The space allotted to the Hospital for Feeble-Minded in this number of the Bulletin may be profitably occupied by a reference to some difficulties and misunderstandings in the work of our Institution. To the public and to those charged with the management of the Hospital an ever-present problem is the pressure for accommodation. Repeated requests for the admission of a case, always met with the same response, "No room," seem to convey in some quarters the impression that we are not trying to do our full duty. A few facts should relieve the minds of those interested of any misapprehension in this regard. In the first place it should be remembered that our population is different from that of a Hospital for the Insane. We do not pretend to cure cases of mental defectiveness. All we can do is to develop as far as possible the mentality of the children sent to us, increase their interest in life and make them more useful and a source of some help to the Institution charged with their maintenance and protection. Unlike the Hospitals for the Insane, there is little movement in our population. From the Hospitals for the Insane a great many are discharged annually as cured or improved. Four of them in 1913 discharged ten per cent. of their daily average population. In the same year our population was 815 and our discharges three, or less than one-half of one per cent. With us it will be seen the number of vacancies in any year depends largely on the number of deaths. If the death rate is low the admissions are few.
Let us now see how the Hospital for Feeble-Minded has tried to meet the public demand for the reception of the mental defectives of Ontario during the past few years. The normal capacity of this Institution is placed at 740. For the year 1912 our daily average population was 814; for 1913, 815; 1914, 815. These figures would indicate that we are keeping the population up to the very limits of our accommodation and that the crowding in of more cases is impossible if we are to have any regard for the health and comfort of our patients.

The building operations now in progress will mean substantial and welcome relief. When the two cottages in course of erection are completed we shall be able to open our doors to probably 300 more patients. Meanwhile the parents of children who should be here and the medical men of the Province interested in feeble-minded cases will, we hope, exercise the virtue of patience.

Proceeding, let us emphasize one or two points that the public appear occasionally to lose sight of. First, this is, as its name denotes, a hospital for feeble-minded. Now and then we have parents and physicians seeking admission for a child whom they say is not mentally defective. We have had physicians erase the declaration of the child's defectiveness from the certificate, and thus leave the certificate as valueless as a blank sheet of paper. If the person for whom admission is being sought is neither imbecile nor idiotic the Hospital for Feeble-Minded has no right to receive the case. We are not conducting a school for dull or backward children. Ours is a training school and custodial institution for children who are not normal and never will be normal.

I wish I could indelibly impress on the minds of the people those two words "for children." Many times we are urged to make room for old men and old women. Imbeciles they are, no doubt, but harmless, inoffensive bodies who would be quite comfortable and could be easily taken care of in any House of Industry. Every
harmless patient of that type admitted to this Institution is a denial to another case of treatment and protection gravely necessary in the interests of the unfortunate and society as well. To train and protect the children—that is the first and all-important purpose of this Hospital. It is only natural, I suppose, that each municipality should strive to unload as many as possible of its charges upon the Province, and were there room for all, this shifting of the burden of maintenance would not be so serious a matter. But when, as is the case, there are two boys or girls sorely needing training and protection for every vacancy that occurs, it is unreasonable to expect that we should open our doors to harmless old men and women whose only trouble is they have no one to look after them.

Working for the reduction of the mental defectives as a class our only hope of success lies in the identification and segregation of all feeble-minded children, young men and women. This is a rational application of the science of eugenics. It places one class of the unfit humanely and comfortably in positions where they cannot marry or reproduce their kind. And, by the way, it is only in an institution such as ours that the defective girl or young woman is absolutely safe. The private home that affords her adequate protection must make a virtual prisoner of the girl and deny her pleasures which under proper surveillance she is privileged to enjoy in an institution.

