

requires a good deal of love, accompanied by discretion, patience and firmness, and will then receive its reward. The afflicted are led to regard their disease, and what is done for it and them, in the light of the gospel. Family devotion is held very day, and every one who is able is assigned to some work suitable to his capacity. Regular employment is a necessary link in the daily life. We have arranged for Sunday services in the best possible way at present; the epileptic cannot attend church. We have also arranged for beneficial recreation, so far as our means will permit.

In order that this work shall attain the object already mentioned, it is necessary that the friends of the sick extend to us a helping hand. We need to build several houses according to the above plan. We ask kind people to send us subscriptions, large or small, and to remember the epileptics with legacies. We need yearly contributions for the care of the indigent epileptics. We hope to reach a stage when it will not be necessary to turn away any applicant because he is not able to furnish the minimum yearly payment—400 crowns (about \$112). Our per capita expenses are estimated at about 500 crowns (about \$140) per year. There are already several waiting to be admitted, in advance of our accommodations. A few are able to furnish a part of the yearly subscription; others nothing. We gratefully accept all gifts, goods, etc., that may be utilized for the benefit of the patients or manufactured by hem. We can use everything,—clothes, old and new, foot wear, pieces of woolen goods that may be made into articles of clothing, bed linen, stamps, articles of food, etc. Such goods may be addressed to the "Institution for Epileptics, Terslose, via Soro."

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METHODS OF ADMISSION TO INSTITUTIONS FOR THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

A considerable difference exists in the methods of admission to the different institutions for the care of the feeble-minded, and it is worth inquiring if a movement to secure uniformity in this particular might not be desirable. Because of the belief in the earlier days that the defective mind could be trained to a normal development by suitable teaching, in some of the older institutions the state provided for only a specified period of residence. This plan has been modified in some places. On the other hand, in one state at least, the cases are required to be examined by two physicians, as in case of the insane. These physicians are appointed by the county judge, who, on receiving their report

that the person examined is a suitable subject for the care of an institution, commits for an indefinite period. Discharge then lies with* the superintendent, with the approval of the controlling board. This plan has an advantage over the method of placing children by agreement between the parent and superintendent, in as much that the removal in unsuitable cases is absolutely prevented. Where there is no objection to the removal home of the child, it is done with the utmost ease. Very often, however, parents hear of their children becoming useful in various ways, and through a desire to profit by what they have learned, will attempt their removal. Maturing girls, again, will be demanded by parents entirely unfitted for their care. It is well in such cases for the institution authorities to be armed with a legal commitment, to keep these children from dangerous release, or to recover them in case of elopement or abduction. The final decision of the controlling board constitutes a safeguard against any error of judgement or possible abuse of power on the part of the superintendent.

We have heard exclamations, almost of horror, at the idea of the feeble-minded being "committed for life." The term appears to bring up the idea of confinement and the long years of punishment which are meted out to great offenders. Instead of this, the child simply becomes a member of a congenial community, in surroundings adapted to his especial needs, free from all the grave responsibilities of life which he is unsuited to meet. It has more of the character of an emigration to a locality where the conditions of life are better adapted to the needs of such individuals. He associates with children of his own grade of intelligence. He is lifted to a higher moral plane by the teaching of selected teachers. He is taught some useful employment, and secures and takes pride in a standing in the little community in which he feels that he fills an important place. He is furnished with entertainment suited to his understanding, and may take an active part in furnishing it. In the girl, the inevitable instinct of

maternity, which finds its first expression in the love for a doll, is gratified and satisfied with the care of the little ones which are always found in such an institution.

Of what is a high-grade imbecile deprived on entering a well-conducted institution? He is deprived of a lack of congenial society in the community at large, where he never stands on the same plane as his fellows; and the discouraging influence of such a position of mental inferiority is most detrimental to progress. He is deprived of a life of poverty; for these are times when intelligence and industry are essential to attain even a comfortable livelihood. Development of maternal instinct prompts to early marriage, or frequently to illegitimate motherhood. Such hasty marriages, without much idea of the grave responsibilities involved, terminate very frequently in divorce, or desertion, and remarriage. The study of these family histories in our institutions, where mental weakness is not an accident, but a family trait, is a revelation on this point.

The active interest of the feeble-minded in the daily life of institutional communities, the enjoyment of the society of those of their own mental standing, the replacement of the feeling of inferiority by consciousness of equality and its incentive to progress, should certainly compensate for any "deprivation" they may suffer by the change. The readiness with which children who leave institutions for their homes for a vacation will return to their companions is a strong argument that the life in such a community is a proper one for them. Not infrequently children will insist on returning before their allotted vacation is finished. It is true that long residence in an institution may be detrimental to those who have afterwards to go out into the general community to struggle for their livelihood. It is also true that few, if any, superintendents of institutions for the feeble-minded make any claim of being able to restore an inherently feeble-minded person to normal mind to ever stand on an equality with the normal citizen. So they should be subjects for life-long guidance by others.

Possibly a better plan would be to have children committed voluntarily, but to have a legal process provided for that would enable any case, inside or out of the institution, to be placed under the life guardianship of the institution, when the conditions were such that the child's best interest required it. This would permit the admission and training of many children whose friends otherwise might be prevented from making any commitment.

In any event, the state must ultimately care for the vast majority of this class of cases during their natural term of life, and assume their care for this period, with the condition that parents or guardians may withdraw their children if they desire to do so, provided they can show evidence that the child will be comfortably cared for, and that no danger to the community will occur through its release. When such guarantee cannot be provided, the state should stand "*in loco parentis*."

THE "SPECIAL CLASSES."

We are glad to publish in this issue quite a complete explanatory statement of the English special classes, particularly as carried on in London. We are indebted to Dr. G. E. Shuttleworth for the reports and circulars from which the information was obtained.

The question has several times been raised in this country as to the advisability of providing for special classes, at least in the larger cities. Our readers will be interested in Mrs. Scott's report of the Chicago experiment. All who have to do with schools for feeble-minded realize that there are a few children on the border land between perfectly normal children and those whose mental weakness is unquestioned that are not capable of making progress in the public schools, and yet who are very sensitive about being classed as feeble-minded. It would seem that special schools would be very useful for such pupils in this country, though the social con-

ditions in England and America are so different that what would be successful there would not, necessarily be so here. Without entering into any special discussion of the question at this time, it seems to us, in the light of the present day, that the village community plan approaches most nearly the ideal arrangement for our defectives, and the social conditions of America are favorable to its development.

We are pained to learn of the death in September last of Mrs. Ireland, for thirty-eight years the devoted wife of Dr. W. W. Ireland, of Mavisbush, Polton, Scotland. The Journal extends earnest sympathy to Dr. Ireland in this great sorrow—the first visit of the Grim Messenger to his family.

The Journal extends sympathy to Dr. W. B. Fish for the loss of his "Home," by fire, at Wheaton, III. It seems that the fire started in the laundry, and within a few minutes enveloped the whole building. Fortunately the children were out for recess, and no one was injured, though the doctor himself had a narrow escape, as he entered the burning building in search of a child reported missing, but afterwards found outside.

Dr. T. Telford-Smith has left the Royal Albert Asylum permanently, and after a long rest will settle in the south of London.

Day schools for feeble-minded are being tried in Providence, P. I., and in Philadelphia, Pa.

The Barony Parochial Board of Glasgow, Scotland, representing a population of about 300,000, have begun to build an asylum for their pauper idiots.

The new state institution for feeble-minded in Missouri is located near Marshall.