QUARTERLY BULLETIN of the State Board of Public Welfare

Volume I JUNE, 1920 Number 2

Feeblemindedness and Its Care in South Carolina

Prepared by Mr. Williams and Miss Bishop.

Published by the STATE BOARD OF PUBLIC WELFARE 1008 Palmetto Building Columbia, S. C.

Application Made at the Columbia, S. C., Post Office for Admission as Second Class Matter
A feebleminded person is one whose intelligence is stunted. We shall have to go a little into the words “intelligence” and “stunted” to understand this definition.

Intelligence is the mind as nature gives it to us. It is made up of such elements as perception, memory, reasoning, will; and these all working harmoniously together give us our thought world. There is a distinction between intelligence and knowledge—intelligence we come by naturally and knowledge we acquire. One may have a large intelligence and yet his knowledge may be meager because of some hindering circumstance such as poverty or an environment of ignorance. Knowledge is something that comes from the outside, we have to receive it through our own personal experience or it has to be told to us by someone else. For instance, no person would know that yellow and blue combined make green unless he had seen these colors mixed or unless someone had told him of it. So it is with all of the things, both great and small, that go into a person’s stock of knowledge. Intelligence on the other hand is that inward life that receives the knowledge. This intelligence, let alone will continue to grow to a definite extent.

“Stunted” means arrested growth. A dwarf, for instance, will never grow to normal height. He may be kept well and the most be made of what body he has, but he can never be nourished into a tall man. So with the intelligence if it be stunted; it may be nourished by patient teaching and strengthened by a good physical background, but no nourishing and strengthening will make it go beyond a certain point. “Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?” is as true of the body of intelligence as it is of the body of flesh.

Tredgold’s Definition

A classical definition of feeblemindedness is that given by Tredgold. He says that it is a state of restricted potentiality for, or arrest of, cerebral development, in consequence of which the person affected is incapable at maturity of so adapting himself to his environment or to the requirements of the community as to maintain existence independently of external support.” But
for a simple and workable definition we may hold to our sentence: a feebleminded person is one whose intelligence is stunted.

There are many different forms used to denote feeblemindedness such as amentia, arrested mental development, mental deficiency and retarded development. In our common tongue, whose words were created out of experience that ran through long ages, we have such words as fool, simpleton, dunce, silly person to denote feeblemindedness.

Grades of Feeblemindedness

There are three grades of mental defect:

1. Idiots: That is to say, persons so deeply defective in mind from birth or from an early age as to be unable to guard themselves against common physical dangers.

2. Imbeciles: That is to say, persons in whose case there exists from birth or from an early age mental defectiveness not amounting to idiocy, yet so pronounced that they are incapable of managing themselves or their affairs, or, in the case of children, of being taught to do so.

3. Feebleminded Persons—Morons: That is to say, persons in whose case there exists from birth or from an early age mental defectiveness not amounting to imbecility, yet so pronounced that they require care, supervision, and control for their own protection of others, or, in the case of children, that by reason of such defectiveness appear to be permanently incapable of receiving proper benefit from the instruction in ordinary schools.

The Training School, Vineland, N. J., gives the following classifications of the feebleminded from the standpoint of industrial ability:

**Idiot—Low Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child under one year old; helpless.

**Middle Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child one-year old; feeds self anything.

**High Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child two years old; eats discriminatingly.

**Imbecile—Low Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child three or four years old; plays a little; tries to help.

**Middle-Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child five years old; can perform only simplest tasks.

**High-Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child six or seven years old; can do little errands about the house. Washes dishes, scrubs.

**Moron—Low-Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child eight or nine years old; can scrub, mend, care for room, make beds, etc.

**Middle-Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child ten years old; can do regular work; uses tools.

**High-Grade:** an adult with the mentality of a normal child eleven or twelve years old; can do complicated work such as caring for animals, uses machinery, but cannot plan.

