Care and training of the feeble-minded : being a report of the eighth section of the International Congress of Charities, Correction and Philanthropy, Chicago, June, 1893 / edited by George H. Knight.

Care and Training of the Feeble-minded

BEING A REPORT OF

THE EIGHTH SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF CHARITIES, CORRECTION AND PHILANTHROPY, CHICAGO, JUNE, 1893

EDITED BY

GEORGE H. KNIGHT, M. D.

Superintendent of Connecticut School for Imbeciles

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SECTION VIII.

THE CARE AND TRAINING OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

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Superintendent of State School for Imbeciles, Lakeville, Connecticut.

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Superintendent of Institution for Feeble-minded Youth, Columbus, Ohio.

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International Congress of Charities, Correction and Philanthropy.

Eighth Section.

THE CARE AND TRAINING OF FEEBLE-MINDED CHILDREN.

GENERAL SESSION.

Thursday, June 15, 1893, 8 P. M.

Rev. Frederick H. Wines, LL. D., vice-president of the Congress, called the section for the *Care and Training of Feeble-minded Children* to order and introduced as chairman of the meeting M. Prosper van Geert, of Antwerp, Belgium.

Dr. George H. Knight, superintendent of State School for Imbeciles, Lakeville, Connecticut, read the following paper:

THE COLONY PLAN FOR ALL GRADES OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

GEORGE H. KNIGHT, M. D.

There is nothing new to advance in considering the cause of the feeble-minded from the charitable side. We have to go over practically the same ground so often, always with the hope of going a step farther in the creation of a just public sentiment, that the members of the National Conference might well think our motto was the old one ending "Here a little and there a little."

Our work must of necessity be many-sided. The children, always children no matter what the age, demanding our best efforts, are usually neglected, often abandoned, always dependent.

Unlike the normal child, one of feeble mind finds his best development in an institution, for there alone can he get that most necessary

factor in the happiness and development of every human being, companionship.

The methods in use for developing to the highest possible extent a feeble mind, too often in a feeble body as well, are the methods used in the development of the normal child, but intensified.

Example is much farther above precept with the imbecile than with his brighter brother, and he gains from imitation and contact with his own kind that which his limited intelligence could never originate.

At every discussion upon child-saving work we are impressed afresh with the difference which must always exist between the methods in the training of the normal and the feeble-minded child. I do not wish to be understood as undervaluing the influences of home-training, decidedly not of that indescribable quality called "mothering," an instinct, by the way, which even imbecility cannot deaden—nor is this instinct of tenderness wholly confined to girls.

I shall never forget an object-lesson in this given by one of the older boys during the early days of our Minnesota institution. The population of the state was largely foreign, bringing into the institution Swedes, Norwegians, German and French children, all of whom had the difficult lesson of a new language to learn. One night at dusk a mother brought and left with us a small boy of seven, dumb, but capable of hearing, and understanding no language but his native one, French. Each member of the family tried in turn to tempt him to eat his supper. We tried milk, and bread and milk, bread and butter, bread with syrup, with sugar, with apple sauce, everything that a child of that age was supposed to like, but without success. Finally he was put to bed, still sobbing, and when after a time he grew quiet and the matron went in to see that he was all right, she found that the biggest boy in the dormitory had taken him into his own bed and the little fellow had fallen asleep in his arms, comforted by that language of kindness which needs no interpreter. The next morning we found that *plain* bread was the only thing the child was accustomed to, and that we had spoiled his supper by trying to change his habits too suddenly.

The instinct of protection and kindness shown by this big boy is by no means an unusual quality in that grade of feeble-mindedness which we classify as bright imbecility, and in developing this trait by training such cases into care-takers for the smaller and more helpless children we serve the double purpose of making these dependents

producers, and also of giving them the standing of useful members of the institution family.

Our experience as superintendents has taught us that the imbecile can be developed best where he can be made useful. He gains in self-respect in a position of trust, in kind if not in degree with his more fortunate brother. Out in the world the relentless force of competition would drive him to the wall and keep him there, literally a cumberer of the ground, a source of pauperism, and if he were bright enough to be made a tool in the hands of the unscrupulous, a source of crime.

There is no market for imbecile labor outside institution walls, except in rare cases where charity and humanity cause some one to take an oversight of an individual case. No homes are opened to the abandoned imbecile. No one is eager to adopt the burden into his own family. There is absolutely no such thing possible as the placing-out of imbecile children, except for gain. We must then have institutions for this class, both for their own sakes and for the sake of the community. The problem that is constantly before us is how shall we make such institutions best serve the purpose for which they are established.