This, then, should be the aim of all those who desire to help in the work among the feeble-minded: To mark for institutional control the cases that in their age and character present the greatest danger of reproduction. The boy may be able to run errands and do unskilled work; the girl may give promise of developing usefulness in household duties. These facts may intensify, they certainly do not lessen, the dangers of marriage, or the graver evil which spells misery for the unfortunates and a heavier burden for the State. And yet many people think
the only feeble-minded who should be sent to our hospital are the feeble-minded who cannot do anything. We are often asked: "What is that girl doing with you? She can work." The tragedy of the situation is that in many private homes in the Province the feeble-minded girl knows only work and the monotonous seclusion that hides the shame of her proud sisters.

From what I have already said it is quite obvious that the policy that makes for the most generous and most effective segregation of the feeble-minded is the policy that will achieve the greatest measure of success. We cannot bring ourselves to seriously consider any other remedy. Sterilization, even if it could be justified on humane and moral grounds, has not, where adopted, fulfilled the expectations of its advocates. Some earnest, well-meaning people urge the erection of schools which shall train and care for the feeble-minded until they reach maturity. That proposal merely carries the mental defective to the edge of the danger zone. The gravest necessity for their institutional oversight would present itself when the school had finished its work. Indeed, the training of the school may have improved the manner and appearance of the girl or boy and rendered matrimony or its worse alternative all the more easy. The school for feeble-minded must therefore provide a home for its graduates, and the measure of the accommodation of that home will be the measure of the service the school will perform. I was recently told of a case in one of the bordering states. A feeble-minded boy made gratifying progress in the training-school, became an efficient member of the band and a valued assistant in the carpenter shop. The school had done all for him that any school could be expected to do. This boy eloped from the institution, married a former nurse, and the two children that have been born of the union are defective.

The solution of the problem of the feeble-minded cannot, therefore, be reached through the building of schools,
invaluable though they be for the development of the usefulness of this unfortunate class. When the children have finished their schooling, what then? Are they to be sent back to their homes or set loose in the world? Or shall there be another set of institutions to receive and protect and utilize the labor of the graduates of the schools? For my own part I am firmly of the opinion that an institution such as ours—training-school and home combined—meets the requirements of the situation more effectively and more economically than any other plan so far suggested. In our report for the year ending October 31st, 1912, we dealt with this phase of the question at some length, and the views we then set forth we have reason to emphasize now!

"To my mind the ideal institution for the feeble-minded is one that opens its doors to all grades, provides for their proper classification, and, while ministering to the comfort and happiness of all, develops in the improvable cases the greatest usefulness of each. The helpfulness and sympathy of the rugged and healthy toward their stricken companions have impressed me more than I can tell. Nowhere, I believe, can one see more worthy examples of self-sacrifice and true Christian charity than among these children, feeble in intellect, 'tis true, but strong in the generous impulses of their hearts. In an exclusive training-school, where the service would be entirely dependent upon employees, opportunities for the development of the virtues to which I have referred would be fewer, and the spirit of mutual helpfulness less pronounced.

"But the economic side of the question cannot be ignored. The maintenance of this and kindred institutions is kept well within the financial resources of the Province by the labor of the patients. Were we to stop the work of our men in the fields and barns and shops; of our girls in the sewing-room, laundry and wards; and engage outside help for these various services, the annual
expenditure would be enormously increased. If, then, the Province and the municipalities have to care for the feeble-minded, the greatest service to that unfortunate class with the lightest burdens on the people would, in my opinion, be rendered, not by building and maintaining a separate training-school for high grades, but by developing the system under which the improvable cases can be trained according to their capacity, workers can be given healthful, productive employment, and at the same time the comfort of the helpless ones sympathetically ministered to. With adequate accommodation, perfect classification of the various grades is easily attainable under such a system. Indeed, I rather incline to the belief that a more efficient training-school is possible in the presence of the larger operations and more varied activities of an institution such as ours than in a training-school set apart as such and devoted solely to the education of high grades."

We have been considering in this article the case of mental defectives. The dull or backward child presents another problem and one for the educationist to solve.