Dr. Goddard, in his book, “Human Efficiency and Levels of Intelligence,” says, “Since efficiency is largely a question of the wise adjustment of means to ends, it is obvious that persons of little intelligence will be capable of only the simplest adjustment. It is the inability to make any but the very simplest adjustments which constitutes feeblemindedness, and it is because of this inability that the defective is so inefficient that he can rarely earn sufficient to maintain himself. Education for the normal child consists in giving him such a stock of experiences and general principles that he is able to adapt himself to any of the ordinary situations of life; and with increasing experience, to almost any situation that may come up. The feebleminded person, on the other hand, cannot be given the general principles. He can only understand concrete situations. Consequently when a new situation arises which is different from any that he has seen, having no general laws of principles that he can call upon, he is unable to meet it. The extent of these limitations is often surprising. For instance, a feebleminded girl who might have been taught to make bread according to a very definite formula would be utterly helpless if told to make half the usual amount; while the cook who reasoned that if it took three minutes to boil one egg, it would take six minutes to boil two might be above the moron grade, although very little. When it comes to steaming eggs six minutes in a pint of hot water for one egg, it requires a relatively high grade of intelligence to understand that two eggs require a quart of hot water rather than twelve minutes in a pint of water.”
Often persons appear to be shiftless and lazy when they are morons of a high grade whose mental defectiveness is unknown to the community in which they live. This shiftlessness and laziness is due to the sluggishness of the nervous system, which is so dependent on the mind. When the brain does not work with proper coordination of its parts or is torpid and uncertain in its functionings, the whole nervous system takes on an apathy. The characteristics of these people that we have faulted are therefore the effects of a condition over which persons themselves have no control.

Another class of the mentally retarded that give much trouble are those of nervous instability. Those people hold jobs for a while and then leave without provocation. Those that do not recognize the mental deficiency of these persons think that they are impelled by tempers or motives that they have failed to discipline. The inevitable in this case must happen, the afflicted ones lose the confidence and sympathy of their fellows and traveling through much misfortune finally settle in the almshouse, or in the home of some kind-hearted person, there to end their days in poverty.

Chapter II.—Causes of Feeblemindedness

Early Hypotheses

What causes feeblemindedness? In the ancient days men turned to religion or philosophy for an answer to this question. The idiot child was in the possession of devils which must be cast out or, as was believed at a later period, he was one of a class especially blessed and under divine care and protection. It was to demonstrate the theories of the materialistic school of philosophy that Dr. Itard, in 1800, undertook the education of the “savage of Aveyron,” thus giving to the world the first recorded attempt in the training of idiots.

Itard believed that at birth the human mind might be likened unto a blank tablet or “tabula rasa,” on which, through the following years would be engraved the impressions received through the senses. He believed that his “wild boy of Aveyron” lacked only training to become a normal person. His efforts failed because the mind of the idiot boy did not have the same innate capacity for development as is possessed by the normal mind.

Present Scientific Beliefs

We know now that at birth the development of the human mind has already progressed far, along with the development of the nervous system, and that each of us possesses innate mental characteristics, tendencies and capacities in which we differ in more or less degree from every other person. We believe, too, that by far the most important single cause of feeblemindedness is heredity, and that the part played by environment in producing mental defect is a relatively small one. Of course, there are a few authorities who dispute this, and all agree that many cases of feeblemindedness are due to environmental causes, both pre-natal and post-natal.

For instance, that type of mental defect known as Mongolianism is believed to be caused by pre-natal malnutrition. What the lacking nutritive element is, has not been determined but scientists are working on the problem. In the same way it is possible that alcoholism, syphilis, tuberculosis and other diseases may sometimes, by affecting the health of the mother, cause the child to be malnourished, so weakening the nervous system as to
destroy its capacity for complete development. This, however, is not an established fact.

Belief in the "marking" of infants and in all that class of phenomena known as "maternal impressions," as pre-natal causes of feeblemindedness, is widespread. Without going into a discussion of this question, it is sufficient to say that no reliable evidence of the genuineness of these phenomena has ever been found, and that the teachings of medical science seem to relegate such a belief to the realm of ignorance and superstition.

Severe illness and serious accidents during infancy and early childhood are responsible for many cases of feeblemindedness. The amount of mental defect due to these causes is variously estimated. That there is a tendency to ascribe undue importance to such accidental causes is shown by a study of the family history in many of these cases. If we have mental defect occurring in several successive generations, there is at least a reasonable doubt as to whether the child would not have been feebleminded anyway, even though the illness or the accident had not occurred.

**Backwardness Distinguished**

Malnutrition, diseased tonsils and adenoids produce backwardness in children. The child who is handicapped physically cannot hope to compete successfully with other children in the race for mental and educational accomplishment. This, however, is not genuine feeblemindedness, but merely backwardness, and once the physical impediment is removed, the retardation will disappear and the child will attain to his normal development.

Lack of education and training never produces feeblemindedness, nor even mental retardation. A child who has never been to school may seem to be mentally backward and often even feebleminded, while in reality he is only retarded educationally. Such a child has just as much native intelligence, and will have as much intelligence when he becomes a man, although he has never spent a day in school, as if he had enjoyed the finest education. To be sure he will not have the same amount of knowledge at his command, but the difference will be one, not of intelligence, but of intellectuality.