We think we see the most hopeful future in the adoption of the colony plan, where the child of the lowest grade, the idiot—that unfortunate, often born so repulsive that even the ties of blood cannot lighten the burden of any but the mother—finds his one chance of development in the custodial department.

The epileptic finds here his place, with medical care which gives him perhaps a hope of improvement, or lacking that, the oversight which keeps him from bodily harm, the amusement or occupation which brightens his life, and the shelter which removes him from the curiosity and the pity of his fellows.

The bright imbecile with harmless instincts or tendencies finds in this colony home a market for his labor. He is no longer a pauper, a state charge; he can at least earn his board and clothes, and he can care for and help to entertain and make happy his fellows who are less fortunate than himself.

The brightest imbecile of all, the moral imbecile, who gives us many of our criminals, finds in the restraint of the institution a safeguard, a restraint unwillingly borne, hard to enforce, difficult to maintain wisely, but more necessary for the ultimate public good than the public has yet any conception of.

Most important of all, the outcome of the colony plan is the fact that when we have found a method which shall care for the custodial case, whom no one wants, and the epileptic, who becomes a custodial by degrees unless his disease is arrested, and the bright imbecile who can be taught to help his weaker brother, and the moral imbecile who can have the outlet of occupation and the safeguard of restraint and constant oversight, and most necessary of all, and most difficult to procure for him and his depraved tendencies, that charity which suffereth long and is kind—when we have brought this about we shall have made the tremendous gain of preventing among imbeciles that disgrace to our civilization, the reproduction of their own kind.

The colony plan is not a vision, but a well-defined working plan, proving itself by actual experience every day. In its successful outcome lies our hope of progress in the future of this work, which, so far as our end of the "Problem of Charity" is concerned, must of necessity be, not "the survival of the fit," but always "the revival of the unfit."

Dr. A. C. ROGERS, superintendent, State School for Feeble-minded, Faribault, Minnesota, read the following paper:

STATE CARE OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

A. C. ROGERS, M. D.

These figures upon the cardboard* are our excuse for calling you together to-night, to consider with us the best means of dealing with the feeble-minded. Those of us engaged in their care and training are always at a disadvantage in presenting their claims, because we are their paid retainers. Their misfortune happens to be our means of sustenance. We are conscious that a calm judgment must eliminate from our testimony all personal interest. With this understanding, let us state the facts as we understand them, holding ourselves open to conviction, if better methods than ours can be suggested.

Speaking for the United States, and using the figures for 1890, the facts are these:

First.—We have approximately 95,000 feeble-minded persons among our 63,000,000 people, or one to every 660 of the general population.

* See page 13.

Second.—These defective children seem to be no respecters of family station or caste. They come to the homes of the rich and poor alike. The learned and the illiterate share alike in this misfortune. They are found in the dense population of the cities, amid the ceaseless noise and smoke of manufacturing traffic and transportation, and they are not strangers to the rural homes where nature revels in sunshine and songs of birds.

Third.—In general it is a fact that the advent of a feeble-minded child into a family brings a burden of sorrow and care which has not its equal upon the calendar of domestic afflictions.

Fourth.—It is a fact, with some rare exceptions, that from the time a feeble-minded child arrives at the age when normal children walk and talk, it is better for the child, the family and the neighborhood that it be cared for by those trained for that kind of work. A well organized institution with twenty-five trained persons can care for and train one hundred feeble-minded persons more easily than a whole family can *care* for one such person, under ordinary circumstances, without attempting any systematic training whatever.

Fifth.—It is a fact that all mankind is growing in the knowledge and practice of that greatest of all virtues, charity—charity in that true sense which Webster gives as the first and principal meaning, namely, "That disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow-men and to do them good."

Sixth.—The advantage of insurance is a fact of common business experience. Men gladly contribute at regular intervals to a common fund from which they can individually be indemnified for loss of property or limb, or their families for loss of life.

Seventh.—Every family in the land into which children are liable to be born faces the possibility of having one or more defective ones among the number.

