President's Annual Address.

By Dr. A. C. Rogers, Faribault.

Minnesota is one of the few states that began early in its history to comprehensively grasp its charitable and correctional problems, and this fact is no insignificant factor as a cause of its wonderful prosperity. Without attempting anything critical or exhaustive, I had thought of presenting a sort of panoramic view of some of its institutions, especially those under the management of the state, with such cursory comments as they have suggested to me.

Dependent Children.—Beginning with the children, this state has assumed that every child should be brought up in a good home, and so (since 1880) it gathers up the outcast and neglected ones, takes them to the beautiful, temporary home at Owatonna, where it feeds, clothes and educates them till permanent homes can be secured.

The facts that (1) the provisions of the law are so broad in application as to miss no child in need, if the authorities are true to their trusts; (2) that the most thoroughly disinterested officer of each county holds the authority to determine the necessities of each case, including the question of separation from parents; (3) that the object of the whole scheme is to place hooligan and neglected children in normal families, rather than to retain them in the institution; (4) that the state holds them under absolute control till of age, and can thus remedy at once any mistake made in placing them; (5) that the state keeps thoroughly posted concerning them, and does readjust their placing as occasion requires—are some of the salient features of this work. That there should have been received under state guardianship to Jan. 1, 1800, 1,824 children, indicates the breadth of the work; and that; 83 per cent of the 304, at that time past the age of supervision, should have developed into excellent manhood and womanhood is a fact that can be fully appreciated only by a consideration of the probable results had these 304 children grown up amid the environments from which the most of them were rescued. To what extent county commissioners are watchful of their
duty, and how wisely the judges of probate exercise their authority in annulling parental guardianship are questions that would be of interest to learn.

The reformatory and penal system of Minnesota has certainly been wisely organized and developed.

The school at Red Wing, by recognizing the importance of accidental environment in determining the conduct of many of its pupils, has happily adopted the name of Training School, significant of its rational aim to educate its pupils, largely by establishing industrious habits and independence of character. But this rational work would be very incomplete without the further plan of supervision after discharge, now in vogue, the extending of the helping hand when most needed. What is true of Red Wing is equally true of St. Cloud, so far as the final purposes are concerned. Even the veteran institution at Stillwater (that ranks historically with the capital at St. Paul), that would, under the old idea, be simply the home for the hopeless criminal, who would pursue the weary round of daily toil to the predetermined end, without hope of variation or relief, rationally treats its unfortunate inmates as though possessing still some elements of manhood and some ambition to respond to the effort at education and the application of the indeterminate sentence and parole system.

The secretary of the state board of charities states that there is a constant improvement in the jails of the state, both as to sanitary conditions and classification of inmates. As the counties are becoming more prosperous and new jails are constructed, the authorities are looking around for advice as to better methods of arrangement and construction, and under the present law they have a perpetual source of information in the board.

There is still room for improvement in some quarters, but the encouraging feature is the increased desire to improve. St. Louis county, I understand, early took its place in the front rank.

Minnesota has its state board of charities that, having no managerial authority over its institutions, can stand between them and the public, and serve the interests of both, when misunderstandings occur, by being in a position of truth, and possessing the facilities for acquiring accurate information concerning every detail of the former, and with no bias and no interest to serve except that of the truth and the welfare of the state.

As to the poorhouses, the board of charities claims that the entirely dependent poor have not been sufficiently numerous in the state to make their care generally a serious problem, and only a few of the counties have poorhouses, and some of them are practically empty.

The proper treatment, care and disposition of the insane, the feebleminded and the epileptic are the great problems of the state's charities. The management of the insane and the management of the feebleminded each involves its own peculiar problems. It would seem that the rational principles involved in the treatment of the insane are (1) careful diagnosis, (2) care and treatment of each case from first to last, as a mentally sick person, with that nice adjustment of medication, nursing, diet, social intercourse and restraint, rest and employment that the peculiarities of each case suggest.

