

L. G. Foley, Chairman, State Board of Control: I think there will be many things of interest in our meeting today, things we all will enjoy, but before we start our program I should like to introduce the new member of the Board of Control, Mrs. Anna O. Determan. Have you anything to say to this organization this morning, Mrs. Determan?

Mrs. Anna O. Determan, Member, State Board of Control: Mr. Chairman, Co-workers and Friends, I do not want to intrude upon the time of this program, but I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation for the very kindly attitude and the spirit of cooperation which I have met at the different institutions where I have been and in St. Paul. I have been impressed with the spirit that seems to be manifest, the spirit of wanting to carry on as usual in spite of any adverse circumstances, which I know you have all had during the past years with the overcrowded institutions and the shortage of funds.

Aside from that I haven't anything to say other than to assure you of my desire to cooperate with you and with my colleagues on the Board to the end that the best interests of our institutions may be served in accordance with the wishes of the responsible people of our state.

Mr. Foley: Thank you, Mrs. Determan.

Doctor Murdoch, you are the first speaker on the program. Will you tell us all about your fine institution?

THE MINNESOTA SCHOOL FOR FEEBLE-MINDED

J. M. Murdoch, M. D.

Superintendent, Minnesota School for Feeble-Minded

I will not attempt to tell you all about this institution. I will confine my remarks to a very few of the pertinent facts, which will not take up a great deal of time.

I am often asked the question of how it happens that there are three state institutions here in Faribault. To understand that we must go back to the time when Minnesota was established as a state.

Minnesota became a state in 1858. The early interest of the state in her handicapped members and her early acceptance of the responsibility for their welfare is evidenced by the fact that the first state legislature, assembled in 1858, passed a law creating a school for the deaf under the name of the Minnesota State Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb. This school, although authorized in 1858, was not opened for the admission of pupils until five years later. Located in the city of Faribault, it opened in 1863, with eight pupils in attendance.

In the following year the name of the institution was changed to the Minnesota Institute for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind, and provision was made for the training of the blind as well as the deaf.

At that time there was no place for the mentally defective. Many of them were admitted to the school for the deaf because they did not talk. Others, because of their defective condition, were admitted to the state hospitals for the insane in Rochester and St. Peter.

In 1879 the legislature authorized the board of directors to open an experimental department for feeble-minded children, and in July of that year fifteen children were transferred from the Rochester and St. Peter state hospitals to Faribault.

It is interesting to note that of those fifteen children who were transferred to the institution at Faribault in 1879, fifty-seven years ago, one still remains with us. He was the eleventh in order of admission. This boy, "J. T." we will call him, was born in 1866. His age on admission was thirteen. His present age is seventy. He was an indigent patient, sent to the institution from Otter Tail county. When admitted he was an excitable idiot, barked like a dog, pounded his head with his hands, never learned to talk, and never advanced beyond the mental age of three or four years. He was always noisy and destructive. In recent years he has become less disturbed. He is now quiet and inoffensive. His physical condition is fairly good. During the last few years he has become quite attached to one of the young, helpless children, and he helps in caring for this little crippled boy. For one thing he takes him to the bathroom. He has learned to put on his own clothes and now helps this little boy dress—only under supervision, of course. He is no longer a difficult man to care for.

Among that first fifteen was a woman who died about a year ago. She, also, was a very destructive, excitable idiot until about a year before she passed away, when she began to lose weight and vigor and gradually faded away. Some fifteen or twenty years ago she developed tuberculosis, but recovered from that condition.

We still have with us another man who was admitted that same year, 1879, although he was not one of that first group of fifteen. He came from one of the state hospitals and was eight years of age at the time of admission. He was of a

higher mentality than the other two just mentioned, but made very little progress in school, although he improved somewhat by the training he received and became quite a useful boy on the farm. He worked most of the time around the dairy. Although not able to work there now, he still lives at the Dairy Cottage and helps in cleaning up the basement of that building. He has always been good-natured and well-behaved. He is in fairly good health at the present time.

In 1887 the name of the institution was changed to the Minnesota Institute for Defectives, and provision was made for separate departments for the deaf, the blind and the feeble-minded.

Separate buildings were provided for the blind in 1874 and for the feeble-minded in 1882. The first building of the group provided for the feeble-minded was the north wing of this main building.

Thus you see how it happens that three state institutions were located in Faribault. First came the Minnesota State Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb. Next provision was made in that institution for the training of the blind as well as the deaf, and it was called the Minnesota Institute for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind. Then came the special class for the feeble-minded and the name of the institution was changed to the Minnesota Institute for Defectives. Later we have the separation into three institutions.