Now with these seven important facts before us, we are ready to advocate state care for the feeble-minded. We would not for a moment be understood as discouraging private enterprise in this direction; but any enterprise that is at all comprehensive requires large capital. Private care of the feeble-minded necessitates wealthy patrons or an income from extensive endowment. As the great mass of children of our land are of poor parentage, or parentage of mediocre means, so the great majority of feeble-minded children are of similar parentage and hence ineligible to private care. If a few of our millionaires can be led to see the good which some of their

money could do in endowing homes for all classes of the feeble-minded, by the influence which this Congress wields, or otherwise, it will be "a consummation devoutly to be wished." May God hasten the day of its realization! What we do urge is universal effort to bring this class under the care which every interest of humanity demands that it should have.

Following now as corollaries from the proposition stated are these facts:

First.—The state can accomplish what private enterprise cannot, simply because it can readily furnish the means. Counties might unite and accomplish practically the same results, if they could agree upon some fair adjustment of the necessary support, responsibility and oversight. We will not argue over the particular means if the work is only comprehensive. The machinery of state government is well adapted to handle these matters, and hence in practice will, we believe, generally be called upon to do so. The principle involved in both cases is the same.

Second.—The state can bring together a sufficient number of children to make the institution accomplish its best work, because with large numbers will come better classifications, and the reduction of expense to a minimum consistent with the character of work done. I think all who have had experience with the feeble-minded will testify that these children are happier and more teachable when carefully arranged into convenient groups; and economy of administration demands that each group, whether under the care of a teacher or companion, be as large as possible consistent with the most efficient attention of the care-taker. The colony system has been almost necessarily developed by this matter of classification, and it meets with universal approval wherever it is clearly understood.

Third.—The state can secure harmony and uniformity of action among the various agencies, auxiliary or indispensable to successful working of organized effort for the feeble-minded; the determining of eligibility; the keeping in view the fact that it is not necessary that every feeble-minded person should be in an institution; the collection of data bearing upon causation, and the application of means tending to the comparison and harmonizing of methods employed for training; the lessening of the causative influences are among the things that at once suggest themselves in this connection.

Fourth.—State care of the feeble-minded is after all a practical system of insurance which guarantees to every parent of a common-

wealth a home for any child of this kind which may come to his fireside through no known violation of natural laws upon the part of either parent, a home where such a child can receive a degree of care which no mother can give without neglecting those children who are to engage in the active affairs of life, and the direction of whose destiny she alone can properly supervise.

Finally, the state can better afford *financially* to care for its feeble-minded in well organized institution colonies than to neglect them. The question of comparison of per capita expense for the care of public wards involves two variable elements in particular, namely, character of treatment and data from which expense is estimated. The character of treatment will depend not altogether upon the disposition of the management, but more especially upon the culture, sentiments and general financial ability which characterize the community. Paupers can be maintained at a cost of seventy-five cents per week in county poorhouses, and idiots can be "farmed out" for seventy-five dollars per year. I regret to say that one of our noble sister states still reflects discredit upon her otherwise fair name, by permitting this latter state of affairs to exist. At the present price of the necessities of life, do you want the reputation in your respective communities of imparting the kind of care which these figures indicate?

The only way to compare cost of maintenance intelligently, quality and all details being equivalent, is to consider the interest upon permanent investments, with every item of food, lodging, clothing, instruction, amusement, medical and general attendance. When comparisons are made on this basis, state care will, I believe, be found in every case to exceed but little the average cost of the ordinary county care of our poor. For the sake of illustration I turn to the published report of the board of charities of a neighboring state, the only one accessible at this writing, and I find the following facts for 1891, namely: *First.*—The per capita cost of the poor varied in the different counties from nothing (where sales from farms exceeded cost of maintenance) to $11.13 per week, the average for the state being $2.71, excluding interest on investments and medical attendance. Adding these latter items the average becomes $4.03. *Second.*—The cost per capita of the school for feeble-minded, in the same state for the same year, was $3.52, exclusive of clothing, transportation of inmates to school, and interest on investments. Adding the latter items the average becomes $4.50. This gives a difference of 47

cents in favor of the poorhouse care of paupers, as against the systematic care and training of feeble-minded in an institution well equipped with schools, shops, farm and garden. It is only fair to our cause to add that in this particular case the institution is comparatively new and has hardly begun to reap the financial advantage which follows from the employment extensively of trained inmates. This feature eventually becomes a very important characteristic of every institution organized upon the colony plan. These figures are suggestive, and while they will not correspond in detail in every state, I trust you will follow up this line of investigation in your respective states, and I have no fear that the results will strengthen our present deductions.

