Aylesbury, to which "the most violent and troublesome" of all the persons committed under the Inebriates Act of 1898 are sent, says that "the greatest difficulty is experienced in distinguishing between those patients who are violent and vicious as the result of mental instability and those whose bad conduct is due to their own evil courses. . . . Certainly not more than 2 or 3 per cent. of the inmates are of absolutely sound mental capacity." Out of 167 patients received since 1901, ten have proved "certifiably insane"; and 25 per cent. of the whole number are "definitely and undoubtedly feeble-minded high-grade imbeciles for the most part and lunatics in all but actual delusions." He continues:—

> If, however, the term "feeble-minded" is to be extended over a broader basis, and made to include all those individuals who are abnormally excitable, subject to attacks of uncontrollable temper, perverted morally, inconsequent in ideas, of feeble reasoning powers, and unable to acquire knowledge beyond the most rudimentary principles, then nearly all might be classed as feeble-minded, but certainly over 70 per cent. should be so defined. They are so mentally unstable as to be incapable of earning their livelihood on equal terms with their normal fellows.

The following table shows the mental condition of habitual inebriates committed under the Act of 1898 to reformatories

"where they are kept under conditions which afford perfect opportunity for close observation."

Classification according to Mental State.	Number in each Class.	Percentage to Total Number of Persons admitted to Reformatories.
(1.) Insane—Certified and sent to asylums.	48	17·0 } 62·7
(2.) Very defective — Imbeciles, degenerates, epileptics.	271	
(3.) Defective—As above, but less marked, eccentric, silly, dull, senile, or subject to periodical paroxysms of ungovernable temper.	857	45·7
(4.) Of average mental capacity—On admission, or after six months' detention.	697	37·3
Total Admissions . .	1,873	—

Some of the forty-eight persons classified in the above table as insane were found to be suffering from delusions when admitted to reformatories, others were in an excited state which gradually developed into mania, a third section of these persons were obviously demented, a fourth melancholic and suicidal, a fifth epileptic with periodical attacks of mania, and a sixth were the subjects of recurrent mania which developed and subsided, in some cases, two or three times during their period of detention as inebriates. All these insane persons were admitted to reformatories as "habitual inebriates" and would have continued to be treated as such had they not been subjected to the closer and continued observation possible in reformatories. All were eventually sent to asylums, and many are now permanently insane.

The "very defective" and "defective" classes may be considered together; the characteristics of each are the same, the only difference being one of degree. "Defective," in the sense used here, includes every person admitted to reformatories who has been considered much below an average standard of mental capacity, but insufficiently so (in the opinion of general medical practitioners and magistrates) to justify a certificate of insanity, or only now and then certifiably insane during short transient paroxysms. Nearly all the 1,128 cases included in these two defective sections have given evidence of possessing some of the peculiarities in cranial conformation, general physique, and conduct which have long been recognised as evidence of congenital defect. The smaller number of persons, where signs of early defect are wanting, are probable instances of brain degeneration

produced by persistent alcoholism, advancing nervous disease, senility, or other cause."

The legal definition of an inebriate in the Act of 1879 is:—

"A person who, not being amenable to any jurisdiction in lunacy, is notwithstanding, by reason of habitual intemperate drinking of intoxicating liquor, at times dangerous to himself or herself or to others, or incapable of managing himself or herself and his or her affairs,"

which, as the Commissioners point out, practically classifies a large proportion of inebriates as a sub-class of the mentally-defective, and if their recommendations are adopted they will then be dealt with not as criminals but as feeble-minded persons.*

MENTAL DEFECT AND ILLEGITIMACY.

MUCH evidence was heard as to the prevalence of immorality amongst the feeble-minded, and witness after witness spoke strongly of the urgent need of detention for feeble-minded girls. In many cases these girls appear to have a definitely immoral tendency, but in a great number of instances their fall is due directly to their weakness of intellect: they have no power to resist temptation and fall an easy prey to the first evil-minded man they meet. Mrs. Dickinson Berry, Assistant Medical Officer (Education) to the London County Council, describes a type which she has frequently come across

in connection with work for the Society for the Promotion of the Welfare of the Feeble-Minded, and especially in cases for admission to the Coningham Road Home for feeble-minded mothers with illegitimate infants. Girls of the type referred to are characterised by persisting childishness and want of power of

* The Departmental Committee appointed in April, 1908, to enquire into the working of the Inebriates Acts have lately (January 11th, 1909) issued their Report. In it they state that they are wholly in accord with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded that mentally defective inebriates should be dealt with as mental defectives rather than as inebriates.

looking after themselves. They can often read and write tolerably, and in a short interview may appear normal, but closer acquaintance usually reveals general want of power, inability to work without supervision, and childish stubbornness of temper.

The tendency to immorality is often shown at an early age. The following notes made on children excluded from the Special Schools show this.

Runs great moral danger, for it is impossible for her mother to keep the girl shut up and she is really incapable of protecting herself.

Mother says she cannot trust her alone, and that she has a decided tendency to immorality.

Erotic, and runs after boys in the street.

(Age 11.) Has been twice criminally assaulted and is now constantly making overtures to men. Sets herself to teach the others evil.

Unmanageable, and constantly running after men.

Morally bad, steals, has no idea of truth. Constant complaints of her being out at night with lads.

The following cases are selected from a large number given by Miss Skinner, Superintendent Nurse of the York Union Infirmary.

E. S.—Single woman. Age 30 years.—Has had six illegitimate children; the last two died, one at two years, and the other at sixteen months old; she has been a frequenter of the House for years; she is a weak-minded woman.

H. D.—Single woman. Age 27 years. Six illegitimate children. Clean girl, but feeble-minded.

A. N.—Single woman. Age 22 years.—Has had four illegitimate children; male child in 1901, another in 1905, two before admission here; a dull feeble-minded girl, and led an immoral life; refused to go to a Home; frequented the House since 1901. She is still at large.

E. H.—Single woman. Age 30 years.—Simple-minded; she has three children living, eldest girl in a home. She had a child here in 1901 and another in 1904. The child born in 1901 died of convulsions. She has had six illegitimate children; frequenter of the workhouse for years; still in the House.

The existing provision for dealing with girls of this class is hopelessly inadequate. The workhouses have no powers of detention. As Professor Sir T. Clifford Allbutt, Regius Professor of Physic in the University of Cambridge, says: "The masters and matrons of workhouses . . . feel the grievousness of this, but cannot help it." In Rescue Homes they are one of the most serious difficulties. Miss Helen

Benington, Lady Superintendent of the York Rescue Home, says:

Thirty per cent. of those applying to our penitentiaries are more or less feeble-minded, many too bad for us to keep, as they lower the standard of work too much and require such special treatment.

If sent to the workhouse they can take their discharge unless certified, and often go back several times for the birth of illegitimate children, thus perpetuating the feeble-minded race.

Mrs. Ruspini, representing the Church Penitentiary Association, also spoke of the difficulty of dealing with these girls in the Homes. Two special Homes had to be abandoned "owing chiefly to the impossibility of persuading the inmates to carry on remunerative employment." Further, she said:

Homes should be partially supported by the rates, as it is impossible to render them self-supporting, owing to the wayward tempers and restlessness of the girls, who cannot work so continuously as those with stronger minds. Other cases again would need to be placed in small homes attached to unions, where they would be kept by compulsion as long as it was thought needful. These homes should be in the country, where the girls should receive small wages. This would encourage self-respect and enable them partly to support their children. They should buy their own clothes under proper guidance. They should be provided with plenty of games and amusements. Their work should consist of gardening, fruit culture, poultry, etc., with plenty of out-door exercise.

These cases of feeble minds and weak wills are a danger to the community. However carefully trained and taught during their two years' stay in a House of Mercy, they are sure to fall back into their old lives of sin, from their inability to resist the temptation around them. There is also the danger of lowering the mental standard of the whole nation by the constant increase of a population of deficient intellect, and the fact that this is the case may be proved by the recurrent returns to the lying-in wards of unions, where there is no power of detention, although it is well known that the departure of many a feeble-minded young mother with the child to whom she has passed on the same heritage of weakness, will most assuredly result in her return before long to the same ward. Compulsory detention at the outset in a suitable home or asylum is the only means of meeting the difficulty and preventing the spread of vice and disease, which such lives ever carry with them.

Dr. Clouston, Physician Superintendent of the Royal Edinburgh Asylum, says:

Of late years I have been devoting special attention to the previous history of the feeble-minded who have been sent to the

asylum as certified patients, especially the young women. Through conversations with the patients themselves and through the enquiries by nurses and the information supplied by parents and relatives and from bodily indications where they have had children, I have come to the conclusion that such persons in a large city are subject to overwhelming temptations and pressure towards sexual immorality. Many of them have had illegitimate children and this often at very early ages. One had seven such children. I look on this source of immorality as an extremely grave one in our social life. When illegitimate children are borne by such young women, the chances are enormously in favour of their turning out to be either imbeciles, or degenerates, or criminals.

The following is from a report made by Mr. Baldwyn Fleming, one of the General Inspectors to the Local Government Board, in 1904:

My attention has been drawn during the last year to several very sad cases of girls who, without being insane, are so defective mentally as to be unable to take care of themselves outside the workhouse or some kindred institution.

In C. workhouse, a girl, D. F., aged twenty-five, had come into the workhouse to be confined. She was physically and mentally defective, but the medical officer could not class her as insane. She had no idea what to do with her child, which was a poor, undersized little object. The matron had managed to keep it alive, and if it remained in the workhouse it would very likely continue to live. There was no power to retain the mother against her wish, and it was stated that she would probably leave the house as soon as the child was strong enough to go out. What would be the almost inevitable result? That in a few months the child would be dead, and the mother would again be pregnant.

In the same workhouse was a child, W. B., aged fourteen, She had been sent to the workhouse with the consent of her parents and of the guardians, to prevent her seduction. She was of unusual physical development for her age, and had evinced propensities which would have certainly led her into trouble if she had not been placed under restraint. She was defective mentally, but was not classed as insane. Unless she can be so classed when she is sixteen, she will be entitled to take her discharge, and the consequences are apparent.

In another workhouse there was an inmate, F. A., aged thirty-three. She was seduced when she was sixteen, and her first child was born when she was seventeen. She has had five children, and three of them died when babies. This woman is less defective mentally than the two cases previously referred to, but she is quite unable to protect herself from the danger she incurs when free from restraint.

These are merely samples of a class of case with which every board of guardians is familiar, and it does seem a matter for deep regret that they cannot be effectively dealt with.

It must be admitted that a woman with all her wits about her, and who is merely a bad woman, cannot be prevented from following her bent, and from inflicting wrong and expense upon society.

But women who fall because they are below the usual gift of brain power, and especially whose constitution is also below par, stand in another category, and can scarcely be held responsible for the evil that comes upon them. Both as regards themselves and the offspring they will produce it is of special importance that there should be the means of protecting them.

What the law does for them is insufficient. Thus, the girl in the workhouse can be kept until she is sixteen; if the guardians can exercise their power of adoption she may be controlled until eighteen; but there the power ends, and at sixteen or eighteen, as the case may be, she is free to discharge herself, and commence a career for which she can scarcely be deemed responsible, and which is morally certain to mean misery and degradation to herself, and the infliction of a serious burden upon others.

The object with which a power of protection is given wholly fails if that protection be withdrawn at the very age when it is of supreme value, and that is as the law stands now.

It may be argued that any extension of the control already afforded would be an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the subject. But that is merely a play upon words. The liberty in question here is the liberty to abuse liberty. Can any interference that is advocated be so harmful as the absence of interference to protect girls of the class in question? What is the operation of existing conditions? That the girl is seduced, that she may give birth to child after child, and that the children for the most part will die after a few months of miserable existence. Such of them as survive will probably be defective in mind and body and will almost inevitably be reared under conditions of vice and squalor which will induce the child to tread in its mother's footsteps.

Almost any result would be preferable to the actual facts as they constantly occur.

There could be little difficulty in framing an enactment which would prevent these evils, and at the same time would safeguard the individual from hardship.

Guardians, or possibly some other authority, might be given a power to retain without limit of age, subject to restrictions which would guard against an improper exercise of that power, and which would enable the restraint to cease at any time when it might safely be withdrawn.

The pity of the present situation urgently cries for remedy; to save the girls, to save the public, but most of all to save the suffering and shame of the children.

The girls are not fit to protect themselves, and it is a farce to treat them as though they were. . . . But the protection they cannot give to themselves can be given by law. It is actually given up to the time when it is most needed, and then it is quite illogically withdrawn.

Ought it to be withheld?

The answer seems clear—No. A well devised addition to the present powers would be of immense service. It is difficult to imagine how it could do harm to anybody. It would protect the poor girls from sin and shame; it would prevent the birth of the wretched children whose presence in the world is a misery to themselves and a burden upon their fellow-creatures; and last (and far away least) it would save the rates.

MENTAL DEFECT AND HEREDITY.

In the course of their enquiries the Commissioners were confronted with a mass of evidence in reference to the conditions and antecedents of mental defect, especially in the cases in which the defect dated from birth or from early life. Although, as they say, an exhaustive investigation of the causation of mental defect was not within their province, yet they felt that they might fairly deal with the question so far as to show the nature of the evidence that exists, "its insufficiency as the basis of an absolutely final dictum on the subject, and its sufficiency as a general guide in practical administration." They found that mental defect was attributed by various witnesses to malnutrition, alcohol and bad environment generally, but that the great majority (twenty-five out of thirty-five) attached supreme importance to the fact that in a very large proportion of cases of mental defect there is a history of mental defect in the parents or near ancestors. Sir T. Clifford Allbutt says:

> I do not think that so much weight is to be attributed to "physical deterioration" in this matter as is done by some witnesses of great knowledge who have appeared before the Commission. I attach, on the other hand, much greater weight than some do to inheritance. If there be a positive increase in the numbers of the feeble-minded and of other lunatics it is because we are doing our best to breed them. Their lives are spared, their physical condition is improved, and their freedom enlarged. . . . The influence of inheritance is far more obvious to physicians in private practice; and these know best the difficulty of getting family histories which shall be worth the paper they are written on. Moreover, inheritance is not a question of fathers and mothers only; the tree must go much further back. A generation or two are as nothing in these enquiries, as every breeder knows. Even where the parents were feeble-minded the defect may have been small, and such an one in a society of low standards may in his own circle be considered not incompetent; or feeble-mindedness may have been overlaid by vicious habits, and thus concealed from unskilled observers. Again, while some of the feeble-minded are dull from earliest years, others are bright, perhaps very bright, till they stop at a somewhat later age. In humble life a parent, indeed, would scarcely be reported as feeble-minded unless he were certifiable.
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> I do not say by any means that all cases of feeble-mindedness are cases of inheritance; arrest of development may be brought

about by incidents in gestation, having their causes, as it were, from without. Such children when adult would probably produce normal progeny, but it would be hard, in the present state of our knowledge, to distinguish these. All arrest of development is apt to run in families, as is seen in harelip, spina bifida, and the like. Heredity, too, is often seen, not in identical, but in kindred, yet different, shapes, as for instance, epilepsy in one child, idiocy in another.

The same witness says:

I do not know myself of any transition cases between physical deterioration and feeble-mindedness, and I do not believe in the existence of such a transition. Indeed, I regard feeble-mindedness, if not accidental of course (as by injury to the head in parturition and so forth), as always hereditary. I have never met with a case of manufactured feeble-mindedness apart from some accident either at birth or afterwards—a blow upon the head or something of that kind. Therefore, I should go on to say that, given a stationary population, the prevalence of feeble-mindedness would be a calculable quantity; and, therefore, in towns which have not stationary populations I should expect some diminution of it by the mixture of strains, and I believe such a diminution is going on by the increase of urban populations.

Sir James Crichton-Browne is equally definite.

Mental defect is in itself transmissible in a high degree, and hence the social obligation to prohibit the propagation of their kind by the weak-minded. My father, when Commissioner in Lunacy in Scotland, procured and published in the *Journal of Mental Science* a photograph of a group of seven congenital imbeciles, brothers and sisters, whom he found in a Scotch asylum. They were the children of parents who were cousins and were slightly weak-minded, although able to earn their living; and they had a brother not in the asylum, but imbecile also. These miserable beings must have cost the parish to which they belonged nearly £200 per annum for a long series of years. I have frequently had under my professional care or official visitation, two and three idiotic or feeble-minded brothers and sisters, and in these cases wherever information was obtainable, I have traced hereditary predisposition. I have had under my care, at the same time, a mother and daughter weak-minded, and a father and son in the same condition. Mental defect, which is dependent on structural change, is more transmissible than insanity, which may be due to functional derangement. A considerable proportion of the idiocy and feeble-mindedness with which we are now afflicted is traceable to weak-minded parentage. There are numbers of feeble-minded girls, wholly unfitted to become mothers, who return to the workhouse year after year to bear children, many of whom happily die, but some of whom survive to recruit our idiot establishments, or to repeat their mother's performances. In one workhouse it is reported that in three years as many as sixteen women of weak intellect were delivered of illegitimate children, and I would venture to suggest to the

Commission that it would be interesting and instructive to procure from the lying-in wards of all our workhouses a return of all the number of feeble-minded women who have been brought to bed in them during the last five years.