**Hereditary Nature of Feeblemindedness**

Feeblemindedness in a large majority of cases is hereditary. Much has been written on this subject. Nearly everyone has read the studies made of the "Jukes," the "Kallikak Family," and Dr. David Starr Jordan's "Heredity of Richard Roe." Those who have not will find these books both interesting and enlightening.

Not only feeblemindedness among the forefathers, but probably neuropathic ancestry as well, may produce feeblemindedness in the succeeding generations. A glance at the family history charts of mentally defective persons will reveal among the forebears many instances of insanity, epilepsy, criminality, chronic alcoholism and other neuropathic manifestations. The question arises as to whether chronic alcoholism of the parent can, of itself, produce feeblemindedness among the offspring. Most authorities agree that it is more probable that the alcoholism of the parent may be looked upon rather as a manifestation of mental defect or a neuropathic condition in the parent, himself, than as a direct cause of mental defect in the offspring. Similarly criminality, in all probability, cannot be inherited, but the neuropathic or defective condition, of which the criminal acts may be a manifestation, can be and often is transmitted.

**Mendel's Law**

That feeblemindedness is directly inherited according to Mendel's law has now come to be a theory which is widely accepted. Work in this field has been slow and painstaking and beset with many obstacles and there is still a wide difference of opinion on this point, but we have a considerable body of evidence which seems to indicate that Mendel's law holds true with respect to the inheritance of feeblemindedness, as well as of other traits.

It was in 1866 that the Austrian monk, Gregor Mendel, published the results of his experiments, made in his garden in the town of Brunn. His work was lost sight of until 1900, when it was rediscovered. Mendel, at work in his garden, crossed dwarf peas with tall ones with the result that the plants which he obtained were all of the tall variety. Allowing these to be fertilized naturally, he obtained in the next generation, tall and dwarf peas in the ratio of three to one. From the fruit of the dwarf peas, planted generation after generation, only dwarf peas
were produced. One-third of the tall peas produced tall peas and continued to produce only tall ones, but the other two-thirds produced tall and dwarf peas in the ratio of three to one. That was because, although all of the tall peas looked alike, two-thirds of them were capable of transmitting the characteristic of dwarfness to the following generation while one-third were not.

Applying then, very briefly, the Mendelian law to human beings with respect to the inheritance of feeblemindedness, there are six possible types of mating. Let NN stand for normal persons of normal ancestry; NF for normal persons of defective ancestry; and FF for feebleminded persons. Following then, are the six types of mating, showing the incidence of feeblemindedness among the offspring:

1. \( NN \times NN \)  \( NN \quad NN \quad NN \quad NN \quad NN \)
2. \( FF \times FF \)  \( FF \quad FF \quad FF \quad FF \quad FF \)
3. \( NF \times NF \)  \( NN \quad NF \quad NF \quad NF \quad FF \)
4. \( NN \times NF \)  \( NN \quad NF \quad NF \quad NN \quad NF \)
5. \( NF \times FF \)  \( NF \quad FF \quad NF \quad NN \quad NF \)
6. \( NN \times FF \)  \( NF \quad NF \quad NF \quad NF \quad NF \)

Normal persons of defective heridity (NF), while of normal mentality themselves, are liable to transmit the defect to the next generation. That is, using type of mating number 3, as an illustration, from a union of two normal persons, both of defective heredity, the normal and defective among their offspring will be in the ratio of three to one, but two-thirds of the normal children will be capable of passing on the defect to the next generation.

Consanguinous Marriages

In connection with the inheritance of mental defect, there arises the question of the effect of consanguinous marriages. Does consanguinity of the parents produce mental defect in the children? Not necessarily. If the heredity is entirely good the marriage of cousins will not result in feeblemindedness among the children. If, however, there is in the ancestry a defective strain, this strain may be doubled, producing mental defect in the next generation.
CHAPTER III.—HISTORY OF TREATMENT

Early Efforts

The first effort to treat feeblemindedness was made by Itard, physician in chief to the National Institution for the Deaf and Dumb at Paris. Itard had for his subject a boy that was running wild in a French forest and who was known as the “savage of Aveyron.” Famous physicians followed by this boy was a curious sight to the Parisians for some time. After five years of patience and skillful efforts in training his ward Itard came to the conclusion that the boy was an idiot and that he was untrainable.

The American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1818 in a few years succeeding received several feebleminded children of a low grade. These children were carefully studied and treated, with the result that they improved and made some progress in habits and in speech.