Now let us face the problem squarely. If it is good for one state to establish training schools, it is good for every state to do the same. I imagine I can hear a protest arise in many quarters when the suggestion is made of establishing training schools and state homes for 95,000 feeble-minded persons. The undertaking does seem vast. Assuming a reasonable deduction for the number of persons that can be cared for best at their homes and in private institutions, we will suppose provision to be made for an army of 84,000, each state taking care of its respective quota, in well equipped institutions built of the best material and with the best modern appliances, and with at least one acre of land to each inmate. For all this we will allow $600 per bed, which you will all agree is ample ; add six per cent. of this amount to the average per capita expense of maintenance under existing circumstances, and we will find that the enormous expenditure of $16,500,000 will be annually required to do the work. These figures almost stagger us, but they must be considered from all standpoints and estimated by comparison with other things with which we are familiar before their proper bearing upon us as individuals can be appreciated. $16,500,000 would nearly reproduce the World's Columbian Exposition, but it would represent only one of the smaller items of the budget which Congress annually passes for its numerous dependencies. This amount would be equivalent to a direct tax of about 26 cents per individual, or $1.45 per voter in our federal elections. A tax of $1 on all real and personal property assessed at $1460 would supply the means required. Practically, however, our taxes for such purposes are indirect, and we can estimate this sum of money by another method. In 1891 the United States received as internal revenue tax on smoking and chewing tobacco, exclusive

of the various forms of manufactured tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, etc., over $18,325,000, or enough to carry on our enterprise and drop over $1,750,000 into a permanent endowment annually.

After all, you will, I think, agree with me that the premium upon this insurance is not excessive. In the meantime what are these insurance companies doing with this premium? They are not simply relieving you of the care of your child; they are doing more for its interests and happiness than you can do yourself. They are organizing farms, workshops and industries adapted to the utillization of the forces which they are developing. They are reducing to a minimum the possibility of increasing the number of this class of unfortunates by multiplying their own offspring, for a fountain can never rise above its source; and to stop this one cause of misery alone would well repay the state for a vast outlay of money.

CENSUS OF FEEBLE-MINDED IN THE UNITED STATES.

(*Compiled from the enumerators' returns, taken June* 1, 1890.)

Alabama	2187	Nebraska	959
Arizona	13	Nevada	22
Arkansas	1671	New Hampshire	779
California	880	New Jersey	1631
Colorado	192	New Mexico	127
Connecticut	1208	New York	7337
Delaware	220	North Carolina	3597
District of Columbia	261	North Dakota	135
Florida	500	Ohio	8035
Georgia	2191	Oklahoma	34
Idaho	55	Oregon	283
Illinois	5249	Pennsylvania	8753
Indiana	5568	Rhode Island	488
Iowa	3319	South Carolina	1805
Kansas	2039	South Dakota	285
Kentucky	3635	Tennessee	3590
Louisiana	1173	Texas	2763
Maine	1591	Utah	183
Maryland	1549	Vermont	901
Massachusetts	2929	Virginia	3090
Michigan	3218	Washington	140
Minnesota	1451	West Virginia	1430
Mississippi	1756	Wisconsin	2402
Missouri	3881	Wyoming	14
Montana	52		
Total in United States			95,571

Dr. A. W. WILMARTH, of Norristown, Pennsylvania, read the following paper:

PATHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS ACCOMPANYING MENTAL DEFECTS IN CHILDREN.

A. W. WILMARTH, M. D.

It is my purpose this evening to avoid, so far as may be possible, technical terms and tedious statistics, and to state briefly the material changes found in the nervous system of our charges and their bearing on their care.

It is a curious and interesting study, as we walk through the rooms of an institution for the feeble-minded, to note the facial expression and shape of the heads of the children we meet. Take first the small-headed or microcephalic imbecile. We shall find him perhaps fairly bright and alert. He will learn quite readily sometimes, but finds his capacity far below that of the normal intelligent child. We shall see a child with a large head, well formed, but he is slow in movement and slow in mentality; another with large head of more globular shape, indicating the presence of water or hydrocephalus; many other children whose outward appearance gives us no clue to a defective brain condition.

Let us look a little closer into these material conditions with those coexisting within the skull, and the bearing they may have on the child's mental condition and his care. But first we shall have to glance at the structure of the organ of will and thought—the brain. So far as we need regard it, we may look on it as consisting of small bodies, termed cells, possessing a distinct vitality, which enables them to receive impressions through the organs of sense and store them away as memories, or to send out impulses as motions; to revive and connect these memories in the process of thought. These cells are arranged in groups, each group presiding over a particular faculty, and are intimately connected together by numerous fibres and firmly held in place by the supporting tissue (or neuroglia) in which they rest. Three things are essential to their perfect action and the consequent mental health of the subject:

1. They shall be sufficiently numerous and well developed.
2. They shall have a large and constant supply of blood to keep them well fed and active.
3. They shall be healthy.