Dr. Ashby said:

The evidence I have been able to collect is in favour of the commonly accepted view that the tendency to insanity, epilepsy and unstable nervous systems, and weak-mindedness, runs in families, and it is in these families that the children are apt to suffer from amentia. In the same way deaf-mutism and haemophilia, diabetes, etc., tend to descend from generation to generation. In at least three-quarters of the children I have examined with amentia there was a strong probability that the amentia was hereditary and primary. In the minority it was more or less certainly secondary, as the result of disease during development either before or after birth.

He added:

The question of how to deal with this output of amentia is closely associated with the question of how to prevent the output.

Dr. Smalley mentions

an instance of the tendency of this class of persons to transmit their instability to their offspring. A medical practitioner in the north of England, lately called my attention to the following: J. W. and his wife, both of feeble intellect, but able to earn a living by keeping cows. They had two sons, both pronounced imbeciles, two daughters, both feeble-minded, one of whom is married. Two grandsons, both pronounced imbeciles, two grandsons normal. One grandson deaf and dumb, and one granddaughter normal.

Dr. Mott gives some statistics founded on his examinations at Colney Hatch. In 208 cases of boys, excluding other causes such as birth injuries, injuries to the head when young, tuberculosis, etc., a hereditary taint of insanity or epilepsy, direct or collateral, was discovered in 34 per cent., but as in some of the cases no history was forthcoming, the actual percentage was probably considerably higher.

The evidence of Dr. Kerr is emphatic. He says:

Mental defect itself is strongly hereditary. The witness cannot give figures, but he has known whole families of defectives—sisters, brothers and cousins—occur in every defective school, and mental defect is very obvious among the mothers who bring their children to the medical officers' examinations. Through stress and strain in the whirl of life the stock is no doubt constantly being replenished, but the most effective means of diminishing the supply would be by stopping the hereditary crop.

Dr. Bevan Lewis, Medical Director of the West Riding Asylum at Wakefield, is no less emphatic. Heredity, he asserts, plays a very large part, and he looks upon mental defect as a germinal variation. He does not believe in the transmission of acquired characters, but looks upon environment as certainly initiating germinal variations.

Dr. Tredgold, who has compiled some very careful tables, the result of close observations during five or six years, thus sums up his conclusions:

> In 90 per cent. of patients suffering from mental defect, the condition is the result of a morbid state of the ancestors, which so impairs the vital powers of the embryo that full and perfect development cannot take place. In the milder cases the effects are seen in the nervous system only, since this is the most delicate and easily injured part of the organism; in the grosser cases other parts of the body are also affected, as seen in the various imperfections and abnormalities of structure called "stigmata of degeneracy." In the 10 per cent. of cases of secondary amentia the condition is due to accidental, and, for the most part, unavoidable, causes. Amentia is thus not only hereditary, it is also the final expression of a progressive neuropathic degeneration.
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> As further proof of this perhaps I may be permitted to cite the following facts:
>
> Thirty-eight women who were insane and under detention in asylums gave birth to children. I traced the subsequent history of these children up to periods at which any nervous abnormality would have manifested itself.
>
> In the case of fourteen of these women the insanity was of a temporary description, due solely to nervous breakdown at a trying period, there being no morbid heredity. Out of the fourteen children *ten were alive and well* in body and mind, at ages varying from three to fifteen years, whilst *four were dead*.
>
> On the other hand, in twenty-four women the attack of insanity was predisposed to by a pronounced morbid inheritance; out of these children only *three were alive and well*, whilst *twenty-one had succumbed*, all, with one exception, a few months after birth.
>
> These figures are small, but I cannot do other than regard the truly alarming mortality in the latter group as the result of morbid heredity, and as further evidence that such inheritance has a most markedly injurious effect upon the offspring.

Evidence was given by Mr. F. Wilkinson, Director of Education, on behalf of the County Borough of Bolton Education Committee, to the effect that in almost every case where parents of mentally defective children appeared before the Committee or magistrates, it was found that the parents themselves were similarly afflicted.

Memoranda on this subject were submitted by Professor Sir E. Ray Lankester and Dr. Archdall Reid. Professor Lankester holds that congenital feeble-mindedness, or mental defect dating from birth or observed at a very early age, is spontaneous originally, and truly hereditary subsequently. It is not brought about by starvation or other such conditions; but, more probably, it is the result of easy conditions of life, which involve the absence of such selective destruction as obtains in nature and among more primitive men. The notion that causes such as "innutrition," wasting disease, improper period of parentage, or alcoholism, have anything to do with the form of "amentia" called feeble-mindedness is devoid of all proof. The teaching of biology is opposed to the possibility of such a connection.

Dr. Archdall Reid is of the same opinion. Like most of the witnesses, he considers that the great majority of the cases of feeble-mindedness are innate, and that feeble-mindedness implies a brain defect, which is a reversion—a true variation—and must tend to be inherited.

The chief witnesses on the other side were Dr. Eichholz, Dr. R. Hutchison, and Dr. Mercier. Dr. Mercier, although he considers the question of heredity by no means settled, and, indeed, is of opinion that feeble-mindedness depends mainly on environment, yet allows that children of defective parents have a greater tendency to be defective than the offspring of normal people.

In either case, as the Commissioners say, the subject is of practical importance as bearing on the question of the indeterminate or permanent control of certain of the feeble-minded.

There can be no doubt that feeble-minded parents do not and cannot bring up their children to be satisfactory members of the community. To this, those who are familiar with the home conditions of families where one, or both, parents are mentally defective, bear ample witness. Their children are often familiar from infancy with drink, crime, and all forms of sexual vice. Neglect and ill-treatment often render them physically infirm, and eventually, either as criminals or paupers, they have to be supported by the community. These reasons for permanent control are entirely apart from the question of direct transmission of mental defect, but in proportion as the probability be great of

feeble-minded persons having similar offspring, the above-mentioned reasons for controlling them, in the interests of the community, would be strongly corroborated.

Closely connected with this part of the subject is the question of births and deaths amongst the mentally defective. It is generally asserted, though opinion on this point is by no means unanimous, that the number of children born to such persons is abnormally high. If this is the case it forms another reason why there should be control of mentally defective persons, both men and women. It is in this connection that the question of the protection of feeble-minded women assumes peculiar importance, for they constitute a permanent menace to the race and one which becomes serious at a time when the decline in the birth-rate is so unmistakable as to cause grave alarm to statesmen and sociologists.* Statistics show that this decline is mainly among the better-educated and more self-respecting classes, and thus the proportion of normal and healthy children to defective and degenerate must obviously become smaller and smaller unless steps are taken to avert the evil. On these points—the fertility of the feeble-minded and the probable degeneracy of their offspring—the evidence from Homes and workhouses and the opinion of scientific men is in substantial agreement. The following table (p. 30) was compiled by Dr. Tredgold.

Dr. Tredgold pointed out that "the average number of children born in a family is four, whereas in these degenerate families we find an average of 7·3 to each," and he added: "Out of this total only a little more than *one-third*—456 out of a total of 1,269 children—can be considered profitable members of the community, and this, be it remembered, at the parents' valuation." Another point is the number of mentally defective children who survived. "Out of the total

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* The Registrar-General's annual report of births, marriages, and deaths in England and Wales for 1907, which has just been issued, gives the birth-rate as 26·3 per 1,000 of the total population, *the lowest on record*.

TABLE SHOWING THE CONDITION OF 150 AMENTS WITH THEIR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

In the 150 Families there were 1,269 children born.

Unsatisfactory.			Satisfactory.	
A. Born dead . . .		170		
B. Since died				
Under 1 year .	138	315	Said by parents to be mentally and bodily healthy. .	456
" 3 " .	107			
" 10 " .	37			
" 20 " .	8			
Over 20 " .	25			
C. Mentally affected . .		245		
D. Diseased, paupers, or criminals . . .		83		
Total . .		813	Total . .	456
Total, 1,269				

number of 526 mentally affected persons in the 150 families, there are 245 in the present generation"—a large survival.

This portion of the evidence is thus summed up by the Commissioners:

(1) That both on the grounds of fact and of theory there is the highest degree of probability that "feeble-mindedness" is usually spontaneous in origin—that is, not due to influences acting on the parent—and tends strongly to be inherited.

(2) That, especially in view of the evidence concerning fertility, the prevention of mentally defective persons from becoming parents would tend largely to diminish the number of such persons in the population.

(3) That the evidence for these conclusions strongly supports measures, which on other grounds are of pressing importance, for placing mentally defective persons, men and women, who are living at large and uncontrolled, in institutions where they will be employed and detained; and in this, and in other ways, kept under effectual supervision so long as may be necessary.

They add:

In our opinion, the general feeling of the people would at present rightly condemn any legislation directed chiefly or exclusively to the prevention of hereditary transmission of mental defect by surgical or other artificial measures. The possibility of adopting such measures was referred to by twenty-one of the witnesses, but only three of them expressed opinions in favour of the practicability of such a course.

PRESENT MODES OF TREATMENT

I. The Poor Law.

Turning now to existing methods of dealing with the mentally defective, we find that, apart from lunatic asylums, which receive only "certified lunatics," various attempts have been made in various ways to meet the difficulty which has always existed, but which hitherto has never been systematically dealt with. For idiots there are asylums, by no means sufficient in number; imbeciles are received in some institutions, but are often too bad for one kind and not bad enough for another; defective children are sent to the Special Schools of the Education authority where these are available; inebriate reformatories and prisons deal with a considerable proportion, but in the last resort it is the Poor Law authority which is compelled to find accommodation for them, and then only on the ground of their destitution, not of their mental defect.

The Poor Law authorities, then, deal with the greater number of "uncertified persons" who are mentally defective. Such persons are very often by reason of their infirmity in a state of destitution, and are unable to take proper care of themselves; and all uncertified persons, when through destitution they are in receipt or need of relief, in some way or other come under the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board.

Thus, unless they are otherwise specified and dealt with, for instance, as prisoners or inebriates, all those mentally defective persons who are "not certified under the Lunacy Acts" are eligible for Poor Law relief if they are poor and destitute; and this may be either indoor or outdoor relief.

There are in the hands of the Poor Law Guardians, on certain conditions and subject to the consent of the Local Government Board, ample legislative powers for providing for mentally defective paupers who are not certifiable, in workhouses, wards of workhouses, or in separate institutions.

These powers, however, are only the same as in the case of ordinary paupers, and include no authority for compulsory detention.

Throughout the country, also, outdoor relief is available for persons suffering from mental infirmity. And under certain conditions the guardians are empowered to maintain idiotic or imbecile children in suitable schools (certified or not certified), and imbecile adults in suitable institutions; and these institutions may be supported out of the rates or by voluntary contributions.

Further, the guardians may pay for the maintenance and education of epileptic and defective children who attend special classes and schools, and they have powers of prosecution in cases of cruelty, ill-treatment, and neglect, while the workhouse serves as a place of detention for certified lunatics, including idiots, for whom the accommodation there is considered sufficient and suitable, and also as an immediate refuge for insane persons who have wandered abroad. It should be added that in whatever form the relief is given, the recipients or their parents are disfranchised just as in the case of ordinary paupers, although there is no similar disability in the case of the physically defective—blind, deaf, etc.—who are treated in institutions; this is often felt as a real hardship and deters parents from placing their children under the care of the guardians.

The portion of the Report dealing with the care of mentally defective persons in Poor Law institutions is very full and is of great interest.

The Commissioners had at their disposal two main sources of information—the reports of the medical investigators, whom they appointed to ascertain the number of mentally defective persons in certain typical urban and rural areas, and who made special enquiries in regard to the Poor Law institutions; and the evidence of witnesses. This evidence came from many quarters and referred to many districts.

(A) *Indoor Relief.*

The evidence as to the suitability of workhouses for the feeble-minded is not unanimous, but it is observed that the

districts in which the investigators considered the existing state of things satisfactory were also those in which the proportion of the mentally defective was exceptionally low. On the other hand, by far the greater number of witnesses agree that the workhouse officials cannot, in the nature of the case, provide the care, training and control which most of the defectives need. Even where they are fairly happy and amenable "there is no recognition of the fact that they need training." In one case "a noisy dement was in the next bed to a patient suffering from acute pneumonia, to whom sleep was an absolute necessity." One witness quoted a case

> where they had got a dozen children in the imbecile block of the workhouse simply because they could find no place to which they could send them to be trained.

In one district there were 889 persons in receipt of indoor or outdoor relief, as epileptics, idiots and insane. Of these 696 would be certified as insane, and 193 were sane epileptics. The proportion of feeble-minded who were not classed as insane was very considerable, possibly half as many as those who were classed.

Another witness says:

> A recent visit paid to the workhouses showed imbeciles, idiots, and slightly feeble-minded living in wards together, all ages from fourteen to ninety. Hardly any attempt was made to teach or occupy the children. On the men's side the boys were partially separated from the men, but the accommodation was cheerless, and the life of the boys idle and dreary. Slightly feeble-minded children were associated with the saddest, most hopeless idiots. I saw six children who had formerly been in special schools. Five of them had greatly deteriorated, probably through lack of training and association with low-type imbeciles. Three boys had been sent to Starcross by the guardians and returned as too deficient for training in that institution. In each case the workhouse medical officer was of opinion that the boys were improvable, but would deteriorate under workhouse conditions. A girl of fourteen who had made considerable progress at the special school, was associating with a room full of low-type imbecile women.

The want of power on the part of the workhouse authorities to detain compulsorily the cases which need supervision is one of the most serious defects of the present state of things. One result, as several witnesses pointed out, is that the

feeble-minded men who take refuge in the workhouse during the winter or in hard times, tend to become regular "ins-and-outs." Worst of all is the case of feeble-minded women and girls, who "form a large proportion of the unmarried mothers who come to the lying-in wards of our workhouses, where they often appear again and again, adding to the rates and to the deterioration of the race by producing sickly and deficient children." On this point the evidence is clear and convincing; all agree that illegitimacy is frequently a result of feeble-mindedness, yet the authorities have no power to keep these women in the workhouse if they wish to leave, and, as one witness emphatically stated, "this class become practically the prostitutes of the rural districts."

An account of the Wakefield Union Workhouse, given by Mr. Bagenal, General Inspector, Local Government Board, Yorkshire District, may be taken as typical of urban workhouses:

The Wakefield Union had a population of 112,365 at the last census, and it includes a considerable rural area together with the town of Wakefield. I inspected this workhouse with particular reference to this subject, and I made special enquiries regarding the feeble-minded, idiots, and imbeciles in the workhouse, and I found as follows: there were sixteen male certified lunatics and eight female certified lunatics, making a total of twenty-four. Of those, three males were idiots and three females idiots. There were five male feeble-minded epileptics, not certified, who were warded with the lunatics or with the infirm men. All these, I may mention, occupy the same block, and intermingle freely, though classified on the male and female side, after a fashion, in separate day-rooms. There were numbers of idiots, and imbeciles, and inmates with their senses, all mixing together, which is a very undesirable thing. It is to be explained by the fact that they have not room in the workhouse. There is going to be an attempt to classify and to add accommodation. But that is the condition of a great number of workhouses—that the imbeciles are mixed up with the sane, which is very undesirable, and very hard lines upon the respectable poor.* There were four feeble-minded women, of whom one was an epileptic. Of these, one has an illegitimate

* In the report of the Local Government Board for 1907-8 attention is again called to this difficulty. One inspector speaks of the cruelty of compelling the sick and aged inmates of workhouses to associate with "idiots who are physically offensive or mischievous, or who create a disturbance by day and by night with their howls, and who, while they annoy the sane, do not receive the appropriate treatment by which some few of them at any rate might benefit."

child; and there is trouble in keeping her segregated from the men. There is another who the superintendent said was very likely to go wrong; and with whom she has had trouble in the same way. All the above are under special observation, and supervised by special officers; and are accommodated in a separate block divided into male and female quarters. Now I come to the main block where inmates in health are kept. In the main block I find the following feeble-minded: eight women between twenty and forty years of age, of whom the master said it would be most inadvisable to let them out; one epileptic of the same character. All these the master manages to detain in the workhouse by persuasion, or by putting difficulties in the way; such as asking whether they have any friends to go to, whether they are likely to keep them, and so on. As a matter of fact he knows that he has no legal right to prevent them discharging themselves. Besides these, there are the following cases: a woman, aged thirty-eight, who has no sense of morality, and is a source of constant trouble to the matron and master. She has had five children, all by different fathers. This woman is now practically a permanent inmate of the house, and is not allowed out. She makes no application to be discharged, but uses very bad language when she is refused liberty to go out for an afternoon. Of her five children three died, very degenerate offspring. The survivors are under the custody of the Guardians. The second case is a woman, aged forty-five, who has three illegitimate children. She is on the border-line of imbecility, but the medical officer will not certify her as insane. Two of the children are said to be the result of an incestuous connection. She makes no application to go out, but there is no means of legally detaining her. There is a third case of a woman, aged twenty, bordering on imbecility. She has been in the workhouse for ten years, and is an active and useful person in work. Then, going on with the females, I find in the infirmary or hospital wards in 1904 there had been three cases of illegitimate births, all the offspring of feeble-minded women. One was the result of an incestuous connection. The superintendent nurse told me that the mothers of all these cases were distinctly feeble-minded, and her experience is that illegitimacy is very frequently the result of this. . . . On the male side I found there were five men who could be described as feeble-minded, who are useful and active workers about the place, going messages, and so on. They show no desire to leave the institution; they are quite content to remain there. Those would seem to be people ear-marked, as it were, for a labour colony, or a department of a labour colony for the feeble-minded, if such were established. Thus I find my summary for that workhouse is: there were twenty-four certified insane, and twenty-six feeble-minded.

