

C. J. Swendsen, Chairman State Board of Control: Ladies and Gentlemen, quite a few of our superintendents have not yet arrived, but with this beautiful day and the fine roads we expect them all to be here later.

We are glad to hold our quarterly conference at this particular institution. Most of you know the institution very well, I think. It is one of which we are very proud. It has been conducted in times past in an excellent way. We have been fortunate in having had very good men as superintendents.

I am thinking now of Doctor Rogers, who was perhaps the greatest man in his line in the United States.

Then we had Mr. Hanna for about ten years, an excellent executive.

When Mr. Hanna resigned the great question which confronted the Board was where we were going to be able to find a man with the necessary qualifications to take charge of this our largest institution in the state. We went East, where we met ten or twelve candidates. We had met Doctor Murdoch, but were not sure that he would care to come West. As luck would have it, we were able to secure the services of Doctor Murdoch. It meant a great deal to the Board, to the institution, and to the state of Minnesota to be able to get a man so well qualified, one who had had the wonderful experience which the Doctor has had. Since he came everything has been running very smoothly; there has been no criticism by anybody. His master hand took hold of the institution and it is in very good shape.

I am glad that Doctor Murdoch has promised to address the conference at this time, giving a brief history of the institution. It affords me great pleasure to introduce Doctor Murdoch to this audience. Doctor Murdoch.

THE INSTITUTION—MINNESOTA SCHOOL FOR FEEBLE-MINDED

J. M. Murdoch, M.D., Superintendent Minnesota School For Feeble-Minded

Minnesota was one of the first states to establish an institution for the feeble-minded. Such institutions had been established in a few states, and in 1876 the Association of Medical Officers of American Institutions for *Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Persons* came into being. At the fourth annual session of this association, held at Lincoln, Ill., in 1879, Minnesota was represented by Prof. J. L. Noyes, Superintendent of the Minnesota School for the Deaf. At this meeting Professor Noyes reported as follows:

"I was instructed by the trustees of the Minnesota Institution for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind to visit you, and to express through you the thorough committal of our trustees and the people of our state to the proper care of our feeble-minded children, and by next July expect to commence with an experimental class in Faribault, Minn.

"In the thirteen years' experience in the management of our Deaf and Dumb Institution we have encountered annually two, three, or four of these afflicted children who were thrust upon our care. Our attention has thus been called to their necessities, and last year we devoted one page of our report to an appeal in their behalf—this was endorsed by our State Board of Health. After frequent meetings of our board of trustees and consulting the State Board of Health, whereby this matter was freely discussed, it was determined to bring it before the Legislature. Concurrent with this movement there had been discovered a number of imbecile and idiotic children improperly confined in our asylums for the insane, and a commission of excellent men—Drs. Wood, Boardman, and Leonard—had been appointed to reorganize those institutions. A bill was passed authorizing this commission to remove to their homes, or to send to the custody of the trustees of the Institution for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind, such feeble-minded children as should be found in the Asylum for the insane, and for whose support an appropriation of thirteen thousand dollars was made. Said commission in due time found and reported in favor of fifteen children to be sent to Faribault. The trustees had accepted this proposition; and had provided a large, airy, well-appointed building—large enough for thirty or forty children—admirably situated on a bluff near the Deaf and Dumb Institution, where the good work is to be initiated by Dr. H. M. Knight, of Connecticut; and it is hoped that under the future administration of the son of Dr. Knight, and the blessing of God, the foundations are surely laid of a noble state institution for Minnesota."

Professor Noyes referred also to the good spirit of the people of Minnesota in these philanthropic matters.

The institution was opened as a department of the Minnesota Institution for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind in July, 1879.

At the following meeting of officers of Institutions for the Feeble-Minded in 1880, Dr. George H. Knight reported as follows:

"You are already familiar with the fact that at the last session of the Legislature of Minnesota the sum of thirteen thousand dollars was appropriated for the establishment for two years of an experimental school for imbeciles.

"Dr. H. M. Knight organized the school last July with fifteen children, all of whom were taken from the insane asylums of this state. Since then we have received five more, making our present number twenty. Their condition when they first entered the school may be imagined when I tell you that they had been confined in the wards with the insane. However,

they were a very good class of children, and capable of great improvement, as was shown by an almost complete change in their habits after three months of steady work.

"Physically and morally we have been able to do a great deal for them; the house is well adapted to our purpose, the sanitary conditions are good, and there has been a marked improvement in the health of the children.

"Mentally our advancement has, of course, been slow, owing largely to the fact that but three of our children were English-speaking when they came. The rest have had to learn a new language, at all times a difficult task, and doubly so for such as these.

"When the school opened one boy could read a very little, the rest were entirely untaught.

"Unfortunately for the large number of imbecile children in the state, this school is as yet but an experiment.