In a majority of our children we shall find some one or more of these conditions violated. The so-called microcephalic imbecile, with his small brain, illustrates the first class. All parts of his brain are undersized and will never give him sufficient mental power to compete with society in these days of active struggle for existence. We may find instead of the whole only a portion of the brain undeveloped or lacking. Or the child may have a large and finely shaped head and yet suffer under essentially the same condition, for we shall find the size due to an increase in the neuroglia or supporting structure, while the brain cells, the active elements through which the mind finds expression, are few or poorly developed. In this class we shall find the offspring of weak-minded parents, also of those whom vice has robbed of their health and strength, who have only a weakened vitality to transmit to their offspring.

As a result of the second condition, simple cases are comparatively rare, most of them merging with the third condition, which we will briefly consider. It was formerly thought that a majority of the feeble-minded were simply suffering from a suspended development; that their dormant faculties could be aroused by special training, and a condition more nearly approaching a healthy mentality be attained. Probably in more than fifty per cent. of the feeble-minded imbecility or idiocy is the result of actual disease. It is probably true that disease will more readily attack a brain which is inherently weak from hereditary causes; but it is just as true that infantile meningitis, the rupture of a vessel from violence or convulsion, or other disease, will not only destroy a portion of the organ, but will check the complete development of the whole in children of families with the cleanest history. The diseases which cause these results are too numerous to describe here.

A sadder class even than these are the children who are bright, perhaps precocious, until well into childhood. An epileptic spasm, or beginning failure of mental power, or, possibly, lapse in the moral nature, arouses the friends' attention to impending trouble. In such cases, unless early improvement occurs, they are liable to lapse into idiocy, or more happily find, after many months, release by death. In many such cases a steady decay of the active brain elements is found; in others, nothing at all. Grave changes have no doubt occurred, but they are beyond our present powers of perception.

What shall we say of that troublesome member of our feeble-minded communities, the so-called moral imbecile? Though proven

a theoretical impossibility by able reasoners, he is an incorrigible reality in all institutions for the feeble-minded. This moral deficiency is generally, but not always, associated with mental defect. It is a disputed question whether the condition rests on material defect in the brain. That tendency to crime is hereditary I think no one will deny. That more or less complete loss of moral stability is the prominent feature in many cases of brain disease or injury leading to insanity, is equally certain. On these grounds we have been accustomed to look on these unfortunates as blameless victims of inherited or acquired infirmity, and to extend them care, that the public might be protected from their evil impulses, and they from the severe measures which the public in self-protection would be obliged to adopt.

I trust these few remarks will enable us to better comprehend the needs of our institutions: why they must combine a school, with peculiar facilities for teaching those slow to learn because of some practical loss of their organ of mind, a hospital for those suffering from actual disease, and a place of detention for those who, through no fault of their own, come into our world handicapped by evil impulses developing without the higher moral instinct of self-control.

Dr. HYDE, of New Orleans.—I would like to ask the gentleman from Minnesota, Dr. Rogers, what methods he employs to raise these children.

Dr. ROGERS.—I am sure there are others who can explain the methods better than I; but the first great object is to attract the child, and the best means in the world for attracting a child is to gain its love and affection. It is perhaps for this reason more than any other that the majority of teachers in schools for feeble-minded are ladies. And a great deal of pains is taken to select only those who are naturally sympathetic. Starting with that, a teacher must use her ingenuity to discover the means of reaching a particular child. No two children in a feeble-minded school are alike any more than they are in public schools. Individual training must be given a much larger place in feeble-minded institutions than in public schools, from the very fact that the progress in each case is necessarily so slow. Concert exercises are used to arouse general interest. Some children are very nervous and excitable; they must be dealt with in the calmest mannner possible. Often when there are outbursts of excitement, they must be led away from other children and placed in some quiet room without any disturbing influence until this excitement passes away. Others again are of the stolid, indifferent kind. They must be worked with almost constantly and stimulated by all kinds of devices, mechanical and otherwise. In our schools to-day

we follow more nearly the methods of the kindergarten of the public schools than the teachers of those schools originally did. There were many special pieces of apparatus used in the early institutions, such as the one at Syracuse and the one at South Boston, now Waverly, that are not in much use to-day. One thing was the balancing-board. Children with a sluggish disposition would be placed upon a board much like a see-saw, and would learn to protect and poise themselves to prevent a fall upon the floor. Another method is to place the child against the wall and gradually force his feet so that the centre of gravity is in front of the child, and he will fall unless he steps forward to catch himself. The kindergarten method proper requires considerable modification for these children. The weaving and sewing and the other various occupations cannot be carried out perfectly. I think Dr. Fernald can explain that method better than I.

