

classes of the public schools throughout the state, according to the figures of the Board of Education, there are about 1,500 children whose intelligence is less than 75% normal. These classes are held in only forty-three towns in Minnesota and we do not have complete figures on the number of subnormal children in the regular classes in other communities. However, it is estimated by the leading psychologists of the country that from one to two per cent of the school population is feeble-minded.

Yet, despite the large number of the feeble-minded in the population, there is only one institution in the state to care for them. It has some 1,900 patients and since it is always filled to capacity and new commitments come in on an average of twenty-seven a month, we have a long waiting list. We can not begin to provide adequate training facilities for the younger feeble-minded patients or custodial care for the helpless and the anti-social ones until we have another institution. We are following the same expensive but short-sighted program with the mental defectives as with the delinquents, maintaining costly institutions and courts in an effort to break them of bad habits when it would be much cheaper and infinitely more humane to train both groups when young in habits which will enable them to live among their fellows with the least amount of friction. Sufficient institutions should be built to care for the feeble-minded who will always need institutional care, effort should be made to secure special training for each educable defective either in the public school or in the state institution, that he may be fitted for a useful place in society later, and our system of county supervision for the extra-institutional case developed fully.

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WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR THE EXTRA-
INSTITUTIONAL CASES?

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The word "feeble-minded" still suggests to many persons, even in this enlightened age, a very low-grade type,—the idiot or the low-grade imbecile. Not long ago, a young matron, seemingly intelligent and by her own statement, "very much interested in social problems," asked if it were possible for me to recommend a maid to do housework. She had been told by Mrs. W. that her maid, Helen, was doing very well and that she had been placed with Mrs. W. by the agent of the Child Welfare Board. It seemed that Mary might find a suitable place here so the matter of careful supervision and all the details connected with the girl's stay in this home were discussed. At the mention of the word "feeble-minded," young Mrs. A. became excited and burst out, "Oh is Mary feeble-minded? I didn't understand that. I just couldn't have a feeble-minded girl in my house. The mere sound of the word makes me ill,—they are such awful looking creatures. Surely, Helen in Mrs. W.'s home is not feeble-minded—she is such a nice, neat looking girl." I tried to assure her that Mary was not awful looking—in fact, quite the opposite—very neat and good looking; that she was also quite capable of doing simple tasks about the house and always tried to do her very best; if carefully directed, Mary would probably develop into an efficient maid. But above all things, she needed guidance and supervision, even outside of the house; that she had been committed to the guardianship of the State Board of Control for this reason; that she was not an idiot or an imbecile but a moron. But young Mrs. A. could not get away from the awful sound of the word "feeble-minded".

For present purposes, we shall divide the large army of the feeble-minded into two general groups: the institutional and the extra-institutional cases.

The institutional cases are, of course, those cases which cannot be cared for outside an institution. This includes all types of the feeble-minded: the idiot and low grade imbecile who are always best taken care of in a state institution, and that moron who is found to be impossible as far as extra-institutional care is concerned.

Among the extra-institutional cases are a few idiots and low grade imbeciles whose parents feel that they cannot possibly endure the thought of allowing the child to live in a state institution and are anxious to keep the child at home. Where there is sufficient guarantee that the child will receive good physical care and will not cause the other children in the home to be neglected, the child is allowed to remain in the home and is visited regularly. The majority of the extra-institutional cases are of the moron group, the highest type of the feeble-minded, comprising seventy-five percent of the entire group of subnormals. The cases discussed at this time are of the moron group.

With the large number of feeble-minded in the state, it cannot be considered a practical solution of the problem to place all of them in institutions. It would be a heavy financial burden and is neither necessary nor desirable. There will always be large numbers of feeble-minded in the community, even after more provision is made. The most practical thing to do, is to make still more liberal

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provision for them and to aim at a better understanding of how to care safely for the feeble-minded in the community.

In considering what class of feeble-minded may safely remain in the community, it is of more importance to study *what communities are safe for the feeble-minded*. Most communities have certain conditions which make them unsafe for any unsupervised feeble-minded person. The majority of the feeble-minded are not vicious but are easily influenced for good or for evil. We cannot, therefore, say that this or that feeble-minded person will do well in a certain community as his reactions will depend upon the influence to which he is subjected.

There are at present in Hennepin County one hundred and twenty persons who have already been committed as feeble-minded to the State Board of Control, but are not in the State Institution at Faribault. Of this number forty-five are institutional cases and are awaiting admission to the institution. Seventy-five are cases which we think can be cared for in their own homes or other homes in the community, under proper supervision. We do not mean to say that all of these cases need constant supervision and attention, as in the case of the idiot or low grade imbecile, whose presence in the home is not harmful to the other children. The amount of supervision necessary not only depends upon the type of the particular feeble-minded person but also upon the home and those held responsible for the care of the person under supervision. You can readily see that the case is not so difficult where we have the interest and cooperation of persons willing to accept responsibility.

Susie was reported by the superintendent of an orphanage as being feeble-minded. She was then fifteen years of age and could not be relied upon to perform well the small duties usually assigned to a young girl of her age. She had spells of temper and was disobedient. At times she did fairly good work but only when she felt so inclined. The superintendent insisted that she simply could not remain any longer at the orphanage and the agent of the Child Welfare Board was asked to commit her as feeble-minded and arrange to send her at once to the State Institution at Faribault. She had been given a psychological test by the school examiner and found to have a mental age of eight years and an intelligence quotient of .58. She was attending the special class for subnormals and was doing only fair work.

At that time Susie had lived at the orphanage for three years and according to those in charge was becoming more and more difficult. Her father had died during the influenza epidemic and the mother was unable to support the seven children. She distributed all but two of the children in various private and state institutions; these two were the oldest girl, who could support herself, and the baby who was too young to be placed in an institution. The mother, who we soon learned was decidedly below the average, paid very little attention to Susie at the orphanage. She had remarried and was busy raising a new family. When she was told that the girl could no longer remain where she was, she thought that perhaps her husband might allow the girl to live at home if work could be secured for her so that she could earn enough to pay for her board and room.

Since the girl was definitely feeble-minded and a home must be found for her or institutional care provided, she was committed to the guardianship of the State Board of Control. We realized that she needed constant supervision. She was, as the superintendent of the orphanage said, "a bit wild;" she wanted to go down town by herself, have a great deal of spending money for her own use

and do just as she pleased at all times. She was first placed in the home of Mrs. B. who had had some experience with delinquent girls placed with her by the policewoman. Susie attended the special class for subnormals and performed certain household duties after school hours. In addition to board and room, she received one dollar a week which she used for recreation and small articles of wearing apparel. Her clothes were provided by Mrs. B. and the Child Welfare Department of the Board of Education. Finally Mrs. B. began to expect such services of Susie as only a very efficient, well-trained maid could perform; when these tasks were not done properly, Mrs. B. became greatly infuriated and would threaten the child with severe punishment. After six months with Mrs. B., Susie was taken out of the home and placed with Mrs. G., a woman of average intelligence. During the girl's six months stay in the first home she received treatment for her eyes, paid for her own glasses and received dental treatment at the General Hospital Clinic. She also learned to be clean about her own person and to select clothes which were attractive but inexpensive. She attended Sunday School and went to places of amusement with members of the family and with friends who could be trusted. She played with the other children in the neighborhood, but we regret to state that when one of them found out that she was attending the class for subnormals, she teased her constantly and taunted her with being feeble-minded.

In the home of Mrs. G., Susie was expected to take care of the two small children. Before going to school, she would bathe and dress them, prepare breakfast and get ready for school. She received \$1.50 a week besides board and room. Mrs. G. allowed Susie to select her own clothes, giving her advice and assistance. She learned to clean the house, care for the children, prepare simple meals and do plain sewing. At the age of sixteen she left school and gave full time service, for which she received \$3.50 per week.

She began to notice that the other girls in the neighborhood older than she—went to places of amusement by themselves or with other girls. She began to ask permission to do certain things she knew were forbidden. She quickly recognized the fact that Mrs. G. was not a good disciplinarian, and that her own little girl often disobeyed. Finally Mrs. G. reported that although she and the children had grown very fond of the girl, it seemed best that another home be found for her. She had been in this home fifteen months, had paid for her own clothes, dental treatment and had saved forty dollars.

Another home was found for Susie but she could not adjust herself. It was then decided that she live at a girl's club house and go out to work. She is now working in a laundry and goes to and from work with one of the other girls who we know is reliable. She receives twelve dollars per week, does not find her work difficult and is proud of being able to show a nice savings account. She selects her own clothes and is allowed one dollar a week for spending money. At present she is planning to buy herself a birthday present—a silver wrist-watch and a fur coat for winter. Her board and room at the club house is \$5.50 per week. She keeps an account of all money received and spent, with the assistance of the matron of the club. She is not quite "so wild" as formerly but is still at times, noisy, restless and given to petty lying. She craves affection and that is being supplied by the matron and her assistant as much as is possible. It has a softening effect on the girl and she is apt to be less sullen and antagonistic. Of course she still craves more recreation and excitement than is afforded at the

club house but nevertheless enjoys the hikes, picnics, movies and indoor parties with the other girls.

We did not send Susie to the State Institution because she could not continue living with Mrs. B. and again with Mrs. G. It is often necessary to make plan after plan until the feeble-minded person is at last in the proper environment.

Thomas was committed as feeble-minded when fourteen years of age. For two years he had been subject to spells of temper and at such times would try to injure those near him. He was attending the class for subnormals and according to the psychologist, who gave the mental-age test, had a mentality equal to that of an eight year old child. The mother, a dull normal, was helpless as far as proper supervision was concerned. The father, although somewhat higher mentally than the mother, did not understand the boy, and could do nothing with him. It was also becoming impossible for the teacher to keep Thomas in the room with the other children, as he was quarrelsome and always ready to fight; also he was making very little progress in his school work. After careful consideration, he was committed and sent to the State Institution. He remained there for two years. The father then asked for a three months vacation, which was granted. Later he was given permission to keep the boy at home permanently. The father felt that he understood the boy better and realized that as a feeble-minded child, he needed particular care and supervision.

The boy was very anxious to do some light work. This was secured for him and consisted of delivery of a daily paper for one and a half hours each day. Work seemed to agree with him and he liked the idea of earning money just as his father and brothers were doing. Later he became a helper and errand boy in a large publishing house. This involved very little responsibility but he was very proud of his position, for which he received twelve dollars per week. He does not crave excitement but is content to spend most of his time with his parents and brothers, who understand that he needs more advice and guidance than the average boy of nineteen. He is now employed at the railroad round-house as general utility man. His last pay check for two weeks was \$46.00. He pays eight dollars per week for board and room, buys his own clothes and other necessities and is quite proud of the fact that soon he will be able to show a substantial bank account. He is in this environment almost 100% efficient.

Annie came to our attention when fifteen years old. She had come to Minnesota from a neighboring state with a married sister, who is decidedly subnormal. The mother had died of tuberculosis, the father had remarried and later also died of tuberculosis. The step-mother was willing to take care of the ten-year-old boy, but insisted that Annie make her home with the sister who later moved to Minnesota. The visiting teacher at the school reported that Annie was in the seventh grade, but could make no further progress. The married sister did not want the girl in the house, as they quarrelled constantly. Annie was lazy, ate enormously and was always complaining of ailments. Examination at the clinic showed that she did not have tuberculosis, but did need treatment for the nose and throat. This was provided for a long time by an excellent private physician. Her mental age was ten and one-half years. After careful consideration of the case she was committed to the guardianship of the State Board of Control as Feeble-minded.

She was placed in a private home where she would be allowed to attend school and work for board and room. Although she was stubborn, cried easily,

and was not always clean about her person, she managed to get along fairly well, with advice and supervision. She later tried working in a club house cafeteria, but the noise confused her. Several housework positions in succession were secured for her. Her most successful work was done at the home of Mrs. R., whose husband was a professor at the university. Mrs. R. took a great interest in Annie, taught her personal cleanliness, did not expect her to do work which was entirely beyond her, advised her as to clothes, recreation, etc. In this home Annie was at least 90% efficient. However, professor and Mrs. R. moved out of the state and the girl had to find another home. She was now over sixteen years of age and did not attend school as she could make very little progress.

As time went on Annie remained for shorter periods at her places of employment. She seemed unable to adjust herself and it seemed almost impossible to find a home where the people were willing to take the responsibility. She was very fond of reading magazines and was positive she could write a better movie scenario than any yet written. Perhaps she could. She began several, but never finished them, at least none ever reached the movie magnates as far as we know. She was very fond of fine clothes, especially the bright colored. I shall never forget the day we went shopping for a hat. It was an afternoon of hard work but I finally convinced Annie that a small red hat perched on the top of her enormous head was not becoming. We finally compromised on a brown tam-o-shanter with an elastic band, thus making it large enough to go around her head. I was indeed thankful when she took a millinery course at the Y. W. C. A. and learned to make her own hats; at least they were large enough if not always becoming.

She was always deeply religious and during the three years of our friendship was first a devout Baptist, then a Christian Scientist, and later a Seventh Day Adventist. She never was interested in men—in fact avoided them. But finally Annie succumbed to the charms of a certain Roy. One day it was reported that she had disappeared from her place of work. She was located in a neighboring city about to marry this man whom she had only known for two or three weeks. A carnal knowledge charge was made against the man, but the case was never pressed as it was soon determined that Roy was feeble-minded and of lower mentality than the girl. He was, therefore, committed as feeble-minded, is now working regularly and getting along fairly well under supervision. We were very sorry indeed to be obliged to send Annie to the institution. She herself thought that she ought to go there at least for awhile, as she felt sure it would help her. She had left her last place of employment very much discouraged as her employer had told her that she was not satisfactory and must leave at once. She knew she had failed often and decided that the county agent would not consider it worth while to try her again in another place. She had no home and although she did not really care for this man, decided to marry him.

The fact that a few fail on the first trial or even repeatedly is no proof of their inability to live outside an institution. A failure may succeed when placed in another environment. Many subnormal individuals have at times been at the point of failure and probably would have failed if they had not been given a chance to try again.

We hope that the time will come when Minnesota will be able to try out the colony system which is so successful in New York state. The purpose of these colonies is to test out the boys and girls in an existence more normal than

is possible in a large institution. They are sent out to work and later if proven trustworthy are allowed to live at the houses in which they work, using the colony house as a social center. They are much happier and more content by this method of treatment, much more normal in their lives and activities, while at the same time the public has the benefit of their labor.

Dr. Kuhlmann of the Bureau of Research, two years ago said, "Minnesota is already committed to the plan of extra-institutional control of those types of subnormals who can be taken care of in this way, but we have as yet hardly the beginnings in means and provisions for carrying out such a plan. This means a group of trained field workers, large enough to cover the whole state effectively, to find proper homes and guardians for these cases and act as their guardian's advisors." There has been until very recently only one member of the staff of the Children's Bureau, devoting full time to the feeble-minded. Another has just been added, making only two workers trying to cover the entire field. Minnesota needs more trained workers and more effective equipment in dealing with the great problem of the feeble-minded.

TUESDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 25

Court House, 9 a. m.

PROBATE JUDGES

*State Association of Probate Judges—Honorable A. W. Johnson, President
of Association, presiding, Albert Lea, Minnesota*

SOCIAL ELEMENTS INVOLVED IN JUVENILE COURT PROCEDURE

Honorable Edward F. Waite, Judge of District Court, Hennepin County

It is desirable on occasions of this sort that he who speaks and those who listen should at once get together in mutual understanding of the subject. Precisely what is meant by "Social Elements Involved in Juvenile Court Procedure?" There are few words or phrases which do not have different connotations in the minds of different people, and of the same people at different times. A "juvenile court," for example, is a different thing in St. Louis county, from what it is in the neighboring county of Itasca; and different in both counties from what it is—say—in Fargo or in Boston,—different in jurisdiction, organization, methods and administrative adjuncts.

This morning I shall mean by the term the juvenile court as it exists in what may be termed the rural counties of Minnesota. I use this term merely for convenience, and without any denial of urban conditions to Stillwater or Mankato, or any other lively town where the county population leaves juvenile court jurisdiction in the probate court.

By "procedure" I mean in general the manner in which the court exercises or may exercise its jurisdiction. So far our terminology is simple. But we encounter difficulty if we undertake to define "social elements." The subject as it appears on the program was assigned to me, but I assented to it and accept responsibility for its phrasing. I have never yet been able to frame, nor have I known to be framed by others, a wholly satisfactory definition of the word "social" as used on occasions of this sort. I shall not attempt one now. But I shall try to clarify my own mind, and perhaps make myself better understood, by saying that in what I have to present for your consideration I shall mean by "social elements" a parental as distinguished from a legalistic attitude on the part of the judge; and the administrative functions which are or may be exercised by him and those cooperating with him in children's cases, to the end that this parental attitude may find fullest expression in the work of the court.

All courts have some functions which may be termed administrative, as distinguished from such as are strictly judicial. In many courts these are of minor importance; for the most part the judge is a mere wheel—an important one, to be sure—in the machinery provided for doing justice according to law. The distinctive feature of the juvenile court everywhere, when it deserves the name, is that the administrative functions are or may be greatly enlarged; the points of contact with the community life are not limited to the court room and the mere judicial process; all sorts of available agencies may be laid hold upon, and many extra-judicial methods employed, at discretion. The reason is funda-