

aptitude for any kind of work, and it requires a great amount of patience and careful handling to cultivate a desire to become in any sense useful. Yet I am glad to say that every boy now has been taught to be useful in some way, though in most cases the stimulus has to come constantly from without. To illustrate the improvement made by some of the boys since admission, I will give details of the most promising cases :—

Case 1.—Age about 11 years. His chief occupation prior to admission appeared to have been sitting out of doors and imitating the cries of all the domestic animals and birds. If set to do any kind of work, would immediately, if left for a minute, revert to his own favourite pastime. This boy is now a most useful worker, and has quite dropped his hobby of mimicry. Owing to his pernicious habits, however, he should be separated from the other boys.

Case 2.—Boy of seventeen. This lad had been for years leading an aimless sort of life prior to admission. A confirmed masturbator, without any sense of shame. This had so weakened his will-power that he was unable to initiate any effort of mind or body, or to exert himself to do anything. This lad has been kept under constant supervision, and never left. He has improved wonderfully, both physically and mentally, and will now work well under supervision. He should be treated in a separate cottage with others of his class.

Case 3.—Boy of ten. This lad was practically unable to utter any intelligible sounds on admission, and was extremely nervous. He is now quite a bright little chap, and can say a great number of words.

I have received letters from several parents expressing their gratitude for the care which has been bestowed on their children. I herewith append a letter received by me on the 3rd March, 1909 :—

“ To Mr. Benstead.—Thank you so much for the splendid report of my dear boy. It gives me great comfort, and now that I am obliged to lie for a week, I need not worry about him. I know that he is well looked after. I have given myself a nasty twist, and suffer a good deal when on my feet, so the doctor has ordered me to keep lying down for a week. I just lie and think of your comforting letter, and when the pain is bad it cheers me up greatly.—Yours, &c.”

One reason for referring to this subject is to indicate to parents and responsible relatives that it is by placing their children under our care early in life that they gain the special advantage afforded by this institution ; as it is only by taking them at a suitable age that one has a chance of educating and training their intellectual faculties and of moulding their characters.

Another reason is that I know of several cases where children, ranging from sixteen to twenty-five and over, are living at home, a prey to themselves and a constant worry and anxiety to their parents, who have never received any expert training, and who are totally unsuitable cases for the mental hospitals. Some of these, doubtless, could be made useful, though not self-supporting, and would in course of time be able to help materially in the necessary institution-work. Could we not make some special provision for these cases, and so relieve the anxiety of the parents, and at the same time render their lives somewhat more useful and interesting to themselves ?

The number of feeble-minded males is everywhere greater than that of females, in the proportion of three to two. This being so, the institution necessary to accommodate girls would not be so large as that for boys. In England most of the training institutions for the feeble-minded cater for both sexes.

We have sufficient ground at Otekaike for a girls' institution, and the two sexes could be trained on the same lines as two branches of the one establishment. The girls could be employed in household, kitchen, and laundry work, as well as sewing, knitting, chair-caning, basketmaking, &c. At Home in similar institutions, with the aid of knitting-machines, the girls knit the stockings, also jerseys for the boys.

In closing my report I should like to draw your attention to some of the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded in England, which was appointed in 1904, and reported to the King about last August.

A. The Classification of Mentally Deficient Persons.

The actual definitions recommended by the Commission are as follows :—

(1.) “ Persons of unsound mind ”—*i.e.*, persons who require care and control owing to disorder of the mind, and are consequently incapable of managing themselves or their affairs, and are not included in classes (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), and (9) below.

(2.) “ Persons mentally infirm ”—*i.e.*, persons who, through mental infirmity, arising from age or from the decay of their faculties, are incapable of managing themselves or their affairs.

(3.) “ Idiots ”—*i.e.*, persons so deeply defective in mind from birth or from an early age that they are unable to guard themselves from common physical dangers, such as in the case of young children would prevent their parents from leaving them alone.

(4.) “ Imbeciles ”—*i.e.*, persons who are capable of guarding themselves against common physical dangers, but who are incapable of earning their own living by reason of mental defect existing from birth or from an early age.

(5.) “ Feeble-minded ”—*i.e.*, persons who may be capable of earning a living under favourable circumstances, but are incapable from mental defect existing from birth or from an early age (a) of competing on equal terms with their normal fellows, or (b) of managing themselves and their affairs with ordinary prudence.

(6.) “ Moral imbeciles ”—*i.e.*, persons who from an early age display some mental defect, coupled with strong vicious or criminal propensities, on which punishment has little or no deterrent effect.

(7.) “ Epileptics ”—*i.e.*, persons who, being epileptic, are also mentally defective.

(8.) “ Inebriates ”—*i.e.*, persons who, being inebriates, are also mentally defective.

(9.) “ Deaf-and-dumb ” or “ blind ”—*i.e.*, persons who, being deaf-and-dumb or blind, are also mentally defective.