Dr. WALTER E. FERNALD, superintendent of State School for Feeble-minded, Waverly, Massachusetts.—It seems to me that the pioneers in this work anticipated the new education. The methods followed in schools for feeble-minded are the same as those used in public schools for teaching normal children. The methods of the kindergarten, the methods of systematic physical training, manual training, the utilization of bright colors, were the methods used in our work forty years ago, and those are the methods used to-day in the public schools. Dr. Rogers did not speak particularly of manual training. We use manual training, the teaching of the children to do things, not only for its intrinsic value, but for its educational value. One of our methods for attracting the attention of a child is to get him to pick up stones. I think that is the most elementary study in our school, and it is unnecessary to say that in Massachusetts we never get out of raw material.

Dr. HYDE.—It appears to me that separating the feeble-minded children from the others is not the correct thing to do. We know that at a tender age children learn more in a kindergarten from imitation than teaching. You show a child a ball. You do not say it is round; you make him see it is soft and he feels it. A little baby or a child in a kindergarten learns from example. Would it not be better, on a small scale, to take those unfortunate children and put them with others so that they could learn from and imitate them, instead of crowding them all together?

Dr. FERNALD.—The experience of the teachers in this work has been that the feeble-minded, more than other children, need companionship of other children. The word idiot means to be alone, and the feeble-minded child is never so much alone as when he is in a public school with normal children; and they are infinitely happier with their own kind, as normal people are happier when they are with people of their own understanding.

Dr. HYDE.—I had in my charge 150 children, and two of them were half-witted. They were not idiots, but they did not have the

mental faculties that the others had, and I expected that they would seek each other's company, but they did not. I always observed that they looked for children who were different from themselves.

Dr. FERNALD.—But those children might have been of the opposite extremes of mental defect. In an institution of some four hundred inmates it is possible to classify and grade the children so that pupils of the same mental grade may be together. We feel to-day that one of the advantages of our institution is the grading and classifying of the children. It is my experience that they almost always select children of their own mental condition. Individual teaching of a feeble-minded child has never been entirely satisfactory. I know of many cases where wealthy parents have employed our tutors to give their entire time to their child, and in almost every case those children have come back to us; and when they have not, I think I have invariably ascertained that they did not do as well as they did in school with other children.

Dr. HYDE.—Do you know of any practical book on the way to raise feeble-minded children?

Dr. FERNALD.—I do not.

The CHAIRMAN.—We have one more speech, by Mr. ALEXANDER JOHNSON, and then the meeting will be open for discussion.

Mr. ALEXANDER JOHNSON, superintendent-elect of State School for Feeble-minded Youth, Fort Wayne, Indiana.—I want to call Dr. Rogers' attention to the doubtfulness and the difficulty of statistics. I think I have before this time quoted on the floor of these conferences the saying of Lord Beaconsfield that there is nothing so fallacious in facts as figures, and I believe those figures on the wall are fallacious. It seems incredible to me that the state of Indiana can be fourth among the states of the Union in the number of its feeble-minded. It seems also equally incredible that Ohio should be the second and Pennsylvania first. I challenge the accuracy of those figures. These figures are taken from the census reports, from the enumerators' returns. The state of Indiana, according to the United States census figures, did not increase from 1880 to 1890 very materially, while the feeble-minded increased something like 75 or 100 per cent., and the insane diminished 7 per cent. The United States statistics for Indiana's insane and feeble-minded showed a decrease of 7 per cent. of insane in ten years. During that time the insane institutions had increased 120 per cent. I don't believe those figures are accurate. I think they are entirely incorrect. The difference between 1880 and 1890 is evidently in the way that the counting was done, for I do not believe we have such a terrible number of feeble-minded in Indiana. If that number on the board were accurate, 5568, at the rate that Dr. Rogers proposes we should care for them, we should have to invest $4,154,400 in providing accommodations for them, and it would cost us $1,113,600 to support them. Our entire state revenue would have to be doubled. But I do not think that is necessary. Why should it cost us so much more to take care of the