“In 1837 Dr. E. Seguin, a pupil of Itard and Esquirol, began the private instruction of idiots at his own expense. In 1842 he was made the instructor of the school at the Bicetre which had been reopened by Dr. Voisin in 1839. Dr. Seguin remained at the Bicetre only one year, retiring to continue his work in his private school in the Hospice des Incurables. After seven years of patient work and experiments and the publication of two or three pamphlets describing the work, a committee from the Academy of Sciences at Paris in 1844 examined critically and thoroughly his methods of training and educating idiot children and reported to the Academy, giving them the highest commendation and declaring that, up to the time he commenced his labors in 1837, idiots could not be educated by any means previously known or practiced, but that he had solved the problem. His work thus approved by the highest authority, Dr. Seguin continued his private school in Paris until the Revolution in 1848. Then he came to America, where he was instrumental in establishing schools for idiots in various states.

In 1846 Dr. Seguin published his classical and comprehensive "Treatise on Idiocy," which was crowned by the Academy and has continued up to the present time to be the standard text book for all interested in the education of idiots. His elaborate system of teaching and training idiots consisted in the careful "adaptation of the principles of physiology, through the physiological means and instruments, to the development of the dynamic, perceptive, reflective, and spontaneous functions of youth." This physiological education of defective brains, as a result of systematic training of the special senses, the functions and the muscular system, was looked upon as a visionary theory, but it has been verified and confirmed by modern experiments and researches in physiological psychology.”

First State Institute Established

Massachusetts holds the honor of establishing the first State Institution for the treatment of the feebleminded. In 1848, her Legislature made an appropriation for the purpose of establishing an experimental school, with the proviso that ten indigent idiots from different parts of the State should be selected for instruction. From that time until the present one by one most of the States have made institutions for their feebleminded.

South Carolina Begins the Work

Soon after its establishment in 1915, the South Carolina State Board of Charities and Corrections began the study of the prevalence of feeblemindedness in this State. The Secretary of the Board, Mr. Albert S. Johnstone, and the Field Agent, Miss Helen F. Hill, studied the problem and gave wide publicity to the results of their studies. The Federation of Women’s Clubs and other organizations became interested and convinced the State that there was need of special care for the feebleminded in our borders. All of this reached a good fruition in the General Assembly in 1918, when the State Training School for the Feebleminded was established and placed under the control of the State Board of Regents of the State Hospital for the Insane. In 1920 the Legislature established the State Board of Public Welfare and gave the State Training School for the Feebleminded to its care. B. O. Whitten, M. D., formerly in charge of the State Farm, a department of the State Hospital, took charge of the school as its Superintendent in December, 1918, and has remained with it until the present.

The school is situated in a mile and a half of the town of Clinton. It has two attractive fireproof brick cottages that
contain two wards each, with a capacity of fifty to each ward. It has also a wooden structure that houses the laundry, dining room and kitchen. The domain of this school extends over acres that are broken into fields and groves, furnishing ample land for agricultural purposes and giving a picturesque surrounding and outlook to the buildings. There must be between five and six thousand feebleminded persons in the State of South Carolina, at least a third of whom need institutional care. It is evident, therefore, that the present school is only the beginning of a much larger institution.

CHAPTER IV.—DIAGNOSIS BY MEANS OF MENTAL TESTS

In the year 1904, a commission was appointed in Paris to investigate the problem of retardation in the public schools of that city and to make report with recommendations. The commission report stated that the condition found was a serious one, and recommended that all mentally defective children be removed from the regular classes. No suggestions were given as to how these children were to be selected, but an educational measure passed the same year required the selection of all mentally defective children by means of individual examination.

One member of the commission, Dr. Alfred Binet, a prominent French physician, realized the need of establishing some standard which would insure uniformity of diagnosis. After some years of prolonged observation and experiment and patient effort, he and his collaborator, M. Theodor Simon, evolved a series of tests which formed the basis for what is now known as the Binet-Simon Intelligence Scale.

This series of tests was published in its first form in 1905 in L'Année Psychologique. After standardization it appeared in revised form in the same periodical in 1908. A later and final revision was published in 1911.

In the meantime various other experimenters were working with the tests. They were introduced into America by Dr. H. H. Goddard, then director of the Research Department of the Training School for the Feebleminded at Vineland, N. J. Dr. Goddard restandardized the tests, adapting them to suit the experience of American children. He published two revisions, one in 1907, and a later one in 1911.

Binet-Simon Intelligence Test

The Binet-Simon Intelligence Scale (Goddard 1911 Revision) consists of a series of tests, graded in difficulty, with five tests adapted for children of each age, from three to twelve, inclusive. For instance, the eight year old tests are tests which, according to the standardization, the average eight year old child is able to pass, but which would be too difficult for the average seven year old child and very easy for the average nine year old child. In standardizing the tests, Dr. Goddard examined nearly two thousand children selected at random, and placed his tests in
the scale on the following basis: taking the tests for age nine as an illustration, these are tests which approximately fifty per cent. of nine year old children are able to pass correctly, but which can be passed by one hundred per cent. of ten year old children, and by only about twenty-five per cent. of children aged eight.