"This mass of evidence is," say the Commissioners, "quite conclusive."

It comes almost entirely from persons who, as Inspectors of the Local Government Board, or as Guardians, are thoroughly familiar with the facts; and it relates practically to the whole country. It is practically unanimous. It has been verified by the personal observation of members of the Commission visiting Poor Law institutions. Its cumulative effect, therefore, can hardly be

set aside. There are special arrangements, here and there, for the care of the mentally defective, and some witnesses suggest that for certain classes the present workhouses may be of service, but it is admitted that, as a whole, the accommodation now provided for these persons is insufficient, unsatisfactory, and unsuitable. It is not alleged that they are treated with unkindness; on the contrary, it is stated that, considered merely as inmates, they are well cared for. Nor, again, is it asserted that the Poor Law Guardians throughout the country are to blame. The system of indoor relief is . . . merely a housing system, and of late years, with an increased sympathy for those who are suffering from mental weakness and defect, with a closer study of mental science, and with the general application of the principle of educational equality to all classes of children, including the feeble-minded, there has sprung up a demand for a more discriminative and individual treatment of mentally defective persons, which cannot but entail a reorganisation of the public provision hitherto furnished for the afflicted.

(B) *Outdoor Relief.*

The Guardians are given very wide powers of administering outdoor relief to cases of mental infirmity, and they may also, as we have seen, send children who are mentally deficient to asylums or certified Homes, paying for their maintenance or making grants to the institutions. Out-relief is granted by Poor Law Guardians "on account of bodily or mental infirmity," and Dr. R. Cunyngham Brown, Deputy Medical Officer, H.M. Prison, Parkhurst, thus describes the state of things which he found during a series of visits to pauper lunatics living under the care of their friends:

These patients, who are mostly imbeciles or senile dements, come under the care of the Boards of Guardians either through discharge from an asylum, or—which is the usual channel—by themselves or their friends applying for parish relief. If in the latter case they are found to be imbecile or of weak mind either by the Parochial Medical Officer or the Relieving Officer they are put on the "quarterly list" of pauper lunatics kept by the Medical Officer, and are thereupon visited and reported upon as to bodily and mental condition, accommodation, general care and management, and whether mechanically restrained or not during the quarter. They are also visited once a quarter by the Relieving Officer. These visits are paid so long as the patient remains on the list. There are two points requiring mention here. In the first place these patients are not visited by the Commissioners in Lunacy, and drop out of official cognizance, so far as the Commissioners are concerned, entirely, and come instead under the Local Government Board. Secondly, a pauper patient previously in an asylum, discharged unrecovered by the Board of Guardians to the care of friends, drops out of official cognizance absolutely

if the friends do not apply for parochial assistance. In several towns I came across cases of this kind, either through their being known to the medical officer or to the police. The patients I found to be of all classes, some cases of profound idiocy, various degrees of imbecility, cases of mild senile dementia, and a considerable number of simple senility, with no discernible mental defect beyond some loss of memory. Imbecility, however, existed in nearly 50 per cent. of the cases. A surprising feature was the large number of imbecile women of child-bearing age, amounting in the cases I saw to over 40 per cent. of the female patients. Coupled with the extremely lax guardianship which I found in large numbers of these homes, and the utterly insufficient bedroom accommodation frequently present in houses where the female patients were living, it is not to be wondered at if breaches of the moral code occur.

The care of patients is entrusted in nearly all cases to their natural guardians or relatives, that is to say, to the very people whom experience has shown to make the worst kind of guardian. Out of 215 cases of which I have careful notes the guardianship was obviously bad in sixty-five, doubtful in twenty-seven, and in ninety-eight satisfactory. In a considerable number of cases I found pauper lunatics living under the care of relations, parents, or others who were distinctly of weak mind, and most of the Parochial Medical Officers with whom I spoke knew of cases of this kind. In one case one imbecile girl, who had, however, only been six months on the list, had an idiot child, and was living under very bad guardianship. Another woman living with aged parents in the same district had specific disease when the present Parochial Medical Officer was appointed, and another female pauper lunatic living alone in lodgings in the same district was afraid she was pregnant. She went to the Union and it was discovered that she was not, but that she had been taken advantage of was known. In another town two sisters, aged twenty and thirty, cases of congenital but not profound imbecility, were leading lives of prostitution. . . . Cases of this kind, and the conditions from which they must inevitably arise, are so frequently encountered that they constitute an evil which must be recognised and should be instantly remedied.

In a very large proportion of cases the accommodation was bad. Out of 183 cases, serious overcrowding was present in fifty-three, or 28·9 per cent.; twenty-eight were lodgers and living in one room, and in 102 cases no overcrowding was present. In very few cases had the patients their own bedrooms. The rooms in which the patients live were clean and comfortable in 55·5 per cent., fairly clean in 13 per cent., very dirty in 31·5 per cent., and in 68 per cent. of these latter absolutely filthy. The apparent dirt and state of neglect in which some of these patients live is indescribable. I have found patients sleeping on beds made of straw, in sacks, on rags, on broken-down camp beds, and in many cases adult patients sleeping in the same room with other adult inmates of the opposite sex. In many other cases, however, I found the patients living in clean and comfortable rooms, well clothed and tended. I am unable to speak of the patients' diet, for, though I called at many houses at the ordinary meal times, I rarely found them at meals. Probably this is due to the fact that in many houses of this class there are no set hours for

meals. I was informed, however, by many of the senile class that their staple food was bread and dripping and tea, and in the case of single patients living alone it is difficult to see how they could afford much more out of the sums allowed to them by the Board of Guardians.

The practice of boarding out mentally defective children, in the same way that normal children are boarded out by the guardians, is universally condemned by inspectors. The foster-parents as a rule have neither the patience nor the knowledge required for training these children, and the result is that they are neglected, even when not cruelly treated, and generally deteriorate. Miss Mason, senior inspector of boarding out under the Local Government Board, gave a good deal of evidence on this point, and is strongly opposed to it on all grounds. She asserts that it is dangerous

because they have not the sense to take care of themselves, for one reason. To give you one instance, there was a feeble-minded girl who was assaulted by her grown-up foster-brother, and then was returned to the workhouse. The parents cannot take care of their own children. A woman asked me many years ago, could I find a home for her daughter to be sent to? She said she would pay anything if I could find an institution in which she might be sheltered. Also because, if cottagers or working people cannot take care of their own children, how can you expect them to take care of other people's? They are not kind to them, they have no patience with their stupid and their tiresome ways. They do not work as they expect them, and they cannot trust them on an errand, so they whack them.

(C) *Institutional Relief outside the Workhouse.*

Finally, the Guardians have power to send the "uncertified" feeble-minded to other institutions, such as Special Schools, idiot asylums, the workhouses of other Unions, paying for their maintenance. They may also make grants to institutions "which appear calculated to render useful aid in the administration of the relief of the poor;" these are considered under "Voluntary Institutions."

The case of London workhouses differs in this particular from that of other unions, inasmuch as they have the use of the institutions of the Metropolitan Asylums Board and of the London County Council. These include a central receiving Home for children, and Homes for helpless imbeciles,

unimprovable imbeciles, and feeble-minded children, besides lunatic asylums. The most instructive in many ways is the Industrial Colony at Darenth, in Kent, for the accommodation and training of the improvable of all ages: it consists of asylums, schools, an industrial colony, and pavilions which are being used temporarily for unimprovable children. It may be said to represent the first experiment of uniting in one colony improvable children, boys and girls over sixteen, and adults. The experiment has been of great value in showing how much can be done with the mentally defective by means of manual training, and at the same time it gives much encouragement to the hope that such colonies could in the course of time be made to a large extent self-supporting. The children, it is stated, could do anything mechanical so long as they were looked after. They could not initiate anything; they were only good when they were constantly supervised. One patient is worth to the institution 15*s.* a week as a labourer, and out of 425 male patients 412 are at work, quite half of them contributing by their work to their own maintenance. The present cost of the patients (1905), is 10*s.* 6*d.* a week, and Mr. Helby, former chairman and now member of the sub-committee, believed that in an entirely industrial colony the cost might be reduced 50 per cent. It is interesting to compare the account of this colony with that given by the Commissioners of similar institutions in America (p. 64).

II. Education.

The history of the process by which mentally defective children have gradually come to some extent under the care of the Education Authority is both typical and instructive. Though London differs in some respects from the rest of the country, it may yet be considered as the best, because the most complete, illustration of the application of the principles on which legislation has worked.

The Education Act of 1870, by placing on the School Boards the duty of dealing with *all* educable children, soon led to the establishment of schools for the physically defective;

indeed, so early as 1872 special provision was made for teaching blind and deaf children, but no grant was made for this purpose till 1890, and it was not till 1893 (Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act) that the provision for such children became compulsory. Meanwhile the School Boards had been drawing attention to the needs of the mentally defective children, and special schools were started in some of the large towns, but the matter was not dealt with by legislation till 1899, when the Defective and Epileptic Children Act *empowered*, but did not *compel*, the authorities to provide for such children,

(i) By establishing special classes for them in some of their schools.

(ii) By boarding them out in houses near to special classes or schools.

(iii) By establishing either day or boarding special schools for them.

For epileptics the Board of Education certify boarding schools only.

This permissive Act has been only partially adopted, and then only in urban areas. In 1907 there was accommodation for 9,082 children, but of this accommodation no less than 4,946 was in London. Even where these Special Schools exist they are never adequate to the demand, and it appears from statistics that ·59 per cent. of the total number of children on the school registers (some 35,662 out of 6,044,394) are in need of more suitable provision than at present exists. The account given by Dr. Melland, who examined the Manchester area, is in many respects typical. He found

sixty-five imbeciles, almost half of whom (thirty-two) were children who had either never attended school or who, having proved unteachable in the ordinary school, were excused attendance and left to run the streets, getting into mischief, and also showing dangerous and destructive tendencies. Five had been tried in one or other of the special schools for defective children, but had proved themselves incapable of profiting by the teaching there, and the other ten had been examined for the schools, but had been recognised as too markedly defective for admission. The remaining eighteen were met with in the ordinary day schools,

gaining nothing from the teaching there, and only serving to interfere with the order and progress of the classes in which they were placed.

In Somersetshire, where there are no special schools,

one hundred and fifty-three defective children in the ordinary elementary schools were receiving practically no training, and were often a source of distraction to the other scholars. When the time comes for them to leave school, the educable period will have passed, and they will be turned adrift, with their capacity for useful work entirely uncultivated.

Here it may be well to make clear what is the actual method employed with regard to feeble-minded children under the Education Authority. If a child in the ordinary Elementary School is thought to be defective, it is sent by the teacher to the nearest Special School and there examined. It is then generally kept on probation and ultimately is

(*a*) returned to the ordinary school as not being defective;
(*b*) dismissed as too defective (imbecile); or
(*c*) retained in the Special School till the age of fourteen or sixteen.

It will thus be seen that the imbecile class (*b*) is wholly unprovided for by the Education Authority, and when dismissed from the Special School these children, unless they are chargeable to the Guardians, become greatly neglected. In some cases the child is left alone all day locked up; in others it runs the streets.

On the question of excluding children too defective for the special schools the evidence of different witnesses shows that the practice is by no means uniform, some authorities going in the direction of taking only the most improvable cases, which are in fact rather dull and backward than strictly feeble-minded, and others becoming gradually more rigid in excluding the merely backward and accepting only low-grade children.

The following figures give some idea of the working of the present system: they show the proportions of mentally defective children who were deemed fit for schooling of some sort and were therefore submitted to the medical officers' examinations in London, in 1904:

Numbers examined	4,561
Passed for elementary school	1,047
Passed for Special Education:	
Blind	54
Deaf	59
Physically defective	702
Mentally defective	1,728
Rejected at once as imbecile	143
Rejected after probation as imbecile ...	44
Rejected as invalids (postponed)	828
Left, aged 14, permitted to go to work ...	140
Left, aged 14—15; boys, 91; girls, 90 ...	181
15 and over, boys, 60; girls, 53 ...	113

As to the general results, Dr. Kerr says: "A considerable proportion show little moral restraint, some are almost without speech, some seem incapable of work, others work without progress or intelligence; very frequently too they are addicted to staying out or even wandering at night, and many of this last class come into the hands of the police. Some have bad habits, and immoral tendencies are common. Many are capable of control while in the Special School, but speedily become irregular and incontrollable on leaving it. . . . . About one-third will be capable of materially contributing to their own livelihood after leaving, one-third will partially contribute but require an After-Care Association of some kind to watch over them, whilst the remainder should not be allowed to mix with the rest of the community, but should receive some kind of custodial treatment."

The following cases of children from a Special School in South London, who had left over age and so had presumably had the full schooling available, will serve to illustrate this estimate. (See Table on p. 43.)

Typical cases show what is meant by "not earning at all," or "at home," or "with parents."

A.—Girl, imbecile, admitted to the school in 1894, aged ten; respectable home; sent to Darenth in 1896; brought home by her parents in 1898; cigar-making and training-home tried unsuccessfully; 1905, aged twenty-one; at home doing nothing, distinctly imbecile, needs careful watching.

B.—Boy, admitted 1892, aged ten. Specialist reports: "Congenital imbecility and epilectic fits"; home, low class; father seventy-nine, blind; mother consumptive; six children living, ten dead; elder brother in an asylum; left school, 1898, help refused; 1902, in Peckham Asylum; 1904, workhouse; 1905, Caterham Asylum. Reported no trouble, does light work in the grounds. It will be noted that for four years (sixteen to twenty) he was at home under no control.

It is clear that these cases become in the course of time either "home" cases that very often require oversight, or "institution" cases.

LEFT OVER AGE—58 CHILDREN.

Particulars of (a) Economic and (b) Moral Condition.

(a)			(b)		
		Per cent.			Per cent.
1. Not earning at all.	16	27·6	1. Satisfactory or harmless.	20	34·48
2. Occasional small earnings.	8	13·8	2. Unsatisfactory .	13	22·40
3. At fairly regular unskilled work.	26	44·8	3. Doubtful . .	7	12·06
4. Earning good wages.	7	12·1	4. Acknowledged as Imbecile.	4	6·94
5. Supported by husband.	1	1·7	5. No record. .	14	24·12
	58	100		58	100

The next class are those who earn a little occasionally; and the phrase stands for hardly more than "not earning." These children will "never be self-supporting, and probably will soon be on the rates."

C.—Girl, admitted to school, 1892, aged eight; stupid, but willing; home very low class, not to say bad; father deserted, mother living with another man; reported for overcrowding, seven in one room 1905, both men in the house. A preventive home for child was offered and refused; in 1899, aged fifteen, a training-home was offered and refused; in 1903 the girl applied for help to get work. She was sent to a home, but reported hopeless for service. In 1905, aged twenty-one, she is living in this bad home and doing odd jobs for neighbours. Possibly something might have been made of this girl if she had been sent to a home at fourteen or even earlier.

D.—A boy, admitted in 1892, aged eight; had fits and bad sight, very small and delicate; home low class; father was a cooper, now has a barrow; had a sunstroke and now ill-treats wife and children; brother, also in special class, killed by a street accident. In 1899 he left school; several trades tried unsuccessfully; too dull. A place in a good firm was found at last, but the pay was too small, 2*s.* while learning, and work too hard. In 1903 he was going with a man who had a barrel organ; in 1905 he was lost sight of.

The third class is "fairly regular and unskilled work." Even here one does not find steadiness of employment. "It appears fairly certain that an in-and-out condition with regard to employment is the rule, but whether this is more marked than in normal children of the same class it would be difficult to say." The difference would lie in the eventual ability to become self-supporting.

E.—Three boys were admitted in 1892-93 from one family, all deaf and bad-tempered; home very low class; father a compositor, diseased and drank; ill-treated wife and children; mother's family of weak intellect and consumptive; in 1898 all went into the workhouse. The first boy left in 1896; repeated attempts to get work for him failed. He became violent, and in 1897 was placed in an asylum. In 1902 he was still in the asylum and the report was good. In 1905 he is at home, aged twenty-five, earning 3*s.* and food at a greengrocer's. His employer is very kind, but says he has to be very careful not to put him out. The second boy, aged twenty-three, has been in Darenth since 1898. The third boy, aged twenty-one, is at home and earning 14*s.* and doing well. The father is dead. Two sisters, both weak, are in service.

This is a representative case of a low-class home; the drink, the weakness of intellect, the workhouse, the asylum—with, at the end, the one boy earning 3*s.* a week and food at the age of twenty-five, the third boy doing well, and the two "weak" sisters in service.

At present the children are compulsorily kept at these schools between the ages of seven and fourteen, or they may stay till sixteen. In the opinion of many witnesses the age should not be arbitrarily limited; most seem to think seven is too old to begin, and several considered that the years spent at school between fourteen and sixteen are practically wasted. The majority of them are incapable of head-work, yet the Code insists on all being taught the three Rs. There is a strong feeling in favour of a course of teaching based

entirely on manual work in many cases, and the advantages of this method are proved by the results obtained in the Homes and Asylums. At Rochester House, which was opened by the Metropolitan Asylums Board in 1901 for improvable imbeciles, the boys and girls did much of the work, both of the house and garden. "Manual work was begun as soon as the child showed any aptitude for it," and the matron, Miss Hargreaves, was of opinion "that boys learn a trade much more quickly and more easily if their tuition is commenced early, provided that their strength is not over-taxed and that sufficient relaxation is given them." A similar method is adopted, on a larger scale, at the Darenth Industrial Colony, to which the children from Rochester House have been transferred. Here the children are kept only two hours a day at mental work, and in the cases where they are found to make no progress, to be incapable, as is not infrequently the case, of learning to read, even this is given up and they are given manual training only. Miss Dendy, in giving evidence as to the Sandlebridge Schools, said: "I would myself very much prefer to make the training of older children, when it is proved that they are feeble-minded, with few exceptions, entirely manual. You struggle to teach feeble-minded children from six to sixteen out of books, which is very hard for a child, and at sixteen the child simply gives up any attempt to learn. The schoolroom lessons have this advantage; they are delicate children, and they would not be able to stand physical work all day long."

In favour of giving half time or more to manual and industrial training, there are many witnesses. Dr. Bevan Lewis's time-table at the Stanley Hall Home shows that writing and reading are each given only for quarter of an hour lessons in the week, with two lessons to counting and two to arithmetic, and the rest of the time is given chiefly to movement, sense, and imitation lessons; and this is often the case elsewhere. Dr. Eichholz says: "I should prefer a greater preponderance of manual training than is at present customary in many of the schools." Miss Poole, Secretary

of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants, says: "I think at least half their work ought to be manual from the beginning." Dr. Odhams, Chairman of the Norwich Elementary Education Committee, says: "The greater part of their time should be spent in the open air, and manual work of various kinds should be the principal part of the instruction." Dr. Damer Harrisson, Medical Officer of Special Schools at Liverpool, says: "The teaching of the three Rs to a large number of children in special classes is an entire mistake." Dr. Beresford says: "Their education should be almost entirely manual." Miss James, Head Mistress of a Special School at Liverpool, says: "I would ask for absolute freedom with regard to the subjects taught, so that if necessary the whole of the training should be through the manual occupations. . . . I strongly urge that as much time as possible should be given to manual occupations and industrial training, and that, where the medical officer and head-teacher agree on this, it should be left entirely in their hands to arrange with the committee that the Code should be so interpreted. At present it says not less than six hours, but it gives so many compulsory things to be taught that it is most difficult to find more time."

Mr. Garbutt and Dr. Crowley, on behalf of the Bradford Education Committee, express the opinion that in some cases it would be desirable to teach a definite trade or handicraft to children attending a day-school; and Mr. Jones, who is clerk to the Burnley Education Committee, thinks that manual instruction should be given "with a more pronounced view to the future employment and maintenance" of the children. Dr. Bennett, on behalf of the Leicester Education Committee, says: "For the worst types of children, teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic is a grotesque waste. In the better classes a certain amount is good; but to hear children struggling vainly with head work when they could be well trained in gardening and so on, is a waste of money." Mrs. Hume Pinsent defines the position thus: "The education should be manual, with classes in the three Rs for *those capable of benefiting by such classes.*"

It is clear that the Special Schools for the mentally defective are still only in the experimental stage, although they have already been of immense service in directing attention to the needs of these children. They have made it possible to ascertain the numbers and characteristics of the feeble-minded, and have served as observation centres in which the merely dull and backward who can eventually be sent back to the normal schools can be distinguished from the actually deficient who require custodial care. As to the education given in them, Dr. Kerr's personal opinion is that, although in some cases the Special School results are good, yet on the whole the expense is far more than the benefit. This is mainly because, as the authorities are discovering, the education has to some extent been on academic lines and is wasted in the greater number of cases. There is considerable difference of opinion amongst the witnesses as to whether they should be continued on the same lines or should be to a large extent replaced by residential Homes which would be both educational and industrial and where the inmates could be detained permanently if it were found necessary. One point that comes out very plainly in the evidence is that the physical condition of feeble-minded children has a great effect on their mental condition. Suitable food at regular hours, work which does not overtax their strength, plenty of sleep and relaxation, fresh air and generally healthy surroundings, combined with constant and kindly care, are shown to be the conditions on which depend the satisfactory results reported from such institutions as the Sandlebridge Homes. It is unnecessary to point out that in the large majority of cases of children who go to Special Schools, and then are sent to earn their living at fourteen or sixteen, the conditions are the precise opposite of all this. At the same time the Special Schools will always be needed for the work of classification, for differentiating the backward, the improvable and the unimprovable, while, as Mrs. Pinsent said, "if the Defective and Epileptic Children Act of 1899 were made compulsory and properly carried out, there would be no need of registration; it would act in itself as a registering authority." In any case it

is obvious that some further steps will have to be taken in the matter, and, as one of the witnesses explained, the local authorities are holding back and hesitating about incurring expense because it is generally felt that the whole question will have to be gone into and the education of the mentally defective put on to a definite and general basis.

III. Voluntary Institutions.

The voluntary institutions dealing with the mentally defective are the outcome of two distinct movements, one towards the middle of the nineteenth century which led to the establishment of idiot asylums, and another which commenced about 1887 when the first Home for feeble-minded girls was opened by workers connected with the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants, to train girls who were reported to be "troublesome, helpless, and mentally defective." It is this later movement which has led to the more careful consideration of the problem of provision for those whose mental or moral defects render them unfit to take their place in the world.

Idiot asylums may be generally described as being both educational and custodial. Their object is primarily educational, and they were the outcome of a belief that in many cases special education would prepare "for the duties and enjoyments of life" the children or young persons admitted to them. All institutions for the care of idiots have to be registered by the Commissioners in Lunacy, and are inspected by them. The evidence seems to show that they do, on the whole, carry on efficiently the work for which they were founded, although it is admitted that the educational system should be more and more manual and industrial. The asylums, however, are quite inadequate to the numbers needing treatment; every institution has a long waiting list. It has been estimated that there are some 46,000 idiots and imbeciles in the United Kingdom, with provision for only about 7 per cent. The consequence is that most of the asylums keep their patients only for five or seven years,

and then discharge them to make room for improvable cases. For most of the cases discharged there is need of after-custody or after-supervision, which they do not get; the percentage of those who succeed in life is very small, and the general opinion of the witnesses is that they ought not to go out into the world, however competent they are to work. Dr. Beach, formerly medical superintendent of the Darenth Asylum, was of opinion that custodial asylums should be provided, as in America, to which this class could be transferred, and he believed that this would be a benefit both to the community and also to the patients, for "the more patients of this kind are employed the happier their lives are, and they are more amenable to treatment."

The voluntary Homes for the feeble-minded comprise homes for improvable cases, boys and girls; homes for the permanent care of children, working women and girls; and one home (the Coningham Road Home, Shepherd's Bush) for women and their infants from maternity wards of metropolitan workhouses. They are of special interest as representing a variety of experiments on different classes of feeble-minded subjects. Under existing conditions the homes for improvable boys and girls "serve chiefly as institutions auxiliary to boards of guardians who, at a comparatively small charge, obtain the advantage of a system which, if extended, would promote the care and classification of a large number of inmates quite unsuitable for maintenance in workhouses or as recipients of out-door relief."

Two points of great importance in this enquiry are made clear by the evidence dealing with these Homes: on the one hand the real advantage to the inmates of a regular, ordered life with proper attention to health and definite training, mental, moral, and physical; on the other hand the impossibility of effecting a permanent cure so as to enable the mentally defective to take their place in the world. The testimony of all the witnesses examined by the Commissioners was practically unanimous that the feeble-minded are so deficient in will-power that they are easily lead by those stronger than themselves, whether for good or evil; that they have little or

no initiative; that their want of memory and often of any reasoning power makes it almost impossible for them to form habits, so that they are in constant need of some supervision to ensure their performing even the simplest tasks. When, however, they are suitably provided for the results are often remarkable. Miss Pease, a Poor Law guardian, and a member of the Northumberland Education Committee, speaking of the Morpeth Laundry and Home of Industry, says:

The Home has proved a great and growing success. I do not think that any girl who is really feeble-minded ever is cured; yet they become happy and useful—very different to the miserable, dull, pathetic creatures they were formerly. Most of these girls can be kept in homes without compulsion, for the tendency to escape is not great; but there are a few for whom forcible control is necessary. We have had thirty-four inmates; five have been in from the beginning, seven have been returned to workhouses because they have been too violent or had fits or been too depraved, three have died, two are in asylums, three are in service with kind mistresses who look after them, and we have two younger girls who in two or three years will probably be able to go out; only one girl has been entirely lost sight of. I believe that in a home like ours, where we are supposed to take improvable cases, there will be a small percentage of girls who, under careful and kind supervision, can earn their own living outside a home. Sometimes a girl who has been steadily improving in a home when she goes to service slowly deteriorates. The girls notice this themselves. At a treat we had last summer I asked a mistress to allow an old girl to come for the day, and her young sister, who is at the Home, said to me, "Our Lizzie is not as bright as she used to be." Good food, regular work, and living a good deal in the open air, does improve the girls in a wonderful way, mentally as well as physically, but our experience goes to prove that for the majority permanent care is needed, either in homes such as ours where the girls will stay voluntarily, or in colonies or in custodial homes where there is compulsory detention. Five of our girls have been taken away against the strong wish of the committee. Guardians and relations come to the home and see the girls apparently new creatures, doing their work well, and perfectly happy; they consider that they are cured, and are capable of going out in the world and of earning their own living, or of being useful at home. No one can judge the mental capabilities of a girl from an afternoon's visit; they may be perfectly good and almost normal for three or four months, and then suddenly lapse, have violent attacks of temper, when they are a danger to themselves and the other girls; or they have fits of sullenness, when nothing can be done with them; sometimes they become almost imbecile. When the girls are seen at their best the guardians or relations insist that they shall go to service; they are taken away, and the work of years is undone, for sooner or later the majority of those taken away drift into crime, or find their way into the maternity wards of the workhouse, and in the end are a much heavier burden on the community than if they were allowed to stay on in the homes at the moderate charge to the rates of 6*s*. a week. One of our girls whose father insisted on taking her out two years ago, had a baby last

spring. We need powers to protect our girls from relations such as these. It is miserable to think of the ruin of this girl; she was an innocent and happy child two years ago, and now there is no end to the sin and misery before her. If we can keep and safeguard these girls we shall at least relieve the rates from the keeping of illegitimate children. I am quite certain that the majority of them are happier as well as safer under control. When a laundry is attached to these homes, with other industries, such as rug-making or poultry-keeping, they can become almost self-supporting, the 5*s*. or 6*s*. a week for each girl from the guardians or friends more than covering expenses. Laundry-work is especially suitable for feeble-minded girls; they enjoy it and do it well, and live contented, happy lives, instead of being a source of misery both to themselves and to the world at large. It is always a pleasure to me to visit the Home, and to feel that there are fifteen girls living simple, useful lives in safety. They ought to be protected from the misery and temptations which they fall into when they have the power of asking for their discharge in the workhouse.

Again, in the Coningham Road Home, which was established by the National Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-minded as a permanent home for girls and women and their children, and where the inmates are of a very low type:

it is surprising what improvement *judicious* training (of which previously they have had little or none), regular hours, plenty of sleep, good wholesome food eaten at stated times, constant and varied employment, but not excessive work, make in the girls; but I fully realise that this improvement is not sufficient to keep them safe from temptation if they were out in the world. I am convinced that if all our girls had to try and earn their own living and support their babies they would soon succumb again. Their work is not good; they are slow, clumsy, and careless; they require constant supervision, more than they could or would get in service; few mistresses of the better sort would put up with them as servants.

The Sandlebridge Boarding Homes for boys and girls constitute the most complete experiment yet made for providing permanently for the feeble-minded. Miss Dendy, the Honorary Secretary, thus describes their foundation. She was a member of the Manchester School Board, and being impressed by the number of feeble-minded children in the schools of whom no particular notice was taken, she began, with the assistance of Dr. Ashby, to make enquiries which led to Special Schools being built in Manchester.

When I had seen these children and seen many of their parents I became quite convinced that to treat them only in day-schools was, to a very great extent, a waste of time and money. I approached a few influential gentlemen in Manchester and put my case before them, and

asked them if they would form a preliminary committee to enable me to take action. They were very good about it, and they did, and we formed a society, which is known as The Lancashire and Cheshire Society for the Permanent Care of the Feeble-Minded, with the intention of getting hold of a certain number of children, and trying to prove that those children, in proper conditions, could be kept happily throughout their lives without hardship or forcible detention; though we should be very glad indeed to have powers of forcible detention. This society has about 500 subscribers and 300 members in Cheshire. It owns twenty acres of land, and we have built two schools, one for twenty-five girls, and one for twenty-five boys. We have accommodation there now for fifty children. We have great insufficiency of accommodation. We are about to build another school for fifty children, and the Cheshire County Council has entered into an agreement with us to take their defectives, and they are making us a grant towards our building expenses. We have, further, just arranged to rent a farm which is abutting on our premises, and which will, for some years to come, serve us as an overflow to put the boys in as they arrive at the age of sixteen or seventeen.

We do not take in anyone over the age of thirteen. If we had powers of forcible detention we would take them in at any school age; but we find if we want to form their habits we must take them in young, so we take them in as young as we can get them, and we teach them that that is to be their home. The principle upon which we have gone is to hold it out to them as a reward that they may stay there if they are good and if they are naughty the chances are that they may get sent away.

Our boys are now arriving at the age of sixteen, and they have never slept a night off the place since they have been there. Neither boys nor girls show the least restlessness. They are orderly and good. It is rather sad, in a way; you can manage them with a word; they are great big fellows now, working in the garden, some of them.

We have two gardeners, two matrons, two deputy matrons, two teachers who teach the boys and girls in common in a little school which we have built outside both houses, and two servants. Besides that, we get a certain amount of voluntary help, and this winter we shall have voluntary help from one of the Manual Instructors from the Manchester Education Committee, who, feeling that nothing could possibly be so good for defective boys as his own work (woodwork), volunteered to come down on Saturday afternoons, and teach these children all through the winter if we liked to accept his services. We shall have them at the benches all through the winter when the more delicate of them would not be able to be at work in the garden.

The results of putting these children into boarding-schools are simply wonderful. Boys who could not button their own clothes, and could not feed themselves decently when they came down, behave now quite absolutely nicely; they not only button their own clothes, but when the buttons come off they go to their mother, as they call her, to fetch needles and cotton to put the buttons on. They knit their own stockings and knit all their own vests; they do a great deal of garden work and a great deal of cooking; they are making their own night-shirts, and, in fact, doing everything that girls usually do. As far as possible we are getting girls to do what boys usually do, so as to afford as much variety of occupation as we can. We have a little more difficulty with the girls, but not on the point of restlessness; simply they are rather more imbecile, taking them all round, than the boys. I have my meals with the children when I go down to stay the night, and they

behave at table quite like little ladies or gentlemen. It is quite enough for the matron to say that she will "tell Miss Dendy." It is the utmost punishment really that is necessary, even for the big ones. They are as easily guided as little children, and their delight in the place is delightful to witness. We have pigs, poultry, cows, and sheep, and we have had corn and so forth this year. All those who are able put a hand to everything that goes on on the little farm; and every fresh event makes a fresh desire to stay.

The boarding-schools were built privately by the Lancashire and Cheshire Society for the Permanent Care of the Feeble-Minded, but the society works in conjunction with the education authority, not only of Manchester but of Salford. The Cheshire County Council entered into an agreement with the society to supply twenty-five beds for Cheshire children on the receipt of a loan for £2,000, granted on the understanding that, in the event of the homes at Sandlebridge being closed, the loan should be repaid subject to certain deductions. The society undertakes to give the council the first choice of so many beds, but does not pledge itself to keep them vacant. The Manchester and Salford school authorities and those at Bolton and Blackburn contributed towards the furnishing of the schools.

The children at Sandlebridge cost £20 a head per annum, exclusive of charges for land and buildings. The £20 includes clothing, teaching, everything. The buildings last erected, which are of an excellent class, cost £112 a bed; the next, being semi-detached, were estimated to cost £80 a bed. "The cost of food is 3*s.* 8*d.* a week. We feed them largely on what they grow themselves in the place. They get a little meat, but not a great deal."

