

**RETYPE FROM THE ORIGINAL**

Quarterly Conference May 5, 1903

Dr. Rogers: Mr. Chairman, I think it is much easier in discussing this matter from the standpoint of the law as it stands, to see the impossibility, rather than the possibility, of doing anything of very much importance. However, as has already been suggested, if we are going to make a sort of resume of what has been accomplished, there is work that can be done along the right lines, that will at least lay the foundation for better work later, and I think that should be encouraged. Reference has already been made to the matter of keeping very careful records of clinical cases. Reference has also been made to the efforts that have been made, from time to time, to secure pathological investigations and reports. Now one thing that is very often overlooked is the importance of having thoroughly kept and accurately kept clinical records of all kinds to accompany pathological work later. I presume that all of our institutions are keeping pretty fairly accurate records of all the cases. It is exceedingly important in the study of sociological problems to know, just as far as possible the family histories of all the cases that are received in our public institutions. I refer particularly to the insane and the feeble minded and the delinquents and I think the same is true of the blind and deaf to a large extent. Then, following that, it is of very much importance that we have careful life histories of these people when they are under the observation of those who are expert in studying their habits, their symptoms of disease and their peculiarities generally. As to the question of anything like serious pathological work I think, as Dr. Kilbourne has already said, it is practically out of the question, except as occasionally an institution can pick up an expert. That is an old problem and I presume that there is not a hospital in the country of any size that does not have a good microscope, a microtome and a few other things that have been used by someone for a few months and then stored away in the attic simply because there was no one who was competent to use them. Now the development of the scientific investigation of reports depends upon trained and competent enthusiasts. He must be an enthusiast, he must be competent and he must be trained in the technique of the work. If it were possible to have in any one state a laboratory devoted to the kind of work I refer to I think success at a minimum cost might be realized, and it has occurred to me in this connection whether or not it would not be possible in the near future to have some such an organization as the Carnegie Institute, which is filling in so many blank spaces, take up just this kind of work; for pathology can be studied at a distance. Pathological specimens can be preserved, transmitted and examined at a distance. It is worth thinking about and I believe would be practical thing. The thing about and I believe would be practical thing. The thing that the institutions can do I wish to emphasize, that is, keep careful records of the cases that come to them and investigate as far as possible the family histories of the cases, as this depends so much upon heredity and the data must come from observers and the institutions have an opportunity for making observations. I believe very thoroughly in the suggestion Dr. Welch gave us, to keep in touch with the outside, the outside profession and outside people who are

interested or will make any effort to study along our lines or lines that are collateral or in any way related. I believe it would be a splendid thing for these conferences if the board could find experts along any line of work in which the institutions are interested and especially along scientific lines, who would come in and give addresses on subjects of that kind. Although the field, as has already been suggested, is very well covered in our literature, yet that literature does not reach all the people that could be reached through these conferences who ought to have the benefit of it. Another thing might be done. If we could find the right person or persons in our institutions, or could secure them, some person might do translating of foreign literature. That would very often give us a great many suggestions in our practical work. But that, again, is another rather difficult problem, because there is an immense amount of literature bearing upon these specialties that is valueless and a person would need to sift out so much to get what is of real practical value that it would be an expensive operation and a rather cumbersome operation and a great deal of that can be obtained from translations which already exist and which are published in various journals in this country.

It seems, however, that the methods that have been suggested, of making our records very complete in our institutions and presenting such data at these conferences, together with what can be learned from those who can be invited from the outside, nearly cover the ground.

Judge Gould: What is the value of this record of family histories, unless, in some manner it is to be made use of by the people who are engaged in the conduct of these various institutions?

Dr. Rogers: The findings or conclusions from the study of these records would be matters of public interest. We cannot very well obtain family histories and publish those family histories, but it is a well recognized fact that the experts who are dealing with defectives of all kinds are entitled to all the knowledge possible concerning the family histories of dependents and it is part of their duty to make studies of the histories and make such conclusions as they can from them. The public is entitled to the benefit of those conclusions. Of course I intended to say that they should be published.

Judge Gould: The section in question is evidently copied directly from the Iowa law, and whoever prepared it, must have had in mind the gathering of such information as would be generally useful along the lines here suggested, and it was evidently intended by the legislature to require the boards in control to disseminate information which would be useful and educational.

**RETYPE FROM THE ORIGINAL**