The constant and ever-increasing use of the Binet tests, throughout the country, in schools, courts, child-caring institutions, clinics, etc., testifies sufficiently to their great worth. The scale forms a "measuring stick" for the mental ability not only of feebleminded, but also of normal and precocious children. As an aid in the solving of educational problems and problems of delinquency and dependency it is of untold value.

Of course, the tests drew criticism, much of it due to the unskilled handling of the tests by those untutored in their use, but some of it justified. In 1916, the Stanford Revision was completed by Dr. L. A. Terman of Leland Stanford University. This revision claims to meet the shortcomings of the previous scale. Terman also published a book of complete instructions to be followed in using the tests. The Stanford Revision is not only a revision but also an expansion of the previous Binet scale. The arrangement of the tests is changed somewhat and new ones are added. There are more tests at each age and the method of scoring is slightly different. Beyond age twelve, there are tests for age fourteen, age sixteen or average adult mentality, and age eighteen, or superior adult mentality.

Yerkes-Bridges Point Scale Test

Another revision which appeared in 1915 is the Yerkes-Bridges Point Scale for measuring mental ability. The Point Scale, unlike the others, is not an age-grade scale at all, but a series of tests arranged in order of difficulty. With a few exceptions the tests used are from Binet. In using the scale the procedure is to begin at the lower or easier end until the point is reached when the tests are too difficult for the person examined to proceed any further. For each test passed correctly he is credited with a certain number of points, the maximum score attainable being one hundred points.

The Binet tests are not the only ones used in the measurement of intelligence but they are the most widely used. There are the Healy tests and so many others that to describe them would require several volumes. In connection with the Binet Scale it is always advisable wherever possible to use supplementary tests. The more information one is able to secure concerning the mental ability and characteristics of the person tested the more accurate, of course, the diagnosis.

Always an effort should be made to obtain and to record as completely as possible the history of the case. The family history, social background, and developmental history are of the utmost importance. Often such an investigation reveals details which, if overlooked, would interfere radically with one’s understanding of the case.

Tests for Temperament

We are coming to realize too, more and more, that not only the mental level of the individual, but his emotional and temperamental characteristics also must be determined. Two persons of the same mental level will often react very differently to the same environment. In recommending treatment this fact must be carefully considered.

The possibilities in the future of service to society, through the use of mental tests are almost unlimited. Vocational psychology is coming to the fore. More and more great industrial corporations are finding it to their interest to employ psychologists. Many of our social misfits and much human misery are caused by lack of understanding of the mental capacity of the individual. The movement for the extension of the use of mental tests was given impetus by the war and is growing with astounding rapidity. Its progress is a forward step toward the goal of greater efficiency and productivity and the curing of many of our social ills.
CHAPTER V.—THE CARE OF THE FEEBLEMINDED

Since the feebleminded person is one who "cannot manage himself or his affairs with ordinary prudence," society must care for him. The problem of doing this, in so far as it was within the limits of possibility at all, was until recently thought to be a relatively simple one. The feebleminded, we said, must be cared for in institutions where they can lead happy, useful, and often partially self-supporting lives, where they may be protected from the hard knocks and the temptations of the world, and where they can be prevented from becoming a social menace.

We have known, though, for a long time, that we were not carrying out this program which we set for ourselves. Our institutions have been crowded to overflowing, yet their capacity has been pitifully inadequate to meet the need. We have not been teaching our feebleminded, most of them, to lead useful lives. We have been unable to prevent many of them from becoming a menace to society.

As a result, colonies for the feebleminded have been established in order that a larger number might be received by the parent institutions. In the community, the public schools have developed special class systems for those children who could not be given institutional care.

So the problem of providing for the feebleminded has developed into a threefold one, involving: (1) care in the institution; (2) care in the colony; (3) care in the community.

1. Institutional Care

Even now, when we speak of the care of the feebleminded, it is the institution which first comes into mind. The institution does, and ever will, occupy a dominant place. Anyone who has visited any of the best schools for the feebleminded in this country, must be glad that this is so.

Here in South Carolina we have a splendid new State Training School about to open. The first cottage will accommodate fifty inmates. This cottage is an attractive, spacious, one-story structure, built according to the latest and most approved plan. A second cottage, similar in style, will soon be ready to receive occupants.

With such a beginning we ought to, and in the future surely will, be able to boast of one of the finest institutions in the country. Here the feebleminded will be provided with a pleasant home and the best of care. They will be taught good habits, how to care for themselves, for their possessions and the possessions of others. Many will be trained to do some useful form of work. Some in the institution will become partially or even entirely self-supporting, while a few may be so trained that after several years they will be able to return to the community and take their place in society as good and useful citizens.

It has been said that South Carolina has been late in providing care for her feebleminded. This is true, but may we not now take advantage of our past delinquency? Other States have, by long experiment, frequent blunders and new trials, arrived at what is best in the care of their mental defectives. We may profit by their experiences, avoid their blunders and meet the problem armed with a more extensive knowledge and a clearer understanding.

In order to do this, our new institution will need behind it a wholehearted interest, sympathy and support throughout the State. Every loyal citizen should know about and understand the work which is being done there.

2. Colony Care

That colonies, accommodating small groups of inmates might be established, and that these colonies could be made self-supporting and even income-producing, was an epoch-making discovery in the progress of care for the feebleminded. In this way, the constant pressure on the large parent institution exerted by a long-waiting list of those seeking admission, may be somewhat relieved. Also by the adoption of the colony plan, the maximum amount of good care may be given by the State to its mental defectives at a minimum amount of expense.

Colonies for low-grade feebleminded persons and also colonies for those of higher grade have been established and carried on with considerable success. An example of the former is the Menantico Colony, sent out by the Training School for the Feebleminded at Vineland, N. J. Here a group of low-grade boys, mostly of the idio-imbecile type, with a few high-grade boys to help direct, are housed very simply and inexpensively,
but comfortably, and are set to work clearing and reclaiming land which would be otherwise useless for farming purposes, because of its covering of scrub-oak. The work is rough and unskilled, requiring only a small amount of intelligence to perform under supervision. The higher grade boys enjoy the work of directing, appreciate the responsibility that is given them, and like the colony life. The colony is entirely self-supporting and has been, ever since its founding, a remarkable success.

Among the attempts at the colonizing of high-grade defectives, Dr. Charles Bernstein's experiments are especially notable. Dr. Bernstein is superintendent of the Rome Custodial Asylum at Rome, N. Y. The first attempt at colonization from the institution at Rome was the establishing of a farm colony in 1906. The number of colonies, of which Dr. Bernstein's institution is the parent, has now increased to twenty-one, eleven for boys and ten for girls. Ten of these are situated in the country, and eleven are in towns such as Rome, Syracuse, East Aurora, etc. Ten of these latter are for girls. The girls live at the colony and work in the mills or hire out by the day to do sewing or domestic work.

All of Dr. Bernstein's colonies are peopled with feebleminded children of high-grade and in many cases the colony is used as a preliminary step in preparation for future parole. Many cases have been successfully paroled during the last ten years. In fact, the number of failures have amounted to less than ten per cent. of the total.

Dr. Bernstein believes that by the colony system, if it be extended and prove as successful in the future as it has hitherto, “at least one-half of all the feebleminded who have to be cared for because of dependency or delinquency” may be provided for, at a saving to the State of New York of hundreds of thousands of dollars. “And more,” he says, “these cases will be made much happier and more contented by this method of treatment, much more normal in their lives and activities.”

3. Community Care

In community care for the feebleminded, the public schools have taken the lead. Recent as is the movement for the establishing, in the schools, of special classes for defective children, its growth has been one of astounding rapidity. Now most large cities, and many of the smaller ones, throughout the nation have highly organized special class systems. Those of Rochester, Cleveland, Boston, Newark and others are especially well developed and organized. In South Carolina, both Charleston and Columbia, realizing the necessity of giving special training to mentally subnormal children and the school’s responsibility in this direction, have made splendid beginnings in developing their systems of special classes. Columbia, during the past school year, has established four such classes. Of course, a special class system means the establishment of classes for precocious and exceptional children as well as for children who are mentally deficient.

The public school bears a heavy responsibility in this matter. The importance of discovering the defective child at an early age cannot be overestimated. It has been said that every feebleminded person is a “potential criminal.” Yet we know that most feebleminded persons have no stronger tendencies toward criminality than has the average person of normal mentality. The term “potential criminal” means that the responsibility rests with society. It is the duty of society to see that the feebleminded person does not come into contact with the sort of environment that tends to induce criminal or delinquent behavior, or at least to furnish influences which will counteract the surrounding evil influences of the environment. This cannot be done unless we discover and begin our work with the feebleminded while they are children in body, as well as in mind. Practically every child comes within the influence of the public schools at one time or another.

This is not true of any other organization. Hence, the duty of the public school in this matter is obvious. In most cities throughout the nation, the schools have assumed this responsibility and have taken the lead nobly.