Up to sixteen years of age, the education authorities pay for the children—contributing authorities £20, non-contributing authorities £25. The guardians pay £25 a year. Of children who have left at sixteen, Miss Dendy says:

In Manchester at present we have only had five leave us at the age of sixteen. There were two girls, and in each case I got the Union to have those girls and send them straight to Miss Grayson's Home for feeble-minded girls in Liverpool. In one case the girl has remained there—it is over a year—in the other case the mother, a bad woman and feeble-minded woman, at the end of six months removed the girl, and she is now at large in Manchester. The other three cases were boys, all epileptic. One is working with his father, who is a joiner. As

the poor man says, "he will be all right as long as I live, but I should like to know what will become of him after." In the other cases the boys are at large. One is suffering very much. He beseeched me himself to take him to Sandlebridge, but he was too big and dangerous.

The experience of many of the managers of these homes shows that it is of the utmost importance that training should begin early. Miss Poole says:

All children noted as feeble-minded should, at the earliest possible time, be put in the way of receiving special education suitable to their mental capacity. It only makes a dull child duller to leave it in the infants' room long after the proper age. As early as possible the children should be moved from school to an industrial home or school, there to be taught the trade or employment by which they are most likely to prove self-supporting. Habits of industry cannot be inculcated too early. It tries their feeble brains less to work with their hands than to learn lessons.

Miss Anderson, who has been superintendent of several homes, gives a case of a child who

at three years old was a wailing baby, unable to stand or feed himself; with constant catarrh; looked like an imbecile; with no control. The physical condition after three years' training was: "walks three miles, marches well, clean, grown six inches, a pretty sturdy boy." On admission he was "nervous and excitable, and had no speech." After the three years he "talks nicely, knows letters, etc., and is very observant"; and the diagnosis of his intellectual development is good, of his moral "possibly good," and in adult life "he will probably be self-supporting in some controlled community."

Another witness says:

The bulk of the girls would not be able to take care of themselves, would not be able to go without supervision, unless the training is begun very much earlier. I think a very great deal depends upon that.

Again, Miss Turner, Medical Attendant to the Metropolitan Asylums Board Homes for Feeble-minded Children, says:

In my opinion seven years old for a deficient child is too old to start treatment; a deficient child ought to be taken in hand long before that. With many of the children I have had in these homes, and privately, the mothers have said that they noticed things were wrong from the beginning. . . . If the mothers notice this (and they are not so quick to notice these things in their own children) I think that proves that deficiency may be noticed early and ought to be under treatment early.

Great difference of opinion exists, however, as to the possibility of determining the question of feeble-mindedness at an early age, and many witnesses are in favour of continuing the Special Schools because, as we have seen, they

afford a valuable means of selecting and classifying the feeble-minded children. Dr. Kerr thinks that it is impossible to decide before the age of eleven or twelve whether a child will be able to earn its own living without control; before that age it is very probable that mistakes would be made.

The blocking difficulty is felt in the same way as in the idiot asylums. "The stationary class is by far the most numerous, and may indeed be said to form the bulk of the inmates of the homes for older boys and girls and for adults. It consists of those who improve up to a certain point, but then remain stationary or even go very slowly backward. . . . They must be under permanent supervision, and it would be well that institutions should be established where they would earn their own living as far as they were able, and enjoy such a measure of personal liberty as was compatible with their condition." Again, "we could do much more in training girls if we could hand on those who are unimprovable." Miss Sterling, Honorary Secretary of the Elizabeth Barclay Homes, Bodmin, says: "After five or six years a girl who comes in at fifteen . . . wants a change . . . It is not advisable for her to remain in the same home for ten or twenty years."

The consequence of this block is that girls are sometimes sent out to service because there is no custodial home to which they can be transferred. It is here that State intervention is most needed; for it seems clear that voluntary effort *alone* is not likely to be adequate to the rapidly increasing work which further knowledge of the subject brings.

This is the general feeling. "The number of homes has been stationary for the last three or four years." Miss Townsend, who gave evidence on behalf of the National Association for promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-minded, said:

> I see no special reason why Homes for the permanent protection and maintenance of the feeble-minded should not be supported by the rates entirely, if they are at all. It is very difficult to carry on these Homes without payment being made in full by the guardians. The public sympathy is not at all keen on the subject. It is very difficult to get voluntary subscriptions and donations.

Miss Sterling said:

I feel sure philanthropic effort would not meet custodial cases. I am inclined to think that the State should intervene in the case of the custodial institutions and that charity might bear the burthen of the more improvable cases.

Miss Pease said:

It would be very difficult indeed to raise the money for homes of this kind—that is, at Morpeth. People do not notice the need in the country at all. . . . I think the need is so great that voluntary effort cannot cope with it.

Miss Bartholomew, Hon. Secretary to the Clapton Training Home, said:

It is not easy to establish voluntary homes, chiefly because of the difficulty in obtaining money for initial expenses. Charitable people do not, as a rule, take a keen interest in the question, and they do not readily understand that, although boards of guardians have power to pay for maintenance of feeble-minded persons over sixteen years of age in homes, they do not establish such homes themselves.

On the possibility of connecting the establishment of new homes or "colonies" more or less closely to charitable or voluntary work and resources, Miss Dendy said:

It would be economically a very great saving, and I should like to point out to the Commission that we have large quantities of land in England that are going out of cultivation for want of labour. This land could be acquired probably at a very reasonable rate, and powers of detention would be all that would be necessary to enable charitable people or other people to care for these children in suitable ways. We have been trying in a small way to solve the problem at Sandlebridge, but anybody who knows what it means to have to collect £10,000 and then to keep a place of that kind going can see how enormously legislation would help, and how impossible it is for charitable effort to cope with the whole trouble.

Again, there is always the difficulty that the work done may be wasted because there is no power of detention. The managers of the voluntary homes are unanimously in favour of the power to detain being vested in some authority or otherwise made enforceable. It sometimes happens that the parents insist on taking the children away when they think the time has come for them to earn, and the results are often disastrous.

Dr. Caldecott, Medical Superintendent of the Earlswood Asylum, where all classes of mentally defective persons are taken, from the lowest grade of idiot who is incapable of

improvement up to the highest grade of feeble-minded, says emphatically:—

> From the experience of fifty years' working with all types of "congenitally mentally deficient persons," it is, I think, perfectly clear that most of the patients in the various grades can be improved. Some of them can be educated and taught trades, so as to become partially or almost self-supporting while in the institutions and a brilliant few—which are quite exceptions, and not on the average more than 1 per cent., I should say, of the total number that come to us—can be turned out to earn their own livelihood in a separate existence in the outside world.

This view is borne out by the results of the Birmingham Homes, of which Mrs. Pinsent says:

> In twelve years 101 cases have left the Homes. Of these only *two or three* are reported to be doing well, so that the work of these Homes, if regarded as "Training," can hardly be said to be satisfactory, and neither is it satisfactory as permanent care, for only four of the original inmates admitted to the Homes are now inmates. With the exception of the two or three above-mentioned, *none* of the 101 girls who for one or other reason have left or been discharged were really fit to return to ordinary life, but they should all have been kept under restraint and supervision.

The general conclusions to be drawn from the evidence on voluntary institutions are, that the existing accommodation is quite inadequate in amount, and that the problem of the feeble-minded cannot be solved without some power of compulsory detention. We have seen that of actual idiots only about 7 per cent. are provided for, and further that, owing to insufficiency of accommodation, the tendency of idiot asylums is towards accepting only improvable cases. For the same reason the other institutions are compelled to discharge those who are incapable of improvement, but who need life-long care and control, as well as those of whom there is hope, though by no means certainty, that they may be able to earn a living. The figures given by the National Association for the Welfare of the Feeble-Minded show how urgent is this need. In six years they received 2,686 applications, of which they were able to deal with 355 only, 217 being received into their own homes, and 238 referred to other homes and agencies.*

* The total number of cases provided for by *all* the voluntary institutions, including the Idiot Asylums, is under 3,000, out of which there is permanent provision for only 300, and this without power of detention.

Even where provision exists, it often fails, as has been shown, owing to the absence of compulsory detention. It is thus clear that voluntary effort cannot be relied on to provide adequately for all classes of the mentally defective, yet, as the Commissioners say, "voluntary institutions are economically managed, and it is of great service to have at the disposal of the authorities and the community that personal work, endeavour and influence which are characteristic of it." It would seem, then, that in the future voluntary institutions will tend to deal with the more improvable cases, while those needing permanent detention will pass under the care of the State.

IV. Methods in other Countries.

On the methods of dealing with the mentally defective in foreign countries some interesting particulars were given by Dr. Cunyngham Brown, Deputy Medical Officer, Parkhurst Prison. He had been commissioned by the *British Medical Journal* in 1904 to enquire more especially into the family-colony system, which consists in the boarding-out of harmless, inoffensive lunatic or imbecile patients in the homes and under the care of competent guardians. He was very favourably impressed with the results of the system; he asserts that the patients are happier, healthier, and more tranquil than in the asylums; that far greater economy is possible; that in certain cases the family-care system in itself acts as a cure, and also furnishes a means of testing the fitness of a convalescent to return to society; that by relieving the asylums of incurable cases it permits of more individual treatment of curable cases. The details of the system are not always the same. The patients are sometimes more and sometimes less closely connected with the main asylums, but in all forms they are directly under the control and inspection of the asylum authorities, and strict rules are made as to accommodation, diet, etc.

Belgium.—The oldest of these institutions, that at Gheel, near Antwerp, was visited by some of the Commissioners, and is thus described:

The patients, who number about 2,000, live mostly as boarders at houses in the village, or in small farms or other houses in the surrounding district. There is also a central asylum, accommodating a few patients for whom institutional care is necessary. There is a medical director assisted by five assistant physicians, and a special pathologist for scientific work. There are also several lay inspectors, who visit every house in their respective districts once a week.

All pauper patients are received first in the central establishment and thence are drafted to the care of their "hosts." If a patient shows dangerous tendencies the law requires that he should be sent to an asylum. Patients requiring continuous restraint, suicidal cases, homicidal cases, those likely to commit acts of indecency, etc., are not eligible for admission under the "Gheel" system.

The patients appeared to be treated, in most instances, as "one of the family" of their hosts.

The charge which was made for their care and maintenance varied from 8*d*. to 11*d*. a day, of which 2*d*. a day was deducted for administrative expenses, the "host" receiving therefore from 6*d*. to 9*d*. a day for each case. Private patients are also taken at charges varying from £16 to £150 per annum. As a rule, only one patient was allowed in each house, but where there were two each was provided with a separate room, and there were stringent regulations as to the size of rooms, bedding and clothing, and cleanliness.

Germany.—In Germany Dr. Cunyngham Brown visited the colony of Jerichow. Here there is a main asylum holding about 200 patients, some of whom are permanent, but most are under observation either on their way to the outside colony or for treatment at acute stages. The other patients live in the cottages of the neighbourhood under the care of the householders, and are visited at frequent intervals by the overseers and medical officers. "The care and supervision," says Dr. Cunyngham Brown, "is extraordinarily thorough, and has been followed by the happiest results. . . . The saving effected by this system of boarding-out of the 563 patients in Saxony was, for 1904, 287,000 marks" (about £14,350) "not counting the saving on the avoidance of new erections which would otherwise have been required. But it has done much more than this. It has relieved the asylums of 14 per cent. of their pauper population, it has been of material benefit to their guardians, and it has been of great benefit to the patients themselves."

France.—In France the family-colony system is considered to have been a great success. The first colony, that at

Dun-sur-Auron in the department of the Seine, was founded in 1892 to relieve the pressure on the asylums of the department, and the cases transferred were "aged people certified as insane, but in whom the condition of dementia, incurable but tranquil, and the senile enfeeblement of their faculties, hardly justified their detention in an asylum." As time went on, other harmless cases were transferred to the colony, including delusional insanity, chronic mania and melancholia, and adolescent dementia. Dr. Cunyngham Brown thus gives his impressions of this colony:—

> I made a house-to-house visitation to most of the 600 patients in the village of Dun-sur-Auron, and also the hamlets of Bussy and Osmery, and encountered many in the streets, unmistakably demented, but attracting no attention whatever from the ordinary inhabitants. I found them occasionally at work, but as the majority are of advanced years, they were for the most part employing themselves in desultory fashion, or at meals. The interiors of the houses were certainly above the ordinary dwellings of the place in point of cleanliness and order, and the patients' clothing and bedding I found in excellent condition. Only two patients, as a rule, are permitted in one house, as it has been found there, as elsewhere, that when more than two are allowed, the proper blending of the patients with the life of the family is impeded. The rules stipulate that the food of the patients must be the same as that of the family, and that at least three and a half kilogrammes of bread and one litre of wine must be supplied to each patient per week, and four days a week fresh meat, independently of vegetables and other foods. The patients appeared thoroughly contented, and though, being for the most part Parisians, many desired to return to Paris, not one wished, here or elsewhere, to exchange the life of the colony for that of the asylum.
>
> As to cost, the sum paid to the *nourricier* for each patient is 1fr. 10c. per day (about 11*d.*) The personal clothing is supplied from the institution, and this, added to the expenses of the infirmaries, medical and other service, etc., raises the daily cost to 1fr. 60c. per patient. The average cost per patient per day in the asylums of the Seine department is 2fr. 75c. If to this saving be added the avoidance of erection of fresh structures, the resulting economy is very considerable.

It will be seen that the system of family-colonies is most suitable for cases of chronic harmless dements, whether lunatics or idiots; it would obviously not meet the requirements of extreme idiots, dangerous lunatics, nor those classes of the feeble-minded which require skilled training and discipline.

America.—The Commissioners who visited the United

States "were struck by the originality and directness of the methods adopted in several of these institutions with a view to stimulating the activity of the perceptive powers of the inmates, and, also, by the freedom from cramping and unnecessary regulations which enabled the managers to apply their minds to new experiments in education and organisation. They were also impressed with the large size of American institutions, some of which contained from 500 to 2,000 inmates. This seemed to them to secure proper classification, the general plan being that each institution contains three departments, and it is perfectly easy to transfer an inmate from one to the other. These departments are: the Custodial for the lowest grade (*i.e.*, idiots), the School for the higher-grade children, and the Industrial for the higher-grade adults. These departments are entirely separate, and often at some little distance from one another, though under the same central management. Our members are of opinion that the large size of the institution tends not only to better classification but to greater economy. They also point out that the provision for the feeble-minded in America is on very economical lines. The capital outlay varies in the institutions they visited from £90 to £160 per head."

In spite of these enlightened methods, there still exist in America the same need for longer or permanent detention, the same conditions of isolation and block, as in England. But there is a more definite recognition of the fact that it is impossible by education, as ordinarily understood, to bring the feeble-minded to such a level of intelligence as would enable them to earn their living, and of the danger of allowing feeble-minded persons, more especially feeble-minded women of child-bearing age, to leave the shelter of institutional life. It is impossible in a limited space to go into details of the institutions which have been established or remodelled under the influence of these ideas, but it may be said that they frankly adopt almost wholly the manual and industrial method of education. The farm is prominent in most of them, and the colony system has been tried with great success. The most complete of these attempts

is that of the two joint institutions of Waverley and Templeton in Massachusetts.

The history of the Waverley School is instructive.

It is a most interesting institution, embodying in itself the whole history of American methods of dealing with the feeble-minded from its earliest beginnings in the training-school for the idiot to its latest development, the colony for the permanent custodial care and employment of defectives unfit for free life. Its superintendent is Dr. W. Fernald, who is not only one of the greatest authorities in the United States of America on the medical aspects of the care of mental defectives, but is an institution manager of great energy, enthusiasm, resource, and capacity.

The school was started in consequence of the feeling aroused by a commission appointed by the Governor of the State in 1846, from whose report we may extract these words:

"Common observation, the official report of the various town officers, and the research of commissioners appointed for the special purpose, all concur in showing that there is a large number of idiotic persons in the Commonwealth who live in a state of brutish ignorance, idleness, and degradation, and go down to the grave like brutes that perish, without a ray of religious, moral, or intellectual light; and experience has shown that, where such persons are taken at a proper age, they may be trained to habits of decency, industry, and sobriety, and lifted up from the slough of mere animal existence to the platform of humanity."

In 1851, when the school was incorporated, the joint committee of the legislature on public charitable institutions reported:

"Your committee have visited this school and been highly gratified by what they saw; the experiment seems to have succeeded entirely. The capacity of this unfortunate class for improvement seems to be proved beyond question."

During all this time the work was tentative. Four or five years later, in the report of 1855, it appears that the trustees, considering the limited means at their disposal, were of the opinion that only those should be admitted to the school whose age and condition gave chance for improvement. The school idea still prevailed. The nearer the child was to the child fitted for ordinary common school instruction the more welcome he was as an inmate.

The school increased in numbers to somewhat over 100 pupils (there were ninety on the average in 1879, and 108 on the average in 1880), who remained for some five or six or seven years, and then were returned to their homes. There was no custodial department.

During this time the school was a private corporation, receiving from the Commonwealth an annual appropriation, always upon the condition that it would support and train a stated number of idiotic persons designated by the Governor. The managers were economical and thrifty and made some money, but always dealt fairly by the State in return for her appropriations, supporting at the school from 30 to 50 per cent. more indigent inmates than they were required to do by the amount of appropriation.