"The attention of the greater part of the people has not been drawn to the fact that such an institution is necessary, but the work has some very warm advocates and is gaining ground.

"Next winter a great effort will be made by those who see the extreme need of a training-school for these children to make this experiment a certainty. When this is accomplished, the law which now makes an insane asylum the only door to this school will be abolished, and we shall hope to see Minnesota providing as nobly for the imbecile as she already has for the deaf and dumb, blind, and insane."

April 20, 1885, Dr. George H. Knight resigned the superintendency of the school to take charge of a similar institution at Lakeville, Conn., with which his late father had been long identified.

In June, 1885, the Board elected as his successor Dr. A. C. Rogers of the United States Indian School, Salem, Ore. Dr. Rogers had previously been an officer in the Institution for the Feeble-Minded in Iowa. He was by nature and training admirably adapted for the position to which he was appointed, and under his able administration the institution developed rapidly to take a foremost place among the institutions of the land. In 1885 Dr. Rogers reported as follows:

"The Minnesota School for Idiots and Imbeciles has sustained a great loss in the retirement of Dr. George H. Knight from the superintendency to assume charge of the institution at Lakeville, Conn. But the work has been so well begun, and is held apparently in such favor by the public, that its friends look for its continued growth and prosperity.

"The last Legislature gave thirty thousand dollars for additional buildings, and it is proposed to expend this amount for a custodial building, to be separated from the school buildings at some distance, provided the amount should prove sufficient, after careful estimates are made, to construct a good building; otherwise, this amount will be used for increasing the capacity of the school buildings. It is probable that the latter course will, from necessity, be adopted.

"The attendance reached ninety during the spring, and the year has opened with all that can be accommodated well at present, one hundred being the maximum.

"There seems to be a strong sentiment in the state in favor of providing for the care of all classes of the feeble-minded, imbeciles and idiotic, and the numerous cases included in these classes whose mental deficiency depends upon epilepsy."

In the same year Dr. Isaac N. Kerlin of Pennsylvania visited Faribault and wrote most approvingly of the progress this institution was making. The following is an extract of a report in which Dr. Kerlin gives his impression of this institution at the time of his visit in 1885.

"Located on the beautiful bluff above the Straight River, Faribault, with a singularly attractive country adjacent, exciting the kindest interest

of an intelligent and warm-hearted community, and with every advantage of space, fertility of soil, and amplitude of water, we know of no institution in the United States so happily and wisely begun. In fact, like the noble state itself, this institution is only embarrassed by the richness of its opportunities.

"The school is an acknowledged success. Its development into all the departments of a great institution is only a question of time, and the readiness of its management to seize their natural advantages."

With the splendid support of the state and the Board of Directors and under the superintendency of Dr. Rogers, the institution became a mecca to which came pilgrims from all states of the Union and from distant shores to see what was being accomplished in Minnesota and to study Dr. Rogers' methods. This was, I believe, the first school to establish a psychological laboratory for the scientific study and classification of types and degrees of the mentally deficient. This department was developed by Dr. A. R. T. Wylie, now superintendent of the Institution for Feeble-Minded at Grafton, N. D., who, while here and subsequently, contributed much to our knowledge of the underlying factors of mental defect. Pioneer work in psychological analysis of mental deficiency was carried on here by Dr. F. Kuhlmann, whose contributions concerning abnormal psychology have done much to clarify our knowledge of the subject and whose modification of the Binet-Simon intelligence tests has been widely adopted and has proved to be of the greatest aid in the evaluation of degrees of intelligence.

Dr. Rogers early appreciated the advisability of establishing a department for custodial cases separate from the school grade. In the school department he appreciated the importance of manual training and made the industrial feature a very important one, providing a great variety of occupations. Separate departments were established for epileptic patients, working boys and a farm colony. A central kitchen with facilities for the distribution of food to all departments was established, as well as a central heating and electric lighting plant. He took a keen interest in the farm and garden and the training of boys in agricultural pursuits.

On the death of Dr. A. C. Rogers, January 2, 1917, the whole world felt the loss of one of the greatest authorities in his day. The feeble-minded lost a beloved friend and champion.

G. A. Merrill, superintendent of the State School at Owatonna, conducted the affairs of the institution as acting superintendent until the appointment of G. C. Hanna, who entered upon the duties of superintendent June 1, 1917. Mr. Hanna ably carried on the affairs of the institution during the trying period of and subsequent to the war and until his resignation in August, 1927, when he withdrew from this institution to give his entire time to the organization of the Colony for Epileptics at Cambridge, during the construction of which he had divided his time between the two institutions.

It was my good fortune to succeed Mr. Hanna as superintendent, August 22, 1927.

My period of stewardship has been so short that I can not lay claim to any credit for anything here which you may deem worthy of praise, nor need I hesitate to comment favorably upon the institution for fear of being considered guilty of self-emulation.