In spite of the splendid efforts made by our public schools, the feebleminded person at large in the community has been in the past, and still is, to a large extent, badly neglected. Then, too, there is the mentally deficient child in the rural community who is so apt to be overlooked. A constructive system of State control is needed to supplement the special classes of the public schools and toward such a system, many others are now working.

Briefly, such a system would involve a central organization, board or commission, to direct the work throughout the State. This central organization might then send out workers to the local
communities, much as the Public Health nurses are now sent out by the State Board of Health. The duties of these workers would involve cooperating with the public schools to see that subnormal children received special training; giving advice, should it be desired, to the parents of defective children, as to the special needs of their children; supervising any feebleminded persons in the community, who might be on parole from the State Training School; supervising other feebleminded persons who need advice and guidance but who are able to get along without institutional care; seeing that institutional care is given to those most in need of it. The central board should also establish and direct clinics in various parts of the state. Traveling clinics have been recommended. Finally, in cooperation with the great educational institutions of the state, the central board should help to direct the training of the workers who would be needed to carry out such a program as that outlined above.

This program is, of course, merely a tentative one. Some such system, however, must necessarily be adopted before we can hope to accomplish much in caring for our feebleminded, or in effectively meeting the state's great problems of pauperism and crime.

CHAPTER VI.—SOCIAL ASPECTS

Feeblemindedness is a primary cause of many social ills. This was not appreciated in earlier days because people did not seek into the ultimate causes of social ailments, but when science was applied universally in the last century it naturally was brought into the domain of social life and there it demonstrated that many evils which we considered as necessary concomitants of human life or the visitations of Providence or the manifestation of the devil were in many instances the results of curable or preventable social diseases. The social worker today goes beyond the outside show of poverty or crime and seeks to know what is the specific causes of them. He realizes that merely feeding the pauper and punishing the convict is not going to bring society to a higher level.

If we run a plumb line through any of our social ills we are likely to find feeblemindedness at the bottom. The reason of this is easily accounted for, because our social structure is based upon highly trained mental activities. The civilized world is borne up by brains that think clearly, this is what raises it above the wilderness and mere animal behavior. When a person cannot reason according to the demands of the social structure in which he lives he is a weakening element at the foundation and must necessarily suffer great pain and cause an unsteadiness in the structure itself, as he cannot withstand the thrust that is made upon him. Or we may change the figure and liken our social order to a piece of mighty and complicated machinery in which each of us is a part. In such, a feebleminded person can be only a part that loses motion, acts erratically, and sets up an irritating friction. To appreciate this we have only to consider some of the troubles that we continually face in our corporate life.

Problem of Poverty

One of the first of these is poverty. Our almshouses are infested by groups of people that have such a low grade of intelligence that they are unable to make a living for themselves in the outside world, hence our counties have to care for them. There is hardly one of these institutions in the state that is with-
out its toll of the feebleminded. (Char. and Cor. Bulletin, page 10.) But not only are our almshouses infested with these poor creatures, barren and miserable homes scattered throughout the state are tenanted by these folk. We can easily understand how this is, for when a man has not enough mind to compete with his fellows, or to know how to work, or to hold on to what he gains by his labor, he goes down in the struggle of life and drags his family with him. Then, too, a feebleminded wife can not manage with enough discretion to have a home such as our normal society would call for. In different parts of South Carolina there are nests of people with arrested mental development, they have been in these communities for generations and have intermarried and bred there. Their neighborhoods are most forlorn and they have been for many years charges upon the bounty of the surrounding country.

Influence on Economic Life

The strain of feeblemindedness is also felt in our economic life. The world of industry is becoming more and more dependent upon machinery and skillful workers to operate it. In our vast industrial populations there are countless mental defectives and unless they are extremely low grade they handle machinery that only normal persons should be permitted to operate. Imagine a nine or ten year old child with the responsibility and danger of such work upon him, yet there are men and women that talk fairly well and have a good physical appearance who are just nine or ten years old in intelligence. It needs no reach of the imagination to detect the fact that numerous accidents and much inferior production must come from such a derangement. Our agricultural interests, too, have to suffer from those that have retarded intelligences. With the business demands that are made upon a farmer and with the astuteness that is required of him for the proper building up of his lands and the raising of his crops, a feebleminded person could hardly cope with the conditions that surround a successful planter. A person cannot ride far on one of our public roads without coming to a small farm with its shack of a dwelling, its meager equipment and its air of being half starved. The likelihood is that a feebleminded family has its home there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Number of Inmates</th>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Number of Inmates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Larceny</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manslaughter</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt at murder</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Forgery</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Embezzlement</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Selling Whiskey</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bastardy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vagrancy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigamy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Other offenses</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seduction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 216

Mental Level of 216 Men at Georgia State Prison Farm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Age</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Negro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 111 105

Cause of Delinquency

As feebleminded persons lack emotional stability, the faculty of adjusting themselves to other social surroundings and the power of perceiving the meaning of morality and orderliness in civilized life, they often fall into crime. This conclusion we should reach by reason alone, but it is also justified by the facts discovered in the population of penal institutions. Here is a table that shows the extent of mental deficiency at the Georgia State Prison Farm. We select this table, as Georgia's population and ours are similar in their racial and other components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Number of Inmates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manslaughter</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt at murder</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bastardy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigamy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 216

Mental Level of 216 Men at Georgia State Prison Farm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Age</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Negro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 111 105
The following table shows the mental diagnosis of these individuals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Negro</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dull Normal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subnormal</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feebleminded</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epileptic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychopathic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pellastra</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid condition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other mental diseases or deteioration</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last year the South Carolina State Board of Charities and Corrections studied the mentality of fifty delinquent women and girls in prisons in this State. It found that, "of the fifty girls and women tested, fifteen, or thirty per cent., are feebleminded. Of these, three are illiterate. Two of the fifteen reached the fifth grade. None of the others ever advanced beyond the third grade."

One story from this report may be of interest to show the course of delinquency that a feebleminded person travels.

"Laura is a pretty light-haired, blue-eyed girl of 18. She is normal mentally and can read and write and do very simple arithmetic, although she has never in her life been to school. Her mother died when Laura was very young and the little girl lived with her father, who is a member of the Holiness sect, and with her brothers and sisters. At the age of ten, she started to work in the mill. When she was 12 years old, a Holiness preacher came to their house. He wanted to marry Laura and to this her father gave his consent. After the marriage Laura continued to work in the mill. Her husband considered himself chosen by divine will to preach, so Laura took care of the house and the babies and worked in the mill to support the family. About two years ago her husband had a vision which he related to all who might be interested. In this vision he saw his true and fitting mate, a woman, tall, dark and slender, exactly the opposite in type from Laura. Strange to say, a woman exactly fitting this description was living at the time in the same house. According to his interpretation of his vision the preacher believed it to be his religious duty to take her into his home, and she became a member of the family. Laura continued to work and support the family. This state of affairs lasted several months until the preacher and the tall, dark, slender woman departed for Ohio, leaving Laura and her two children. When, some time later, Laura fell in love with another man, she believed herself free to marry him. She knew very little except what her father and her husband had taught her; and the latter had told her that she was no longer his wife, that he had taken another in her place. She was married again and lived with her new 'husband' for a week, when she was arrested on a charge of bigamy. She is now serving sentence in one of the detention houses."

As soon as this was written some more tests were made among feminine delinquents, with the results enumerated in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Colored</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Per Cent.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feebleminded</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychopathic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>78</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any one conversant with prisons knows that a large percent of their population are of a low grade of intelligence. It is just as inevitable for feebleminded persons of a certain temperament to flow into these institutions as it is for the tide to flow into the harbor. A delinquent that is mentally deficient should no more be sent to a place of punishment than an invalid should be penalized for vagrancy. The proper place for a feebleminded person, who has a tendency towards crime, is a training school for the feebleminded, where he may receive proper custodial care and a training that is suited to his meager capacities. Too long have we made our prisons and almshouses the catch-all for society which is ready to get rid of any of its troublesome elements by pitching them into these ready conduits.

Another place in which the burden of mental defectiveness falls heavily is the home. Under modern conditions the mother is
left more and more without aid; servants are drawn away by better pay in industries and the children as they grow older, and might be of assistance in the housework, go to school. When there is an idiot or an imbecile, especially if he is of an active disposition, the mother's burden of labor and anxiety is painful to consider. These burdens are of increased heaviness among the very poor, besides the care of the feebleminded demand there is the added weight of supporting them. While we have no unit of measurement for sorrow we know that the constant pain that a mother bears as one sees her child in the grip of the blight that is throttling his mind is hardly outdistanced by any other human trial.

"In one of our county almshouses we found a woman aged thirty-four, awaiting the birth of her tenth illegitimate child (according to her own account). Some have been born in the almshouse, five have died, two at least are being cared for by an orphanage, one by a relative. Her father is said to be of about the same mental grade as his daughter, and is strongly suspected of being the father of some of her children.

"This woman is an imbecile. She is strong and able to do hard work; and with proper supervision she could be made very useful and happy, but her present mode of life tends to make her indolent and brutish.

"Since we visited this woman her child has been born, and both have left the county home. What contribution to South Carolina will the above conditions inevitably make?"