About 1880 some of the more recently appointed or elected trustees began to agitate the subject of a custodial department. Whatever might be the merits of the school proper, they felt that there was urgent need in the community for an institution which should train the hopeless

idiot who had been rejected at their doors for thirty years as unimprovable. The early experiment had shown, as we have seen, that he could be vastly improved. The arguments of these new members found favour with those who had been on the board from the beginning of the school, and the result was that the custodial department was established, not by law, but by the trustees or corporation under their general power. Finally, in 1883, the custodial department was established by law; but by the same Act by which it was established the school department, so far as State cases were concerned, was pauperised, all State inmates being put upon the same footing, and the charges for the support of all cases, whether school or custodial, with the exception of private cases and cases from other States, were laid upon the inmates themselves, or, in case of poverty, upon the places of settlement, and, when the settlement was not known, upon the Commonwealth.

In 1887 and 1888 the State gave grants of £45,000 to be expended in the erection of new buildings on the estate of Waverley, and the site in South Boston which the school had heretofore occupied was sold; the Legislature then expressly recognising a responsibility for providing suitable education for all idiotic persons, either at its own expense or the expense of the place of settlement. Both the State and cities and towns paid 13s. a week for custodial cases; cases from other States were received at £60 a year, and private patients on the school's own terms.

By the Act of 1886 the trustees were directed to make an annual report to the State Board of Education of pretty much all matters that had been contained in their reports to the corporation and Legislature, and were also directed to submit their accounts for the support of inmates in the custodial department by the Commonwealth to the Board of Lunacy and Charity for approval. To the State Board of Lunacy and Charity was also given the power to transfer to the school from the State almshouse* and certain other institutions any inmate whose condition would be benefited by the said transfer, upon the certificate of a physician that he is a proper subject for the institution.

Thus, by this Act of 1886, for the first time some other person or board of officers than the corporation and the trustees of this school and the Governor was authorised to take steps for the care and custody of the feeble-minded in the Commonwealth.

In effect the State pays for the inmates who have no known settlement in the Commonwealth; the place of settlement or the persons legally liable to maintain pay in other cases.

"The education of the feeble-minded boy," said Dr. Fernald, "should be practical and should aim at fitting him for work. . . . In no case is the actual industrial work mixed with the experimental work. The girls go through a special educational school for cooking, laundry work, etc.; after going through these they are sent to do the actual work. The same applies to boys with regard to carpentry." Both are kept in school for some part of the day up to the age of eighteen. To do so longer "would ruin them for practical purposes." There are very few cases of the highest grade. As to the lower grade: Ninety per cent. of the idiots are expected to come out of their "school" or "cottage." "They mostly do physical work, but there is hardly a child who does not receive some instruction. Each attendant has a class in teaching children to wash their faces, to dress themselves, etc. . . . A very large proportion can 'go up,' if the training is done in early childhood. If they are

* The word "Almshouse" in America denotes "Workhouse."

properly developed they are capable of doing physical manual work." So on this scheme of training, out of doors in a field were young boys carrying stones, and older boys using pickaxes and breaking the earth, under one supervisor. A party of girls, low-grade cases, were carrying stones from one circular enclosure to another, for exercise and health and muscular instruction.

Many children were playing games and practising balance and exercises, under an expert teacher on the lawn; and about a dozen children were playing outside with a teacher, holding on to a rope. The teacher was beating a small drum. The children ran after balls, and the weak and paralytic were helped and encouraged to stand, and walk, and run.

At the time of the Commissioners' visit the school contained over 1,000 patients. The total maintenance expenses for 1904, including repairs and improvements, were $150,000, practically 14*s.* a week.

The Templeton Colony represents to some extent the results of the system in its application to life in a "colony" after the age of training.

The colonists, though all custodial cases, *i.e.*, idiots or marked imbeciles, are all required to do manual work, and many of them do nearly the full work of a free labourer. "We saw a group of four," the members of the Commission write,

with heavy sledges and hammers breaking rock, and drilling it for blasting with explosive; they were working steadily and without supervision. Further on was another group of five men working in a field. They were bringing in stooks of corn which they were loading upon a cart. Others in the shed were unloading and storing the corn. A further group was hauling bricks in wheelbarrows. At a little distance, there was a row of about a dozen who, under the supervision of one man only, were working a field with sharp pickaxes. An imbecile was ploughing with a pair of horses, his daily task. All of these men had come from Dr. Fernald's schools for the feeble-minded, and a large proportion of those who were busily and happily engaged in useful work could never be taught to read and write; some had not human speech. The previous training was of course essential: idiots and low-grade imbeciles could not be employed in this way without preliminary training.

All the cottages are built on essentially the same plan—solid brick foundations on cement with rough-cast walls and slate roof. Twenty pounds was paid to the architect for the original design after which all the buildings are modelled. The cost of building and furnishing a cottage is £2,000, although the cost of the group just erected, owing to rise in the material, was £2,400—£40 to £50 a head. The levelling, etc., is done by the inmates, as well as all carting, trenching, sewering, painting, and varnishing.

In each of the cottages there is a large sitting and dining room for the men. It is a pleasant apartment, with an immense open fireplace, and windows along three walls of the room. The impression given is that of a large substantial farmhouse. . . . There are two dormitories in each group, holding twenty-five beds each. . . . The attendance in one cottage consists of a man and his wife, four women, and a laundress. In another group, it consists of a man and his wife, two male assistants, and three women. In each group there are rooms for the attendants. Belonging to each group is a barn, the care of which falls entirely to the inmates. An immense woodshed, where the entire supply for the colony is kept, furnishes employment for many of the men, especially in winter. There is no doctor in the colony, but the local physician looks after the care of the inmates. There is telephonic communication with Waverley. It is seldom that medical aid is required, as long a period as six months having passed without an illness or mishap occurring.

The training schools at Waverley and their adjunct, the Templeton Colony, appear to embody the ideals of Dr. Fernald and the State Commissions at Massachusetts as a permanent provision for the training and employment of custodial cases, whether feeble-minded, epileptic, or even of certain types of insanity. . . . The ideal, and, of course, to a more limited extent, the practical realisation, made a most favourable impression on the Commissioners. It was a pleasure to see the happiness of the colonists, the humanity of their treatment, and the social utility of their employment in productive work, and with prospects of good economical results.

The Commissioners draw special attention to the account of the Newark State Custodial Home for Feeble-minded Women.

The object of this institution is to detain women of a child-bearing age, in order to prevent the propagation of persons of feeble mind with its attendant evils to the community. There are 600 inmates. About half were decidedly imbecile or idiotic, the other half being high-grade imbeciles, or young women whose defect was so slight that on casual observation it would not be evident. Twenty-five per cent. were women who had been brought before a magistrate on some charge, and without being convicted by him had been sent to the asylum as a proper place for their detention. A small percentage had been transferred to Newark from prison and detained there after the expiration of their sentences. This institution is one of the brightest and most comfortable, and, also, one of the most economical that the members visited. It is built on the detached cottage system, and the cost varied according to the different cottages, sinking as low as £50, and never rising much beyond £80 per bed. The weekly cost of maintenance per inmate was 9*s*. 6*d*.

THE NEED OF GUARDIANSHIP.

As we have seen, the evidence from all sources is strongly in favour of absolute segregation or detention of the right kind for a certain proportion of cases of mental defect. This evidence, the Commissioners say, "is very representative, and comes from the authorities of prisons, medical officers of special schools, superintendents of county asylums, members of county councils, Poor Law inspectors, medical experts on questions of insanity and disorder of the mind, and from men of general culture and large legal experience; and others, such as the managers of voluntary asylums and voluntary societies, support it." In short, the whole argument of the Report is an argument for the necessity of segregation in particular cases. It is not suggested that the children whose parents are able and willing to provide proper care and training should be dealt with by the methods indicated by the Commissioners: what they insist on is the duty of the State to provide for those members of the community who come under its care in the manner best adapted to their needs—to extend, in short, to the mentally defective the principles which have already been adopted in the treatment of the physically defective. No one who has read the evidence can fail to be struck by two facts—(1) that a large number of persons are living in a state of physical and moral misery because they are too heavily handicapped by their infirmities to be able to protect themselves, and (2) that the community suffers an incalculable amount of harm, not merely in expense, but far more in the physical deterioration of the race which results from the uncontrolled reproduction of the lowest types. Evidence enough has been quoted to show that the sufferings of these persons can be greatly mitigated and their lives even made happy, and to a certain limited extent useful, if they are placed in conditions where their physical needs can be attended to, where they can be under kind and steady discipline, and where they can be kept amused or employed according to their capacity. This fact is brought out in a

striking way by Dr. Potts, who undertook the investigations for the Commissioners at Stoke and Birmingham. He thinks that "the higher grade aments are sometimes not recognised by the prison authorities; they are apt to think a man who works well in prison must be normal. In prison, however, everything goes like clockwork, and there is strict supervision; the work is of a simple character, and under such circumstances many defectives will create a favourable impression, though outside they would not be able to 'compete on equal terms with their normal fellows' or 'manage themselves or their affairs with ordinary prudence.'" Now the arrangements in a prison are not, of course, made with any reference to the feeble-minded, but a statement like this affords a rather forcible illustration of the principle that control and discipline are the first requisites in dealing with them. All the evidence from the Homes tends in the same direction. Mrs. Ruspini, speaking of the feeble-minded girls in Penitentiaries, says that "the knowledge that they were compelled to remain would cause them to settle down and calm their wayward, restless tempers." At the Newark State Asylum, U.S.A. (see p. 65), the Commissioners were struck by the apparent happiness of the women and their contentment with their lot: the grounds are entirely open, yet there have been practically no attempts to escape. Throughout the evidence, too, we find incidental references which show how the need of provision is felt: all the institutions "have a long waiting list"; parents ask anxiously what is to become of their defective children after they are gone; households are impoverished because the mother must stay at home to look after her imbecile child; complaints are made that the guardians are reluctant to undertake the charge of these children; respectable, hard-working people have to choose between pauperism and inadequate care of the child; a very large proportion of the feeble-minded women drift into the workhouses between the ages of forty and fifty. It is unnecessary to dwell further on the amount of preventable suffering and crime which the evidence heard by the Commissioners has brought to light.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

THE Commissioners thus explain the principles on which they base their suggested solution of the problem.

(1) That persons who cannot take a part in the struggle of life owing to mental defect, whether they are described as lunatics or persons of unsound mind, idiots, imbeciles, feeble-minded or otherwise, should be afforded by the State such special protection as may be suited to their needs.

(2) That the mental condition of these persons, and neither their poverty nor their crime, is the real ground of their claim for help from the State; and that their aid and supervision should be undertaken by some powerful local authority who can ensure that they will receive it from other quarters, or, failing this, will provide it themselves.

(3) That, if the mentally defective are to be properly considered and protected as such, it is necessary to ascertain who they are and where they are, and to bring them into relation with the local authority.

(4) That the protection of the mentally defective person should be continued so long as it is necessary for his good, not only in his interest, but also in the interest of the community.

(5) In order to supervise local administration of this nature a central authority is indispensable.

(6) That the protection of property now afforded to lunatics, idiots and mentally infirm persons should be extended to all mentally defective persons.

(7) It is essential that there should be the closest co-operation between judicial and administrative authorities, in this case the Chancery Division of the High Court and the central authority.

With these ends in view, then, the Commissioners have drawn up a scheme, contained in ninety-six recommendations, of which the following are the most important:

The Central Authority.

They recommend the creation of a central authority, to be called the "Board of Control." This Board would consist of the present Lunacy Commission enlarged and strengthened. Some of the members would be medical men with expert knowledge of the subject, and some barristers qualified to deal with the questions likely to arise. At least one woman would be a member of the Board.

There would also be honorary Commissioners specially qualified to assist the Board; and there would be a paid Chairman. England and Wales would be divided into districts, and there would be at least eight Assistant District Commissioners.

The Local Authority.

The local authority would be the Council of each County and County Borough, acting through a Statutory Committee, one of whom at least would be a woman; and it would take over the duties of the Asylums Visiting Committee and of the Education Committee so far as the mentally defective are concerned.

Guardianship.

Under the head of Guardianship the Commissioners recommend that in cases not under suitable parental or other control the Committee may undertake the guardianship of a child up to twenty-one; the Committee shall then report to the Board of Control, who shall decide what further steps shall be taken.

In the case of mentally defective children who are suitably provided for, but liable by the loss of a parent or other change in circumstances to need the help of the Committee, it is recommended that the Committee should make a voluntary arrangement with the parent for the appointment of a friendly visitor who should keep in touch with the family so that the child would not be lost sight of.

Certification.

They also suggest a simpler system of certification, by which mentally defective persons (not lunatics) may be placed in suitable institutions upon the certificate in writing of a qualified medical practitioner without the intervention of a judicial authority.

Procedure in regard to Mentally Defective Persons.

The Local Committee is to ascertain as far as possible the number of mentally defective persons for whom provision is to be made, and it is to be a statutory duty of all public authorities, such as the Medical Officers of the Local Education Authorities, of the Guardians of the Poor, and of the Public Health Committees, the Medical Officers of Convict and Local Prisons and others to notify to the Committee all cases of mental defect coming to their knowledge. Medical officers in charge of institutions are to be required to report as to recurrent cases, as well as all discharges, admissions and transfers.

Education.

With regard to Education, the Commissioners recommend that the portions of the Defective and Epileptic Children Act which relate to mentally defective children should be repealed, and that it should be made a statutory duty of the Committee for the Care of the Mentally Defective to provide manual, industrial and other training for mentally defective children of *all* grades. The local Education Authority would be required to notify to this Committee any children thought to be mentally defective, who would then be examined by the medical officer and reported on by him to the Committee, and, if necessary, kept under observation in special schools in order to ascertain whether they should be returned to the normal schools, kept in the special schools, or sent to boarding institutions. The Committee would be empowered to take over all the special schools or classes

from the Education Authority, or to contract with that authority to train the children; such schools would then be taken out of the hands of the Board of Education, and would be under the supervision and inspection of the Board of Control. The Committee would also have power to compel parents to send their mentally defective children to any school or institution which the Committee considered best suited to their needs, whether a day-school or a residential institution.

Criminals.

The Commissioners suggest that mentally defective persons accused or convicted of crime should be handed over by the Court to the Committee and kept by them in any suitable institution.

Inebriates.

Habitual inebriates who are also mentally defective are to be under the control of the new authority.

Disabilities.

No one is to be deprived of the franchise or any other rights because his child is under the care of the Board.

In a preamble to the recommendations the Commissioners are careful to point out that:—

It is not intended that the maintenance at public expense of the mentally defective, or of epileptics not mentally defective, should be extended to those who, either at their own cost or at that of their relatives or friends, can be otherwise suitably and sufficiently provided for.

It is not intended to interfere in any way with the authority or powers of the Secretary of State for the Home Department as laid down in the Lunacy Act of 1890.

The powers of the Lord Chancellor are to remain intact, except that:

(i) The jurisdiction of the Judge and Masters in Lunacy is to be transferred to the Chancery Division.

(ii) The duties of the Lord Chancellor's Visitors will be undertaken by the members of the proposed Board.

All the existing powers of the Lord Chancellor or the Secretary of State, with the reservations mentioned above, are preserved and extended to all classes of mentally defective persons.

The three methods of oversight, certification, and detention are recommended as available for the mentally defective; they will be applied subject to statutory safeguards and at the advised discretion of a responsible committee. According to the different classes, for some oversight will suffice, for others certification, and for others certification with an order for detention. The aim of the scheme is the application of particular methods suitable for the cases of different persons, not the general adoption of any one method exclusively.

COST OF THE SCHEME.

The Commissioners go very fully into the question of finance and have prepared tables showing the probable actual cost of providing for all the mentally deficient who would come under the new authority.

It will be remembered that they arranged at the outset for an investigation of certain typical districts with a view to ascertaining the approximate number of mentally defective. On the figures thus obtained, and reducing the question to the estimated charges for persons "needing provision"*—the urgent cases—in England and Wales, they estimate the

* The expression "needing provision" is explained as referring to "persons at the present time urgently in need of provision, either (1) in their own interest; or (2) for the public safety"; that is, "such cases as were, in the opinion of the investigator, improperly, unsuitably, or unkindly cared for; or who, by reason of particular habits and characteristics, are a source of danger to the community in which they live."

annual cost at £1,175,802, an increase over the present annual cost of £541,492. But, as they say,

> it does not follow that the whole of this amount will have to be borne by the public. Some part will doubtless be furnished by relatives of the persons provided for, as is the case at present with lunatics and inmates of reformatories and industrial schools; and, further, we anticipate that the establishment of a new class of institution on simpler and more economic lines and the adoption of new methods of care and maintenance, will result in a considerable diminution of the expenses now incurred in respect of the treatment of persons of unsound mind.

Lastly, there are the charges for the Board of Control. The present yearly charges are:

	£
Lunacy Commissioners	14,752
Masters in Lunacy and Visitors in Lunacy ...	19,805
	34,557

It is not thought that this sum need be exceeded, in spite of the appointment of the additional officers.