adult imbeciles and feeble-minded than it does in the state of Wisconsin to take care of the adult insane? Why cannot we look forward to taking care of our feeble-minded brethren on a more economic basis? As far as the young children are concerned, and the preliminary training, I am in favor of spending every dollar on that part of the work that can be wisely expended. I do not believe in spoiling a good ship, as they say, for the sake of a bucket of tar. I do not believe in stinting one dollar which will make a child grow up into a more self-supporting man or woman. But when we get up to the higher grades we do not need palaces and $800 per capita for houses and furniture or anything like that. We do not have it in our poor asylums, and we have poor asylums which are very comfortable and clean and nice and cost less than $1 per capita per week, taking in the produce from the farms, and some of them are entirely self-supporting.

Dr. F. M. POWELL, superintendent of State Institution for Feeble-minded Children, Glenwood, Iowa.—The question of economy has come up. I do not think the superintendents will differ very much from the gentleman from Indiana. In all these organized institutions, especially where they have advanced in numbers sufficiently to classify them, you will find the different buildings which we term the colony plan. During the last two years we built a frame building a short distance from the main educational building and we have domiciled there 25 boys. They have been through the school department, yet they are not capable of going out into the world to care for themselves; they must have supervision, and the majority of them have no homes to go to. These boys live there, sleep there and dine in their cottage, having their own way. They do the work on the farm, and work in shops and in various places about the institution, so that in course of time, when the institution becomes larger and there are more of them, we shall be able to reduce the per capita expense, and in fact we are doing so, and that is as far as we can go. This class of individuals do not need the class of costly buildings that have been referred to, but there is a question often asked by parents, namely, "Do you ever cure them?" We can say "No" almost invariably. Occasionally there are children that drift in there who ought not to be there. If they are feeble-minded, it is because they have had no opportunity to develop, and they are developed and sent out as self-supporting. Superintendents generally agree that from 10 to 20 per cent. only are sent out as capable of caring for themselves. My own convictions are that this is too large a percentage and that we have made mistakes in sending them out. I remember some years ago, through the importunities of parents and friends, I sent out a number of boys and girls, and the results of sending them out made me extremely careful about sending others out. Since then one of the governors of Iowa wrote a number of letters to the board and spoke to me personally, insisting that we had children there who must be sent out. I told him to pick and

send them out, and I would make a record of it and report the results later; but he never dared to do it. There would have been a history following that would not have been very pleasant to him. I am growing more to feel the necessity of detaining them, for it cuts off 27 per cent. of the cause—a sufficient reason in itself.

Dr. L. L. ROWLAND, superintendent of State Insane Asylum, Salem, Oregon.—We are just beginning, but we have 850 patients. Five miles from the asylum we have what we call a hospital and cottage farm where we are now preparing to keep about 300. A part of my mission here is to inspect asylums and be able to report something to the board. It is believed that of the 75 whom we have kept there, more than half will accomplish about as much as the same number of hired men; and they are there to stay, they are among the incurables. More than half of our teamsters are patients. I ought to state, however, that these patients are not of the class I have just mentioned; they are changing. They beg for the privilege of having teams, and they take quite as good care of them as our hired men. We have with these 850 patients 1200 acres of land, in round numbers. When we had 1025 our legislature added to them, and I can say for one legislature that they have done all that they have been asked to do. I think the solution of this matter lies in the fact of having large farms in connection with shops as they have here at Kankakee. I believe with Gen. Brinkerhoff that many of them would be self-supporting. Ours are fully so. Within one year we have cut down the per capita to a figure that has never been known in the institution before.

Dr. BELL.—It has occurred to me that this is one of the causes of the increase of feeble-minded. These young men and women pass out of the institutions and go to battle with the world, and they intermarry.

Dr. GEORGE H. KNIGHT, of Connecticut.—There are no correct figures with regard to that part of the subject. Epilepsy I have been able to follow up somewhat, and the offspring of epileptics are generally subject to epilepsy. We know, however, that the old adage that "like produces like" is pretty nearly true, and therefore imbeciles should never be allowed to marry. I know of one epileptic woman, an inmate of a poorhouse, who was allowed to marry a farmer who wanted somebody to keep house for him, and the result was sixteen children. Fortunately seven died, but the remaining nine were defective, some being epileptic, and others mentally deficient in varying degrees. Now we have custodial cases of girls who are child-bearing, or capable of child-bearing; we have the brighter classes of imbeciles whom our town-folks permit to marry; we have the moral imbecile, who, if allowed to go astray, increases our criminal class; and the epileptics. These are the four classes to apply our preventive work to. We shall get our best results from this preventive work, and only on these lines are we going to get any results. There are so many unscrupulous men who would take

advantage of a feeble-minded girl that we cannot afford to send them out to work as servants.