The present official name of this institution, School for Feeble-Minded and Colony for Epileptics, was adopted in 1905. Locally the institution is now known as and called the State School and Colony. We do not use the word feeble-minded in talking or writing to the family about our children.

Since the creation of the State Board of Control in 1901, all state institutions have been under its control. Prior to that time the three institutions at Faribault were under a special board of managers.

In 1919 the legislature authorized the State Board of Control to select from the public lands of the state sites for a colony for feeble-minded and a colony for epileptics. In 1923 the law was amended to permit the purchase of a site for a colony for epileptics. Land was secured at Cambridge and the colony was opened in 1925 by the transfer of fifty-one patients from this institution. Since that time 377 epileptic patients have been transferred from this institution to Cambridge.

Most of the epileptics transferred were those in whom epilepsy was the dominating defect, although I believe there were few if any in whom there was not more or less mental impairment. Few epileptics with intelligence quotients under 40 or 50, or who were bedridden or physically handicapped to such a degree that they were unable to go up and down stairs unassisted, were transferred.

We still have in the institution ninety-five feeble-minded epileptics.

The institution is now in reality a village community, with a population of 2,649, of whom 2,309 are inmates and 340 employes. We have our own schools, hospital, assembly hall in which are held church services as well as public gatherings of all kinds, concerts, dances, motion pictures, and so on. We have our own farm, garden and dairy, power plant, water supply, sewage disposal plant, shops of various kinds, storehouses, and so on. The property consists of 1,183 acres owned and 49 acres rented—22 acres from the School for the Blind—of which 600 are under cultivation. We have 170 acres of meadow and hay land; 220 acres of pasture; about 8 acres in small fruits and orchard; about 70 acres of wood land; and the building sites occupy about 110 acres.

In all there are fifty substantial buildings, twenty-six of which are occupied by inmates. The other buildings are the nurses' and employes' homes, power house, barns, shops, service buildings, and so on.

Food for all but a few of our population of 2,600 is prepared in a central kitchen and is served in twenty-five separate dining rooms.

Only two of our twenty-six buildings for inmates are kept under lock and key, one for delinquent males and one for delinquent females.

The institution is no longer divided into school and custodial departments. We consider the whole institution a school and every child under training, even though that training may consist of the simplest habit-formation, the training being dependent upon the mental age and the ability of the child to learn.

Provision is made for feeble-minded persons of all degrees of mental deficiency and no age qualification is required for admission. The large number of separate buildings provides excellent means for classification.

No person is admitted to the institution who has not been adjudged to be feeble-minded and been committed to the care and custody of the State Board of Control. Application for commitment is made to the probate court of the county in which the person to be committed resides. Thereafter, if in the opinion of the Board it is advisable, he is admitted to the institution for care, training and treatment.

The person responsible for the support of any person legally admitted is required to pay forty dollars a year. If the person so liable is unable or fails to pay, the forty dollars a year becomes a charge upon the county in which the person so admitted has a legal settlement.

The three functions of the institution are:

1. The educating of the high-grade feeble-minded pupil by appropriate training in school, in shop, or on the farm, to fit him for life outside the institution under favorable conditions.
2. To provide the intermediate grade, incapable of adaptation in the outside world, useful employment, congenial companionship and a good home.
3. To tenderly, humanly and economically care for the very helpless child whose presence in the home entails a burden too heavy and exacting for the family to bear.

In the school department a systematic program of detailed exercises, including kindergarten, sense training, object training, literary exercises, calisthenics, manual training, and recreations, occupy the pupil's entire day and develop his physical, mental and moral being by methods specially adapted for the training of the feeble-minded. Academic, manual, physical and social training are coordinated, emphasizing each according to the individual needs of the child.

Owing to the large number of feeble-minded and the fact that only a small portion of the feeble-minded in the state can be cared for in the institutional school, after special training every effort is made to return as many as possible to community life.

This is a very cursory report of our institution and of what we are attempting. I hope you will have an opportunity, before the day is over, to go about the school and see for yourselves what we have and what we are trying to do.

Mr. Foley: Thank you, Doctor Murdoch. You gave us a very fine resume of what your institution means and what you are attempting to do in it. We all, I am sure, have learned a great deal this morning.

The next speaker on the program is Dr. A. R. T. Wylie, assistant physician at this institution, who will present some of the different types of mentally defective patients. Doctor Wylie.