The Commissioners draw attention to the fact that the changes they propose are largely changes of reorganisation and that the new charges involved will be neither numerous nor large. They urge that the auditing of accounts should be conducted with great strictness, and uniformity of cost aimed at as far as possible. They dwell on the necessity of enforcing payment from relatives—a point which was also insisted on by many of the managers of the voluntary homes in the course of their evidence—and they allude to the simplicity of many of the American institutions where strikingly good results are obtained. They think it right to say that

> the impression left on our minds by the evidence is that in many instances the scale of expenditure has been too large; that there has been a general disregard for small economies and careful spending; that little thought has been given to what, after all, must be a chief factor in any provision made by the State, namely, the social status and normal requirements of the patients; and finally, that there has been no recognition of any definite and accepted standard of expenditure to which authorities should be required to adhere, and for non-adherence to which they should be obliged to give cogent and satisfactory reasons. In many instances, the establishment of an institution for the care of the

mentally defective should not entail an expenditure of more than £100 a bed, site and drainage included. Under certain conditions it should be much less. For asylum accommodation for patients who require active treatment it should not exceed £200 or £220 a bed.

The methods by which the Commissioners propose to provide the necessary funds to carry out their recommendations may be thus briefly summarised:—

(1) That the transfers and payments now made by County and County Borough Councils out of the Exchequer contribution (the 4*s*. grant) shall be discontinued.

(2) That the total cost of maintenance, care, treatment, education, training and control of mentally defective persons and of the provision of suitable accommodation for them shall be borne by the County and County Borough Councils aided by new grants from the Exchequer.

(3) That substantial financial assistance be granted from the Exchequer to a Council of the County or County Borough for the care and maintenance of mentally defective persons and epileptics, and that this assistance be granted either:—

(i.) As an annual block grant according to the proportion of the local expenditure to an approved standard of expenditure and to the assessable value per head of the population of the district; or

(ii.) As a grant based on the number of mentally defective persons and epileptics for whom provision is made beyond the numbers provided for on the 1st January, 1908, and equal to one-half of the cost of such additional numbers.

(4) Such grants to be payable subject to the certificate of the Board of Control that the local authority has provided satisfactorily for the mentally defective.

(5) That in addition to the above grant there be provided from the Exchequer annually for a term of years a grant in aid for the provision of necessary accommodation in the manner and in the locality advised by the Board of Control.

The Commissioners explain that the 4*s*. grant hitherto paid to the guardians and other authorities for lunatics has led to unnecessary extravagance, since it has been found

that it is by no means uncommon for paupers to be sent to asylums merely because they are troublesome, though not actually needing asylum treatment.

METHODS OF PROVISION SUGGESTED.

Four methods of providing for chronic and harmless patients otherwise than in asylums are discussed in the report :—

(1) To build separate "intermediate" or "workhouse" hospitals, or to build separate and cheaper buildings on the site of existing asylums; (2) to settle suitable patients in family colonies, in cottages or small buildings in connection with some central organisation formed for the care of mentally defective persons; (3) to board them out; (4) to place them in large farm colonies.

Intermediate Hospitals.

Cheaper buildings or simple, inexpensive Homes might be erected in association with asylums for chronic patients, on the understanding that such buildings shall be retained solely for the use of this class of patient.

Family Colonies.

This method has been described on pp. 58—60, as it is carried out at Gheel, at Jerichow, and at Dun-sur-Auron.

Boarding Out.

The boarding-out system, which is extensively and successfully practised in Scotland, might be adopted in suitable localities, but only under altogether new conditions, supported by the local committees for the care of mentally defective persons, supervised and actively supported by the Board of Control, and altogether dissociated from the Poor Law and pauperism.

Farm Colonies.

The idea of farm colonies is practically a new one in England. The Commissioners speak with approval of the American system of farm colonies for the feeble-minded, especially of the Templeton Colony in Massachusetts (see p. 64), and they believe that the establishment of one such colony in England as an experiment would be of the greatest service, both directly and indirectly. They make several practical suggestions founded on the experience gained in the institutions for inebriates, especially that at East Harling, Norfolk, which the inspector under the Inebriates Act describes, in his report for 1905, as "a marvel of cheapness, but cheapness which does not particularly obtrude itself. It is sufficiently well-built, dry, well-lighted, well-ventilated, and can easily be kept clean by scrubbing, paint and whitewash. A great contrast to the finely-finished asylums and public buildings of to-day, yet it serves its purpose excellently, is in every sense efficient, and is quite good enough for the persons who need to be detained therein. Few of them, in fact, have ever lived in such comfortable quarters."

After carefully considering the figures furnished by several of these institutions the Commissioners conclude that "for some classes of the mentally defective colonies well suited for the purpose may be provided at a very reasonable cost; that the cost per bed should not exceed approximately £100 to £120, including site, roads, sewers, water, lighting, buildings, furniture and fittings; and that the cost of maintenance (inclusive of everything except central office expenses, rent or interest, and sinking fund) should not exceed from 8*s*. to 9*s*. per week."

Much has been said of the probable expense of a comprehensive scheme of providing for the mentally defective, but the wastefulness of the present system is obvious. Dr. Beach said it was noticed that as soon as the children were admitted to Darenth many of the parents came off the rates because the

mother could go out to work, not being kept at home as before to look after her child. Dr. Griffiths, Deputy Medical Officer and Deputy Governor of H.M. Prison, Holloway, said: "A special institution for the feeble-minded would probably, under careful management, contribute a fair amount towards its own support, whilst the indirect gain to the general public would be great. At present feeble-minded criminals practically live at the cost of the taxpayer, their families are often thrown on the rates, and in addition there are the police and law costs involved in their frequent convictions, while the work they do during short sentences in prison cannot go far towards their maintenance." In short, it is clear that the country does now pay heavily, in many ways as to which it is impossible to make any calculation, without getting any return; whereas under a system by which these degenerates could be controlled, even if it turns out to be more costly at first, the country will at least receive value for its money, and the saving of expense in the future must be very great. If we compare, for instance, the career typified by the case with 105 previous convictions given by Dr. Smalley (p. 11) with that of a boy brought up and permanently maintained in the Darenth colony, it might be found that the actual balance was in favour of the latter, and we must take into account also the probability of the other leaving behind him an enfeebled and criminal progeny to be an indefinite burden on the community.

Sir Edward Fry thus sums up the matter:

Everyone knows that a large number of the mothers of illegitimate children are of weak intellect that their issue are frequently of the same type; that a large number of the habitual inmates of workhouses are of the same low standard of mind; that much of the petty crime of the country is committed by persons below the average in intellectual power.

One of the Poor Law inspectors saw, in a workhouse in Somerset, an imbecile woman with an illegitimate imbecile daughter, who had her own illegitimate daughter in her arms. Precisely the same picture has been seen in the county of Cornwall, and these are but pictures in small of a fact which is to be seen in very many of our workhouses.

But the ranks of the insane, as well as of the imbecile, are recruited from the children of the feeble-minded. The fearful increase of late years of insanity in this country has necessarily created alarm, and I cannot but believe that one of the sources of this fact is to be found in the imbecility of the parents.

Sir James Crichton Browne entirely agrees in this view. He has written to me to the effect that a terrible increase of insanity is going on, and that it is undoubtedly not merely due to increased diligence or improved diagnosis, but in some measure to the cause named, viz., propagation by the weak-minded, and "I am confident," he adds, "that permanent provision for imbeciles of both sexes, but especially girls, however costly it might be in the first instance, would ultimately result in saving of the rates."

In a word, imbecility, insanity, bastardy, and crime are now paid for by the ratepayer, and any method of diminishing these at a reasonable cost must be to his benefit.

In the ruder state of society which has passed away little heed was taken of these unfortunate children, and many of them, no doubt, died comparatively early in the struggle for existence. But we have learned to think more tenderly of the inferior members of our race, and we seek to protect them from the calamities and sufferings to which they are naturally exposed, and to preserve their lives to the utmost. But in so doing, and so doing rightly, we incur, it appears to me, another responsibility, namely, that of preventing, so far as we reasonably can, the perpetuation of a low type of humanity, for otherwise the beneficence of one generation becomes the burthen and the injury of all succeeding ones. The past increase in the number of lunatics in the country, to which I have already alluded, demands our most serious consideration of every means which can legitimately be used to protect the race from physical and mental degeneration, and I regard the segregation of imbeciles, first in childhood and youth, and subsequently throughout life, as the one of such means which is most clearly open to us.

SEGREGATION

By FRANCIS GALTON, F.R.S.

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SEGREGATION

By FRANCIS GALTON, F.R.S., D.C.L., Oxf.,
Hon. Sc.D., Camb.

THE Royal Commission on the Feeble-Minded have attacked a Eugenic problem of the first order of magnitude with thoroughness and remarkable success. A great deal of the evidence before them emphasizes the view that the annual output of mentally defective children admits of being largely diminished in future generations, and that feeble-minded persons may be more kindly treated and better protected than now, at apparently an inconsiderable increase of total cost to the community. They propose to do this by means of the continuous control of the mentally defective and the segregation of a large number of them in labour colonies and the like, to which only a false philanthropy can object, when the conditions are fully known. Every high form of civilisation brings evils in its train, eating like cancer into the constitution of the people, and surely leading to their gradual deterioration and ultimate ruin, unless they are boldly withstood in good time. The propagation of mental deficiency is one of these evils and the report shows that it is now ripe to be dealt with.

One person in every 118 of our population is mentally defective, being either mad, idiotic, or feeble-minded. There are little short of a quarter of a million of these unfortunate persons in England and Wales alone. Nearly one-half of them are in asylums.

The Royal Commissioners calculate that of the remainder more than 66,000 are merely feeble-minded, and are unprovided for; also that these are precisely the most dangerous class of all when considered from what I should describe as a Eugenic point of view.

The persons in question are naturally incapable of standing alone. If protected and supervised they may lead harmless, and even useful, lives and do something towards earning their living. But when unprotected and cast upon the world, they go to the bad. They do so, not necessarily through vicious propensities, but from the absence of will-power to resist temptations; and quickly sink into the pauper and criminal classes. The women commonly become prostitutes. The feeble-minded, as distinguished from the idiots, are an exceptionally fecund class, mostly of illegitimate children, and a terrible proportion of their offspring are born mentally deficient. A decorous family life among their children is obviously impossible; the conditions of their nurture prevent it. Some of the issue of the feeble-minded are wholly mad or imbecile and find their way to asylums; others are merely feeble-minded and drift into bad ways as their parents did before them; in others, again, the evil is latent, but may break out in a subsequent generation. So the mischief goes on increasingly, and, judging from the growth of insanity, a considerable part of the population has already become bearers of germs of degeneracy.

The report contains abundant and painful evidence of all this; voluminous extracts from it might be made; I give here only three, which have been taken more or less at random and in which I have slightly

altered a word or stop here and there to make them read more fluently.

Vol. I., p. 538.—"Mental deficiency is by its nature and definition a permanent and incurable condition. Once having come upon the State for support and protection, the presumption should be that the individual continues to require its help and control; that he or she is not in a position to rear a family or to contract a marriage; and that the *onus* of proving that he or she no longer requires support and control should be thrown on the individual or his relatives."

Vol. I., p. 108. "Whatever improvement may result, the expense and trouble are thrown away if the child, later, is thrown out into the world, without being able to protect and take care of itself. Protection, shelter, and care must, as a rule, be life-long and permanent. . . . It is to the interest of the girls themselves, who would seem in general to be quite happy in such institutions, and who do not, as a rule, attempt to leave them."

Vol. I., p. 637.—*Question* 11017: "You say there should be institutions for those whom you discharge?" *Answer:* "Yes, certainly, they ought not to go into the world, any of them, never mind how competent they are to work."

Almost all the evidence printed in the report points unmistakably to segregation for life as the only means of preventing feeble-minded girls from doing great harm to the community. They propagate children freely, as already mentioned, who, whether they be as little, less, or more, mentally endowed than themselves, are in all cases subject to most undesirable conditions of nurture.

The questions then arise whether segregation can be accomplished without cruelty to the subjects of it and without prohibitory expense. The reply, so far as it goes, to the first of these questions is strongly affirmative. Not a few institutions, as labour colonies and others, exist here, in Germany, and elsewhere, but especially in America, where feeble-minded persons are taken in, where they live happily and feel as if at home, and where they remain for many years. Unfortunately, as yet, no power exists for their compulsory detention. The inmates are taken out, it may be, by their not wise relatives, or they want a change and leave of their own accord. Anyhow, when they quit the shelter of the institution, they usually go to the bad, and after a time very often apply to be taken in again, with an actual or a forthcoming illegitimate baby.

Feeble-mindedness is of many grades. In a large institution, the inmates, whether men or women, can be graded and be much more easily supervised than in small ones, and be occupied in work, greatly to their own happiness, or in play, according to their several capacities. As regards cost of maintenance, some few of the feeble-minded may wholly or nearly pay for their keep by their work; almost all of them can do something towards the expenses. The cost of maintenance per head, all included, does not necessarily exceed £25 a year. What the average cost of each uncared-for, feeble-minded person may now be can only be guessed, but in workhouse and prison maintenance, in thefts, destruction and food, it may be safely reckoned to far exceed that sum.

The general upshot of the Report of the Royal Commission is that a Central Department should be

created, with authority to deal with all persons who are so mentally defective as to be unable to manage their own affairs, or who are a source of danger to others. At present these persons fall under many different and overlapping authorities, while the feeble-minded are, for the most part, under no definite authority at all. As to the details of the scheme, it is hopeless to attempt to describe them intelligibly in a few lines, the existing conditions and the proposed reforms of them being far too complex and interdependent to admit of a brief summary. But all these details appear to have been thought out with thoroughness and elaboration by an exceptionally competent body of men, after a prolonged inquiry and the examination of a multitude of witnesses. Their proposals, though, here and there drastic, are always considerate towards the feelings of the unhappy persons to whom they refer, and to those of their relatives. It can hardly, then, be doubted that this remarkable Report will be examined with minute care by the officials of the departments concerned, and that in its present, or, it may be, in a somewhat amended form, the action it advocates will ultimately gain a Eugenic victory over evils that have long lain unnoticed, but are now shown to be a very serious and growing danger to our national efficiency.

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM

By the REV. W. R. INGE, D.D.

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM

By the Rev. W. R. INGE, M.A., D.D., Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Cambridge.

The Report of the Royal Commission on the care and control of the feeble-minded affords an excellent test case for a question of great national importance. What should be the attitude of organised religion towards attempts to arrest, by preventive legislation, the increase of citizens who are fatally handicapped by congenital defects? The question is important, because organised religion is a great force in this country; it is a good test case, because the class of persons whom it is proposed to place under restraint for their own and their country's good are plainly unfit either to take care of themselves or to incur the responsibilities of parentage. If the recommendations of this Report are opposed on religious grounds, the opinion will be strengthened that "the Churches" are definitely hostile to all schemes for improving the race, or preventing its deterioration, by means of legislation.

When a subject of this kind is raised in the presence of religious persons, we are more often than not met with an expression of distaste. Either the whole subject of race-improvement is shunned as indelicate, or we are told that we have no right to interfere with the inalienable right of every human being to choose

a mate and have children, or it is said that bodily and mental afflictions are sent by God to be endured by the sufferer and relieved by the charity of the faithful.

It is easy to find answers to these objections, but not at all easy to convince the objector. The truth is that underneath these very poor arguments there is a deep-rooted instinct against any interference, on utilitarian grounds, with marriage and births. It is feared that the same principles which would deny to the half-witted man or woman the right of parentage, might logically be made to cover other regulations and practices which are repugnant to the religious mind. If the business of marriage and procreation is deprived of the peculiar sacredness which protects it against biological experiments, would there not soon be a new standard of right and wrong in matters of sexual morality, which would differ widely from that which is inculcated by Christian tradition and endorsed by the Christian consciousness ?

It is this fear, I believe, which makes so many religious persons backward in supporting such proposals as we now have before us. The apprehension, as concerning eugenic theories generally, does not seem to me altogether groundless, though I believe that it is strengthened by various prejudices which do not deserve much respect. It is true that human nature has wrapped this function and all that pertains to it in a protecting veil of shamefacedness ; and that there is always moral risk in intruding rashly into the *postscænia vitæ*. But if we confine ourselves to our present subject—the Report on the feeble-minded—I do not think that there is anything in the recommendations of the Commissioners which ought to alarm anybody,

and it is possible to urge several considerations in its favour which should appeal strongly to the religious mind.

1. The Report shows that the most cruel wrong is habitually done to feeble-minded girls whenever they are allowed their liberty. The rate of illegitimate births would be appreciably reduced if the seduction of the half-witted were made impossible, and if males equally deficient in moral sense were placed under restraint. The numerous children who are born of these unions are shown by the Report to be frequently imbecile or otherwise defective, and the circumstances of their birth generally forbid the defects of nature to be counteracted by nurture. The usual destiny of such children is to swell the ranks of professional vice and crime.

2. The sacrament of marriage is profaned when it is undertaken by persons who are *non compotes mentis*. The vows which married people pledge themselves to keep cannot, without farcical absurdity, be administered to a couple of which one or both parties are imbecile or mentally diseased.