Dr. FREDERICK H. WINES.—I stand here to speak for the idiots because, more than any other class of human beings, they need a champion. What is an idiot? Most people do not know. What is the difference between an insane person and an idiot? An insane man or woman in the last stages of insanity, suffering from dementia, is an imbecile. An idiot is an imbecile also. The imbecility of the one cannot be distinguished except by an expert. But the physiological history of these two persons is very different. An insane imbecile has grown to maturity, has attained the perfection of his faculties of body and mind, such as they were, and then through some accident or misfortune the balance of those faculties has been lost and the patient has deteriorated physically and mentally. But an idiot is a person who has never been fully developed, whose imbecility originated in infancy or in early childhood. It may have been the effect of a cause which operated before the birth of the child, or of a cause which operated in early childhood ; but in either case the cause was one that produced its natural effect before the child reached mental and physical maturity, and so stopped his development. Now, with this definition of idiocy in mind, I think you must see that idiots are very closely allied to two other classes of beings. In the first place, to the animal creation. We all have an animal side, and a spiritual or intellectual side. The more our spiritual side is developed, the nearer we come to the angels ; the less it is developed, the nearer we are to the brutes ; and the spiritual or intellectual side not having been developed in the idiot, he is so closely allied to the brute creation that he is less to be pitied than you think. A great deal of sympathy is wasted upon him. He does not suffer half so much as is commonly supposed. A lamb, a bird or a kitten does not suffer from the lack of higher intelligence. They are not human, and therefore they do not know what the intellectual life is. Just so the idiot does not suffer in consequence of his lack of qualities which he never had and knows nothing about. On the other hand, the idiot is very closely allied to a baby, because, if he has not developed, he is still an infant, and he remains an infant all his life. His condition is one of perpetual childhood. I have seen grown men and women who were idiots crawl around on all fours, because they had never learned to walk or never could or would learn. I have seen grown idiots playing with sticks and straws like little children. They appeal to our sympathy on account of their helplessness, just as babies do. They are affectionate, like babies ; and it is the responsiveness of their affections which overcomes in our minds the sense of disgust often awakened at the sight of their motions and gestures. They need care and attention all their lives long. Now, many of them will always be custodial cases. You might just as well think of turning a baby out of the house as an idiot. But some idiots can be made self-supporting, just as an animal can be. I can take a horse and

make it earn money, but it cannot earn money for itself. I can make an idiot earn money for me, but he cannot earn it for himself. I can protect that idiot, as I can a child, but the idiot cannot protect himself. If he could protect and support himself, he would not be a true idiot. So, where a family is in circumstances to take care of its own idiots, well and good; it is far better that they remain where they have the benefit of natural parental affection. But the great mass of families with idiotic children cannot do it. The parents are frequently of a low grade themselves, or they are too indulgent. There are a thousand reasons why they cannot do it. For this reason idiots have to be collected together, under the charge of trained attendants, and held, as has been said to-night, for life. While something has been said with regard to error in the census statistics of idiocy, I do not believe that the figures given in the census overestimate the number of idiots in the community; I believe that they underestimate the number. There are no more insane people than idiots. The reverse is probably true. While we are doing a great deal for our insane, idiots need care just as much as they; but we are doing very little for them, and from my point of view it is not fair. Therefore I would like to put it into the mind of the public that the demand for the care of the idiots has not been met. The public needs to be aroused to a sense of its obligation to take care of them. They are hidden from sight. Parents with an idiot child do not let anybody know it if they can avoid it. I have known instances where the family doctor did not know there was an idiot child in the house, because its parents were ashamed of it. The children cannot speak for themselves, and their parents will not. Somebody else must.

Dr. ROGERS.—The figures which I used to show the cost of state care were merely hypothetical. Our buildings only cost about $500 a bed, including everything inside and outside of the building.

The CHAIRMAN.—I told Mr. Johnson I thought that was but an hypothetical case when he said you laid yourself open to contradiction on your statistics.

Adjourned *sine die*.

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