The nearer the daily life of the individual approaches that of the normal family the better it is for that individual. With the defective classes that conformity is practically impossible; hence the necessary evil of the institution organization. As the probabilities of safe and permanent restoration to society increase, the advisability of nearer approach to normal life increases, as does also the willingness of the public to pay the greater expense of care and treatment. As the chances decrease the reverse is true. The diversity of opinions as to methods arises principally from the different values that different people place upon these conditions.

Whether the "county system" or the "colony system" as such should be adopted, it is not in my province to discuss. The question is already before the public, and the various advocates of the two systems have been, and will still be, heard from, and we must depend upon the representatives of the people in the legislature to finally determine this point.

Among the younger charities is that which gathers up the feeble gifted and the simple-minded children of the state—children always, in their mental heritage—and nurses and trains them to the limit of their capacities. Because this work is so little understood is my apology for some special explanation of its nature and purposes. The school for feeble-minded at Faribault is not the "institute for defectives," as many think, but is a department of the same; its objects are to educate all children who, by reason of mental deficiency, cannot be educated in the public schools, and to make a home for those incapable of mental development. It, therefore, consists of two quite distinct departments, viz., that of training and that of custodial care, and yet their functions are ultimately similar. These people present a problem quite distinct, in the main, from that of all other classes. These are children with eyes, but they see not as others see; they have ears, but their hearing is not their bane. Their mental capacity is not equal to their will, their retention uncertain. Handicapped from the start, they fall constantly behind their normal brothers and sisters. If possessed of quiet, confiding natures, they become the prey of the mischievous maker. If of nervous, excitable, aggressive temperaments, they constantly annoy and even injure their playmates. They are the objects of unceasing care and solicitude on the part of the mother, and they are the bête noire of the teacher. These unwelcome visitors that enter the families and schools of the rich and poor, unlike the other children of the state, seem to have no place in the home. They are misfits of both the family and the school, and no amount of shaping of which they are susceptible ever fits them for a normal place, either in the family, the social or the business world. This fact is at the foundation of the distinctive feature of the school for feeble-minded, viz., that it is essentially a permanent home for all classes of feeble-mindedness. The explanation of this is not far to seek. The feeble-minded child lacks the capacity for normal development. Placed under patient teachers and caretakers who understand his nature, and have the facilities for his training, he can in a large percentage of cases become a useful person within a narrow range of activities, but his limit and range are soon reached. He will always lack in the higher mental qualities of comparison and judgment, and will possess but little power of adaptation to circumstances. Thrown upon his own resources, he cannot cope with his more stouter brother and quickly sinks to the level of the vagrant. Placed under the influence of the criminal, he is not infrequently that of the criminal. What is true of the feeble-minded boy is true of the girl, with the additional fact that her sphere of self-helpfulness is still more limited and her moral degradation
almost certainly, in the family, though he may have developed under training the manner and behavior of a gentleman, and perform promptly and accurately the simple occupations he has learned. His parents must take him into account in all their plans and practically the same oversight and direction that they give their normal child of four or five. In the family is of which social standing their defective child is necessary, for it is born from public and cruelty on the side: it he belongs to the family of the day laborer, mechanic or farmer, the father is seriously interested in the pursuit of his child in the public. Even in those cases where the parents can and shall do give their child that special and attention that he requires, and the mother usually it is beyond her ability to control him. Even in those cases where the parents can and shall do give their child that special and attention that he requires, and the mother usually it is beyond her ability to control him. classification of child, the regular life of a well-organized school, the community of spirit, the spirit of an institution, will do all that can be done, with some method of training and discipline, to maintain the care and control of a feeble-minded child, even when they are financially able to do so. Some with the majesty will not.

Thus, the school of feeble-minded children as a rule encourages the plan of sending its educated pupils back to their homes. In cases where having been good homes and their people are so situated that they will give them the necessary supervision, well and good. When they do this the policy is so adequate, so far as possible, of their ambition and welfare. The policy, moreover, is of the people, is of the school and the good majority must remain at the school. The boys can perform any successfully, under supervision, the simple occupations of the farm and garden, including the care of the livestock and the handling of the farm tools. but as the general instruction is a convenient market for all the agricultural and domestic studies that have been prepared, the farm colony is a very important feature of school discipline. Thus the training department, with its kindergarten, its schools, its shops, the asylum for the hopeless, the farm, garden, shop, and shop, with their several courses for suitable employment, amusement and recreation and the opportunities for social and moral discipline, form a veritable "village of the simple," where they may live in happy contentment the useful portion of their days, without disturbances of the general school system, and where they neither worry nor are given in marriage.