3. It is by no means uncommon for a high-minded man or woman to abstain from marriage on account of some hereditary taint, and such conduct is universally commended. Can there be anything morally objectionable in prescribing the same abstention for those who are too deficient morally to choose it for themselves?

4. The alleged "interference with individual liberty" can only be condemned by adherents of an obsolete political school. Christianity is emphatic in proclaiming the organic unity and mutual responsibility of all members of a community.

5. The laws of heredity are divine laws, and if we are allowed to know them, it is in order that we may use them. There is no analogy between such proposals as this and attempts to outwit or play tricks upon Nature. Religious people are apt to be very much confused about "Nature," denouncing her where she ought to be trusted, and appealing to her where she has no answer to give. Nature the inhuman goddess and Nature the infallible guide are alike abstractions of their own inventing. Science knows nothing of a "Nature" which excludes man, even man at his best and wisest. A man plays tricks with nature (we will drop the capital letter) when he allows the ape or tiger in him to overcome the man; he acts in accordance with nature when he directs her forces to the highest ends, the increase of goodness, happiness, and beauty in the world. If Bacon was right in saying that nature is only conquered by obeying her, it is equally true to say that she is only obeyed by conquering her. Persons who are mentally defective are not in a natural state (though in vulgar parlance they are sometimes called "naturals"). We have a right to treat them like children, supplying by gentle compulsion the lack of moral and rational will-power which constitutes their infirmity.

6. Lastly, it is the spirit of philanthropy, not any particular forms of it, which is prescribed in the Gospel. It would be absurd to meet a modern enemy with bows and arrows because our medieval ancestors won victories with those weapons. We need not have the slightest fear (unfortunately) that our efforts will be so successful as to leave no troubles for our successors to relieve. I remember an educationist who

opined that it was wise to leave a few temptations in the way of boys. "The devil will do that without your help," was the appropriate rejoinder of his chief. We are morally responsible for any evils which we allow to continue when we might remove them; and it would be a disaster if Christian philanthropists, who ought to be in full sympathy with such efforts, were to obstruct instead of assisting reforms for which an overwhelming case has been made out.

THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM

By A. C. PIGOU, M.A.

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By A. C. PIGOU, M.A.

Professor of Political Economy, University of Cambridge.

The title which, for want of a better, is placed at the head of this paper does not indicate exactly the gist of what I wish to say. The problem upon which the Royal Commission on the Feeble-Minded has reported is not one that can easily be divided into compartments. It has not a biological aspect and an economic aspect sharply distinguishable for separate discussion. The two aspects are so closely interconnected that it is impossible to touch upon one without incidentally touching upon the other also. I shall not, therefore, try to discuss *the economic aspect of this problem* in isolation, but shall write a little about the problem in general *from the standpoint of an economist.*

The problem in its broad outlines is a simple one. In settling details of administration and deciding upon the individual treatment proper to particular cases there are, no doubt, great practical difficulties. As regards the general policy, however, which the community ought to set before itself, and in the light of which detailed arrangements should be judged, there is no difficulty at all. The situation with which we are confronted can be described very briefly. There are a number of persons—some half per cent. of the total population—who, not being certified lunatics, are in a greater or less degree mentally defective. For

these persons the "good life," however we may interpret that ideal, is precluded. They have entered maimed and blind of soul into the world, and they pass in affliction through it. In their passage they are a danger to their fellows; they are often criminal and inebriate. When they have passed, they leave behind them children similar to themselves, who hand on again to yet other generations the smouldering fire of a degraded life. These persons move among us in the cities and the villages. What is the duty of the State?

Among primitive peoples, struggling for a bare livelihood against adverse and untamed forces of Nature, there was little scope for generosity towards the incapable and the feeble. The tribes were poor; they could not, in a strict and literal sense, *afford* to bear the burden of comrades unable to support themselves. The case is different with us. Through scientific discoveries and mechanical inventions Nature has been harnessed to the chariot of man. As a community we are no longer poor, but rich; we *can* afford to support the unfortunate who have fallen by the way. A nation with an income of two thousand million sterling a year cannot refuse on the ground of finance the half-million which the Royal Commission demand for the mentally defective. If we were simply asked to give the money to make the lives of this unfortunate class a little better than they are, the claim upon our national generosity would be irresistible. Nor could it be answered, as it can be in the case, say, of gifts to unemployed workmen, "There is a danger that your gift will tempt men out of industry, and so itself create the very poverty that it relieves." Men may make

themselves unemployed to win charity on easy terms, but they cannot make themselves imbecile or idiotic. There is all the difference in the world between gifts to a *class* of persons whose limits are determined by Nature, and gifts to a *group* of persons whom voluntary action may increase in number. The feeble-minded are a *class* and not a *group*. The Poor Law "principles of 1834" do not apply to them.

What has been said is, to my mind, sufficient by itself to justify a large expenditure in the interests of mentally defective persons. It constitutes, however, only a small part of the things that *may* be said. Of these the first, but not the most important, is that the expenditure asked for, though it is all new expenditure along a particular route, is not all a net *addition* to expenditure. The feeble-minded, as things are, constitute a heavy indirect charge on the community. As beggars and as criminals it may be that they render their fellow-countrymen poorer by not less than the half-million which the Commissioners desire to devote systematically to their treatment. Under the proposed scheme the money allocated to this object would, without doubt, be partly, and would conceivably be altogether, a substitute for money that, in a haphazard, chaotic, and concealed way, is allocated to it already.

There is a second point. The money that the Commissioners require for improving the treatment of the feeble-minded would not be merely *a gift to them*. It would also be an *investment*, calculated to yield a return to the community just as real and tangible as is yielded by investment in buildings or machinery. The return to this investment is two-fold, partly

direct and partly indirect. The direct return—which will probably be small—arises in this wise. Careful treatment, guardianship and control of feeble-minded persons renders them more efficient workers than they would otherwise be, and so brings it about that they can make a larger contribution of service in return for their maintenance. Investment for this sort of return is merely an extension, towards which special schools and special classes are already showing the way, of the investment that the nation has long made in the elementary education of its normal children. The indirect return is incomparably more important, and really dominates the whole issue. The Royal Commissioners are not concerned merely, nor even mainly, to brighten the lives and heighten the industrial efficiency of the unfortunate people whose condition they have had under review. The fundamental point in their scheme is *prevention*. It is certain that mental defect is in many cases heritable. While, therefore, every attention and kindness should be accorded to the feeble-minded persons who are now alive, these persons must, so far as possible, be prevented from giving rise to a race of similar persons in the future. It is on this side that the investment proposed offers its largest and most important yield. By means of a little money spent now in segregating the mentally defective, it is possible to cut off at the source what would otherwise become a permanent stream of imbecile and idiotic persons, almost certain to fall into pauperism or crime, and to constitute a continuous and increasing charge upon the community. From the standpoint of national finance, there is here a splendid opportunity.

But—and this is my last point—it is not from the standpoint of finance that a question of this kind ought properly to be approached. We are trustees for the inherent quality as well as for the material welfare of future generations. A cause that makes strongly towards race deterioration is operating and is known. It is in our power, with but little severity to any living person, to remove that cause. Those parents whose children it may be necessary to withdraw from their care may, indeed, suffer pain. This is a real evil, but it is temporary, and, in comparison with the enduring good that must result to the race, it is small. In this matter, ignorant as we still are, there is knowledge enough to warrant action of a definite kind. The general policy that ought to be pursued is beyond dispute. The time has arrived for legislation.

CAN THE FEEBLE-MINDED BE MADE HAPPY IN CONFINEMENT?

THE EXPERIMENT AT SANDLEBRIDGE

By MISS MARY DENDY

CAN THE FEEBLE-MINDED BE MADE HAPPY IN CONFINEMENT? THE EXPERIMENT AT SANDLEBRIDGE.

By MISS MARY DENDY, Hon. Secretary of the Lancashire and Cheshire Association for the Permanent Care of the Feeble-Minded.

Those who are acquainted with the subject are generally agreed that permanent detention is necessary in many cases in the interests of the feeble-minded themselves; but it is of the greatest importance that such detention should be of the right kind. If persons who are not criminals are detained partly in the interests of society, it is the duty of society to see that they are made happy.

Fortunately the feeble-minded are much more easily made happy than sane persons. Most people's happiness depends on the fulfilment of their own aims and ideals. One reason why the children of to-day are so much happier than those of thirty years ago is that it is much more common to recognise the right of a child to expand without undue repression. But, though no normal man or woman could live a happy life in the restricted conditions which ought to be provided for the weak in intellect, it is perfectly easy to make the great majority of the weak-minded happy without ever letting them see anything of the outside world. It is indeed essential to their happiness that they should be so secluded; there is probably no more miserable being

on earth than the weak-minded person who is at large. Even in a good home he is not happy, because it is impossible for him to be unaware of the difference between himself and others. We have under our care at Sandlebridge a girl whose parents are in good circumstances and have always done all that could be done for her, but they could not make her happy. She is the only member of the family who is afflicted in this way, and is quite aware that she is not like her sisters. Here we have found the way to make her quite contented. We call her an attendant, and she fully believes that she is doing something towards earning her living. She is a fine, well-grown girl, amiable and fond of little children. She still goes to school for half the day for the sake of the discipline, but, though she is as closely guarded as all our other children, she thinks that she takes care of the little ones both in and out of school.

So with a boy who is one of our paying patients. He is an only child ; he could not be sent to school ; he was of the restless type, never happy except when occupied, longing to be out of doors all day long. In the house his mother had to devote herself to him almost entirely ; he is in no way unamiable, but the difficulty of keeping him safe and well and happy was very great. He has now been with us about nine months ; he has greatly improved in physique, and his face shows how happy he is. The routine of the schoolroom and the play out of doors shared with other boys are doing wonders for him.

I put these cases first because these children come from homes in which no moral or physical harm would ever have been allowed to come near them, but, set

apart as they were from all normal intercourse with their fellows, their loneliness was extreme. All the feeble-minded suffer more or less from this isolation, and in cases where protection is an impossibility because of the poverty of the parents, their suffering is increased by the fact that very few uneducated people have common kindness for the weak in mind. Children in particular, though generally very tender and kind to the blind and crippled, whose trouble they can apprehend, are frequently quite brutal in their behaviour to the weak-minded. They are quick, too, to discover the defect. It is a common thing to find that the children of a day-school have given an offensive nickname to the child who is later brought to the doctor for admission to a Special School. As these children grow older, other and more terrible factors increase their unhappiness. They are early made the tools of wicked men or women who use them for their own purposes. One rarely sees a weak-minded boy or girl at large after adolescence who has the least appearance of happiness, and their ultimate condition is too often one of absolute degradation. If any one doubts this, let him go to a workhouse and see the imbeciles; especially the adult imbecile men out of doors.

It is their acquiescence in whatever befalls them that makes it possible to give them happiness in a secluded life. When we began our work at Sandlebridge, we went on the assumption that in the feeble mind there are no ideas except such as are put there. It has been abundantly proved that we were justified in that assumption. At the time when my evidence was given to the Royal Commission, about five years ago, it might justly be said that our scheme was still in the

experimental stage. We had then only about fifty children at our schools; none of them were over sixteen years of age, and it was generally doubted whether we should be able to manage the boys and girls as they grew up. Now several of our lads are nearly twenty; several of our girls are between eighteen and nineteen; and thirteen boys and seventeen girls are over sixteen. Twenty boys and about as many girls are at work, Dr. Eichholz, the Inspector, giving us a free hand about keeping them in the schoolroom or sending them to work. We have in all 188 boys and girls, divided among the different houses according to their age and sex.

No one who has once seen these children doubts that it is possible to keep them happy shut off from the world. It is essential in the first place not to let them realise that they are in confinement and under supervision. Taken in, as they are, always under the age of thirteen and often very much younger, they grow up to conditions which might have been irksome to them if they had been placed here later. At the same time it must be remembered that detention would be both easier and pleasanter if it were legally compulsory. Fewer precautions would be necessary if it could be assumed that the conditions were permanent. It would be possible to admit the children at a later age into such colonies as Sandlebridge; importunate relatives could not try to unsettle them when they came to the wage-earning age; and the mere fact that they had no choice would generally be enough to produce the feeling of contented happiness.

The boys' house was opened some six months

before the girls'. We believed that the general tendency was to neglect the question of weak-minded males, although they are the majority of the cases.* Of the boys who came to us during our first two years we have lost four. One died; one became insane and dangerous and had to be sent away; one was an epileptic and went to the David Lewis Colony; and another was removed by his parents. This last was a great trouble to us; it was impossible to refuse, as the parents seemed able to give the boy suitable work under their own supervision; but he is not now doing anything. A cousin of this boy remains with us. In his case, the home being unsatisfactory, we backed the boy up in his refusal to leave us. This right of the boy to choose his place of residence after the age of fourteen is all we have to help us when relatives try to remove him.

We have about 100 acres of land under cultivation. Eight of our lads work on the farm and twelve in the gardens. They are encouraged to believe that the whole place with the animals, etc., belongs to them. They take great pride in their work and its results. The boys who sleep at the farm rise in summer at a quarter to six, work with the men till breakfast-time, and, after prayers with the matron, go out again to their work until dinner-time. Immediately after their dinner they go out again and work until tea-time, and they are very happy if any unusual event makes it necessary for them to go to work again after tea—a quantity of pot-plants to be sent off to Manchester, all hands wanted for the threshing-machine or for

* The proportion is generally given as three males to two females; this estimate is founded on the statistics of the Special Schools.

haying, and so on. Failing some such extra work, their time is their own after tea, except that they must wash themselves thoroughly and clean their boots. Two or three of the lads have a piece of land which is their very own; they spend a great deal of time and energy on it and are very much pleased to sell what they produce. When the evening is spent indoors, the form of recreation is decided by the wishes of each in turn. One night it will be singing, one night games, another reading aloud. At a quarter to eight one of the attendants walks with them down to the farm; she waits till they are in bed and the lights put out, and they are all asleep by a quarter past eight. There are six men at work about the place, and these have all been carefully chosen for suitability of character as well as power of teaching. They do not leave the boys who work under them until they see them in the care of the house-matron or one of the teachers.

On Sunday every boy and girl goes to a simple service which is held for them by the teachers in the school-house, the big boys and big girls having their services in different rooms. Most of them know a great many hymns by heart and sing very sweetly. Sunday is always kept as a very quiet day, a day of reading, walking, and singing. It is also a day of best clothes, a very important matter in the lives of these poor children. In the very restricted life we ask them to lead, nothing should be omitted that can give them a little pleasure, and they are pleased by the merest trifles; the birthday cake with their names in pink sugar when they reach the age of sixteen; the various treats of the year, Pancake Tuesday, Easter Sunday, May Day, etc., and, above all, Christmas. These are the

things of which people who undertake the care of the feeble-minded must be willing to think, remembering always that they are children to the end of their days.

The girls are in some respects less easy to manage than the boys. They are more quarrelsome, more restless, and more delicate. We have one girl now who would like to leave us; she is a pretty delicate girl of sixteen and is periodically upset by the visits of a sister, also pretty and as weak as herself, who has, I fear, come to grief. The mother is in an asylum, and the father died there. One girl was taken away by her mother who thought she could make her work at home; there was already one daughter at home with an illegitimate child.

The girls, under two laundry-women, do all the washing and ironing for the colony, no slight matter when it is remembered that there are twenty-six resident staff besides the children. They do a good deal of knitting and sewing, and we arrange an abundance of physical exercise and plenty of small treats for them as well as for the boys. We dress them as prettily as we can; we try to make them feel that they are in a home in the best sense of the word, not an institution; and we consider their tastes as to work whenever possible. It is curious that many of them prefer laundry-work to any other. Many of them, however, are too delicate for it, and it is most important not to discourage either boys or girls by giving them tasks beyond their physical strength. The girls also do a little light work in the garden, such as weeding, cutting lavender, etc., but rather as an extra treat than as part of their regular employment.

We make a great point of good manners; it is quite possible to make all of them, boys and girls, behave so well at table and generally that there is no objection to better-class children associating with them. Much of their happiness depends on this. The toilet, meals, play, school, all can be made the means of conveying lessons in good manners. Everything about the children should be pretty and bright. They should never be allowed to be *cold*, either in their play-room or in their beds. Perhaps we do not, until we consider it, realise how much of the happiness of life depends upon details. If I have given too many, my excuse must be that success in this work depends absolutely upon detail.

Above all, I should like to emphasize the fact that it is easy to keep the feeble-minded children if they are never allowed once to indulge animal passions. A mature weak-minded girl who has once gone wrong can only be reclaimed under forcible detention, but I believe that even those who have been perverted at an early age can be kept straight if they are taken in hand young enough and trained under proper conditions. I do not see how any one can question the kindness of preventing such girls from going through the misery and degradation which must be their fate if they are left at large. Men of weak intellect suffer, as I have often said, quite as much as women if they are not protected. Experience has shown that both men and women can be made perfectly happy in confinement. In the majority of cases they appreciate their happiness, and very few of them would change their lives if they were given a choice.

It should perhaps be explained that the children at

the Sandlebridge Homes are exactly of the same type as those admitted to the Special Schools, except that a few have been admitted who have turned out to be imbeciles. Even these, it has been found, can be trained to some extent.

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