THE INSTITUTION VILLAGE

The institution is now in reality a village community with a population of about 2,000, with its schools, church, playgrounds, industries, warehouses, shops, water works, electric lighting and heating plant, and sewage disposal system, with dairy, farm and garden adjoining.

The property consists of 1,145 acres of ground, of which 576 acres are under cultivation. The inventory value of land, buildings and personal property is \$2,440,331.00. The gross per capita cost for maintenance is about \$250.00 a year. The number of employes is 300.

A dairy herd of 100 Holstein cows furnishes the milk supply.

Groups of boys are employed upon the farm and garden, providing vegetables for the people and feed for the stock.

School training is furnished all children with a mental age of over four years and a chronological age under 16, and appropriate habit and industrial training is given to all regardless of age.

Persons of all ages and of all grades of mental deficiency are received. However, they are a selected group and do not represent accurately all grades of mental defectives, as pointed out by Dr. F. Kuhlmann, Director, Research Bureau, in "The State's Program for the Feeble-Minded" presented to the conference at a recent meeting.

In this program Dr. Kuhlmann told us of the vastness of the feeble-minded problem. As he states, there was a time when life commitment to the institution for all cases was regarded as the only method, but this is no longer true. There are probably at least 25,000 mental defectives in Minnesota alone. Of these this institution can not accommodate more than 2,000 at the present time. We now know that all feeble-minded persons can not and should not be permanently segregated in institutions. We know that the majority will never need such provision, and that with public schools providing special classes and social agencies providing extra-mural supervision the majority of the feeble-minded can live at home. However, the great interest in the extra-mural supervision of the feeble-minded is in danger of clouding our vision as to the necessity of making adequate institutional provision, creating the impression that with these community activities in operation the institution population may be reduced or even done away with.

As a matter of fact the exact opposite is the case. Increased community social service has resulted in the discovery of more children who need institutional care, and it is a fact, in communities where special classes are established in the public schools and social service is well organized, that there is a correspondingly greater demand for institutional provision.

Aside from the very helpless low-grade feeble-minded, where the burden upon the family is too great, the necessity of institutional care is not so much a matter of the intelligence quotient as the inability of adjustment in the community on account of personality traits which do not necessarily depend upon a low level of intelligence, but are such personality traits as are making trouble in the lives of individuals of normal intelligence.

MEDICAL SERVICE

The medical staff consists of one senior and two junior physicians. We have two visiting surgeons, a visiting consultant in diseases of the eye, ear, nose and throat, and a dentist.

All persons on admission are given a thorough medical examination and, where indicated, corrective procedures are carried out.

We have a well equipped hospital. Our people are immunized against typhoid fever, scarlet fever and diphtheria.

Psychometric tests are given by the Research Bureau of the Board of Control.

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

The school faculty consists of a principal and 26 teachers. Instruction begins in kindergarten, and each pupil has an opportunity to go as far in regular school work as his capacity permits. However, few go beyond the fourth grade. Special attention is given to nature study, gardening and the various activities incidental to life upon the farm. Physical training and music receive appropriate attention. Religious exercises are conducted regularly. Weekly dances are held for the children, the music being provided by the institution orchestra. Moving pictures are exhibited frequently. A series of entertainments are given by the school children, and frequently performances by amateur musical and theatrical talent by our friends in the neighborhood.

All of the holidays are appropriately observed.

Ample playgrounds are provided for games of all sorts, and the institution property provides attractive groves for picnics and out-of-door entertainments, which are frequent occurrences throughout the summer.

In conducting the affairs of the institution, I am indeed grateful for the loyal support that has been given me by the able group of men and women who are engaged with me in the work, and especially I wish to express my appreciation of the assistance, encouragement and support given me by the State Board of Control.

The Chairman: We want to thank Doctor Murdoch for the splendid history of this institution which he has given us. I am sure we all realize that it has had a more wonderful growth than any other institution in the state, but in spite of what has been done there is a crying need for the state to take care of the feeble-minded who do not have the advantage of institutional care. We have, as Doctor Murdoch stated, about 2,000 here. We have on the waiting list today about 500 scattered all over the state of Minnesota. Out of these 800, 400 should have institutional care immediately. It can not be done. I do not think that any state in the Union can keep pace with the demand for new buildings. Taken as a whole, Minnesota has done remarkably well. Within the last three years we expended between \$400,000.00 and \$500,000.00 at Cambridge. That institution was started in order to relieve the situation here, and relief is coming. The epileptics are transferred from here as soon as we have room at Cambridge. We are now erecting a building at Cambridge, and some 75 or 80 will probably be transferred there this fall.

What we need more than anything else in connection with this institution is another custodial building. If you will go through the custodial

departments here and see the hundreds of children who are absolutely helpless—I have reference to the idiots—and then realize that we have hundreds just like them in homes throughout the state where it is impossible to give them proper care. I am sure you will know that we need another building here for that class of children. We are asking for \$125,000.00 for that building. I do not know of anything so necessary as that, and I am rather sure that the governor and the legislature will give us the money. We have no reason to complain because, as I stated before, large sums of money have been expended within the last few years for these unfortunates, but we need your help to get that building and we need the help of the legislature and the governor.

Last night I attended a banquet of fathers and sons. It was my good fortune to be there with my two sons and three grandsons. To illustrate the fact that fathers and sons should be pals, one of the men told this story: A venerable bishop in England had a habit of going to walk in the park every day. One day he sat down in the park as usual, but when he tried to get up he had difficulty. A young man who happened to see the bishop went up to him and said: "May I help you?" The bishop asked: "Are you strong?" The man replied: "Yes, indeed; I have helped my daddy many a time when he was drunker than you are."

We need the help of the governor and the legislature and the people of this state in securing a building to care for the custodial cases.

Arthur F. Kilbourne, M. D., Superintendent Rochester State Hospital: It is always a great pleasure to visit this institution which I have been doing since 1885. I believe that Doctor Phelps and I are the only ones here who knew Doctor Knight when he was superintendent of this institution. Doctor Knight was a cousin of Doctor Phelps and a very fine man. He went East and died while campaigning for the governorship or for the United States senate from his state.

In Doctor Bartlett's report of 1870 he recommended the very thing that you have here today for the feeble-minded, realizing that the state hospital was no place for them.

Doctor Rogers, of course, I knew all the time he was here. A finer man never lived.

This institution really should be and is the pride of the state. It is always so well kept up, the children are so well cared for. I do not wonder that it was and is a mecca for all people engaged in this work.

I thank you.

R. M. Phelps, M. D., Fairbault: It occurs to me as appropriate to put in a few notations to supplement in a way the fine general historical description given us by Doctor Murdoch.

Doctor Henry Knight, mentioned as the original promoter of the institution, was an uncle of mine; he married my father's sister. I visited his institution in Lakeville several times. The connection here is that his work carries the work of institutional care of the feeble-minded back to the period of its beginning.

It was about the year 1850 when Dr. Henry Knight came to the little town of Salisbury, Conn., to practice medicine. I have a vague impression that at that time there was only one established institution in the United

States. Doctor Knight in some way caught the vision of possibilities. In 1855 he was on a commission which sought an institution from the legislature. The measure failed by one vote. Remember that at this time there was no general enthusiasm back of the move. Yet Doctor Knight persevered, and in 1858 established a few pupil patients in his home at Lakeville. The Civil War, with all its distractions, was coming on, yet the move progressed, and in 1861 a corporation was formed. In 1863, corporation and private donations helping, the state started a general building. From thence on it grew quite well. The income was derived from privately paid patients, from county pay for indigents, and from help given by the state from time to time.

I first visited the institution in 1888. It was then a rambling collection of wooden buildings, built economically from time to time but with full equipment. It was located in a quiet little village. There had been no political selection, and small towns are common in Connecticut. From 1850 to 1860 might be called the "homespun age," the time when each farm home was its own manufactory, where the family raised the sheep, spun the wool and flax, wove the cloth, and made the garments. They also ran the candles and made the soap. There was no railroad there. It is difficult now to think of all the things they lacked.

As I picture him, Doctor Henry Knight was a man of surpassing general "humanity," a man of prominent "personality," of benevolent good will, and an interest in all people of all kinds. I presume it was these qualities which enabled him to work up the institution to its future standing. Doctor Knight died in 1880, still a rather young man.

As has been told, Doctor George Knight was selected as superintendent to follow his father, and held the position until his death in 1912. He also was prominent politically and in official positions in Connecticut. Finally, some twelve years after his death, it was voted to supplant by a fireproof and modern structure the institution built in such a rambling, piecemeal style.

This is meant only as a little picture of one of the transient phases, one of the transient scenes on the "moving" picture of life, one that has gone so far that it is hard to bring it back to conscious living force even though there are those yet living whose age span covers the whole of it.

The Chairman: Doctor Kuhlmann, do you wish to say anything? You were here a great many years.

F. Kuhlmann, Director Research Bureau: I didn't have anything in mind to say.

I think we are all fortunate in having at the head of this school Doctor Murdoch, who has given us such a good account of the institution's work. I believe he knew the institution well before he came here. Most of the people who are in this work knew Doctor Murdoch before he came here, and I think they will not be surprised at anything that may happen to his credit while he is here.

The Chairman: Doctor Smith, may we hear from you?

P. A. Smith, M.D., Fairbault: Mr. President, I took a back seat on purpose. I did not come here to talk. I am not qualified to speak in an assembly.