It is the aim that the treatment of the poor, according to the associated charities above, which involves the thorough investigation of every application, and which seeks to avoid patronizing and to stimulate self-helpfulness, is rational and right, and yet how difficult to convince many intelligent and influential people of the necessity of this course. It is advanced and discussed in nearly all meetings of this kind, national, state, district and local, and yet indiscriminate giving, or worse, the giving of personal or political advantage—always so far to the principles of the association, is self-helpfulness, do much to undermine the beneficent results of the associated charities and to negative the public in the proper use of its patriotic and methods. In the smaller towns of the state it is very difficult to keep up any charity organization, particularly because the work of investigation must necessarily be strenuous.

Although the present times are prosperous, we should keep in the process of education on the principle that we should prepare for war and times of trouble.

One class of very unfortunate people--Minnesotans is still only partial in the work of alleviating distress and improvements, the epileptics. One class of people is still only partial in the work of alleviating distress and improvements, the epileptics. One class of people is still only partial in the work of alleviating distress and improvements, the epileptics. One class of people is still only partial in the work of alleviating distress and improvements, the epileptics.
almost complete standard is maintained. Incompetent help should not be employed at any price, and there should be a certain period of probation, with a small wage, if any, to insure an ability to adjust himself. This could easily be afforded by the applicant because he has to view the good wages and permanent employment awaiting the person competent and qualified. To the extent that increased expense was compensated with increased efficiency, there would be no fear of the public that pays the bills. For while the economy is justly and properly made much of in both public and private, and I prefer to take my chances with the public with an increased per capita with an honest administration and efficient service than with a low per capita with either a dishonest administration or an inefficient service.

So far I have referred only to some of the working details of the vast machinery that is dealing with some of the abnormal conditions of humanity. It is right to say this machinery is kept in first-class condition, with up-to-date improvements and with skilled operators to direct and supervise it, but it is the duty of every intelligent man and woman to look critically into our social systems for the purpose of discovering, as far as possible, the causes of these conditions. We have a right, I think, to assert that all forms of mental defect and alienation and many forms of criminality are the results of congenital deficiency or instability—a deficiency or unnatural apportionment of the elements that compose the wonderful organization known as man. We thus have a right, as scientists, and as persons having the best welfare of the race at heart, to look critically into their antecedents.

If the deficiency is marked at birth, we put the child in a class. If the adult breaks down mentally, we put him into another class. If he violates the moral or statutory code, we put him into still another class. Unfortunately, however, no man is able to determine with very great precision who are competent to beget perfectly healthy offspring. It ought to be perfectly clear to any disinterested person that people who have already been "engaged in the balance and found wanting" should be excluded from the duties and privileges of parenthood. The public is rapidly coming to this conviction, and if some of the always difficult questions of determining the disposition of the better-class cases can be settled satisfactorily, we shall expect our legal friends and legislators to bring about statutory provisions in support of this idea.

Let us not, however, think that legislation of any kind will reach the root of the matter. We are not willing to admit that the best civilization is necessarily a producer of decrepitude, but we must admit that there creep into our civilization many things tolerated and even encouraged which are fruitful of it. The same are the only sources of decrepitude: it is found abundantly in the path of all forms of selfish ambition. The mad rush for wealth that sacrifices all helpful growth of body and soul in the mere pleasure of getting is an intellectual factor. This is an age of excitement; of over-stimulation, and yet he who would shackle his pace does not, for fear he will be outdone in the race. In this connection, and because he is no father to the man, I wish to refer to two things discussed by Dr. Jones at the Illinois State Conference last October, by quoting a few lines from his address upon certain dangers to the "children of the state," viz. "Indolence" and "overweening self-conceit." So often developed in the rearing of children: