

of the first cases that came to my attention after going to the institution was that of one of our girls who was taken by one of the trustees into a home where the associations were of the **very** best. She soon drifted away and he said he would never try the experiment again. A former superintendent when he left took a little girl with him into a modern home. She was left alone at the house one day and one of the neighboring boys assaulted **her**. Of course, they never left her alone again. I let one of our boys go out and in sixty days he was married. I let another one out and he wound up in the police station. Another boy I call to mind went out with a very good farmer and an ex-school teacher, a very intelligent and well-meaning man, but the boy has gone to the dogs. My experience has been so universally unfavorable in this matter and realizing as I do that these **morons** are the most dangerous ones—that is, most prolific of any—that I am very much opposed to placing them out.

Dr. Wallace: Mr. President, not to help Dr. Bernstein, because I know that he does not need it, but with this great wave of education sweeping over the land on one side, and with the great dearth of information that the members of the medical profession, and those who commit these people have upon the subject of feeble-mindedness on the other, I think that we have some reason to use a little discretion in the institutions. I don't know how it is in the other states but I know that in Massachusetts it has become too easy a matter to get a child into an institution for the feeble-minded and I do not believe we who are at the head of institutions can idly sit by and allow children to be railroaded into our institutions regardless of their mental condition simply because they have been a little wayward; many of them orphans; many of them without a mother's love and care. An appreciable number, probably the same ones that Dr. Fernald has placed out successfully, had they had mother's care and a mother's guidance could have been prevented from ever acquiring the stigma of entering an institution for the feeble-minded. I do heartily believe that there is a good deal to be said on this side. With the social workers pressing the physicians and the physicians too ignorant of the conditions, there is

a likelihood of error, and I know that there is error in commitment. Isn't the time ripe for requiring the judgment of some one who is familiar with feeble-minded conditions and feeble-minded children, to pass upon the cases before they come to the institution, or for allowing us in the institutions to use a little latitude. I believe that the time is ripe for this association to make some move towards framing legislation **requiring** competent judges to pass on children before they are admitted into an institution. The institution is becoming too popular. The school physicians in our big cities, even those who know feeble-minded children, and feeble-minded classes, because of the pressure that is brought to bear on them from the teachers, because the latter do not understand certain children, are often influenced in passing upon these brighter individuals by deferring to the opinion of the teachers who have had the best opportunity to observe them. I know this to be a fact. A boy, because he docs some little foolish thing that the rest of us have done but escaped public censure because we had mothers and fathers to look after us, is passed up as feeble-minded and sent to the institution. We want to keep out of institutions all who don't belong there. I don't believe that the community wants to shirk its responsibility in that way.

Dr. Downing: Mr. President, referring to borderline cases, I have a child with respect to whom it is a question whether he is feeble-minded or not. Because of an accident it was thought best to have an X-Ray picture taken of his hand. The examination showed the too early ossification of the carpal bones. In hunting over the literature I found that two men in New-York had published a report on defective children, mostly at Randall's Island, where they found the carpal bones and hand bones were not alike in their ossification. I find in every case so far of my own, and I have taken children from two and a half to twelve years, this same condition of the carpal and hand **bones**.

Dr. Rogers: As to the advisability of **placing out** feeble-minded children, there can, I think, be no question concerning the wise course to pursue in regard to **all** who are **definitely de-**

fective mentally, and we should be careful not to confuse the issue. The very conditions that render the existence of institutions for feeble-minded necessary, as custodial homes in the broad general sense, contraindicate the probability of placing out mental defectives, successfully. Of course, if now and then a child that is not mentally defective is committed or admitted to an institution, even though such a child is retarded in mental growth from some remedial cause, such a child should have a home in a good family as soon as one can be found for him. Again, a high grade moron boy of acquired mental defect, might be a very safe case to place out in a good family, though the good families that are willing to take such a person, give him a good home, be responsible for his keep, health, comfort, and conduct for what he can earn the year around, are in our north-west, at least, very rarely found.

We have occasionally found such a family, though in most instances even then the arrangements with them has not been of long duration. The boy has generally become unmanageable or has resented what he deemed to be insufficient compensation for services rendered and has returned to the institution or drifted into a more or less precarious method of securing a livelihood. We have a few boys in Minnesota who have gone out and are doing well, but the number is small, comparatively.

We have never deliberately placed out but two girls, both under exceptionally good circumstances and with former teachers. In one case the temperament of the girl and the very close home influence have combined to secure to her a happy and contented life. In the other case, the temperament and personal attractiveness of the girl and the indiscreet freedom permitted, resulted in the usual fall. Except as first stated, I have always discouraged the sending out of girls, but some have gone out against my judgment and their careers have not been satisfactory.

Dr. Keating: Before Dr. Fernald closes the discussion, I would like to revert to one point and that is the education of the public. The teachers in Baltimore, through the influence of Dr. Huey have been giving lectures to the children on the ef-

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fects of feeble-mindedness. We are familiar with the educational talks about the effects of tuberculosis and alcoholism but there has been nothing said about the nature of feeble-mindedness and the effect on the offspring. The teachings of these teachers are having a splendid effect, and we have been able to retain several children in the institution through the efforts of the teachers. I can't agree with Dr. Bernstein that it would take too long to wait for the effect of educational work. The children of today will be the heads of families tomorrow and I think it pays to educate the coming generation in regard to these very things. I hope the superintendents will never lose an opportunity to tell teachers about the effect of feeble-mindedness. Tell it to the children also and explain it to them in an explicit way, and they will think about it and it will bear abundant fruit.

Dr. Bernstein: I would like to know the age of those children you talked to.

Dr. Keating: The children I have spoken to are from fourteen to sixteen years of age.

Dr. Fernald: Mr. Chairman, I am afraid that my paper was not thoroughly understood because I tried to emphasize the importance of two points. First, that education in the broadest sense must be our chief weapon. We must educate the lawmaker; we must educate the judges, the doctors, the teachers. We must educate the children who go to the high school, and college, and normal school, and the medical student. We can thus leaven the population and they will spread the information to the rest of the public who are capable of being educated. We may deal with the other half of the community by our segregation and our sterilization propositions, or by other means. We all understand that laws on our statute books providing for the segregation and sterilization of the defective will be of no value unless the public is educated to demand an enforcement of them. The states in the Union which are successfully handling this matter, are the states where an intelligent campaign of education has been carried on for more than a generation.

The second point on which I seem to have been misunder-