

*A NOTABLE FACTOR OF SOCIAL DEGENERATION.**

THE subject to which I propose to call your attention cannot be said to be a new one, though I do not think that it has ever been presented before this Section. I wish to speak for a short time on one of the phases of social anthropology, in which I am very greatly interested. My theme is the problem of the feeble-minded. This term is now generally used to include all persons from those with weak minds to the most abject idiot. Perhaps most of us have met with a few individuals of this class. Almost every community contains one or more of these degenerates. The aggregate for our country, however, makes a mighty host. We do not know how many feeble-minded persons there are in the United States. The census of 1890 gives 95,571 individuals of that kind. From Pennsylvania there were reported that year 8,753; Ohio, 8,035; Indiana, 5,568; Iowa, 3,319; Kansas, 2,039; Colorado, 192. What the increase since then has been we do not know. The present census does not give any figures on this point; therefore any effort to ascertain the number can be but an estimate. These feeble-minded persons are distributed throughout our land, not in the same proportion everywhere. They are not so notable in some localities as in others. In some places they are so few or inconspicuous as scarcely to be recognized. On the contrary, elsewhere their presence is strikingly manifest, and they, in one way or another, make a deep impression upon society that must endure through succeeding generations. The feeble-minded are found under many conditions. There are children and men and women. It is as children and as adults in their more active years that most of us

know them best. Our social organization is made up of many factors. Some are constructive, some destructive. The feeble-minded are a disturbing element. Their life is a degenerating social force.

Some of the children with stronger mental powers enter the public schools. They may make some progress for a time, but whether they do or not, they must soon drop behind because they are unable to keep up with the work. Others roam the streets; the boys become the butt of the neighborhood, they are led into pranks, too often into vices, and seem to possess a peculiar tendency to immorality. The girls, many of them strong, well-appearing, with no one to teach them aright, and without strength of mind to protect themselves against the temptations which surround them, too early and too often fall into vice. "It is impossible to think of the evil of feeble-mindedness without heeding the curse of vice and illegitimacy which are its inevitable accompaniments. In the feeble-minded person the animal passions are usually present and are often abnormally developed, while will and reason, which should control and repress them, are absent. The feeble-minded woman, thus lacking the protection which should be her birthright, falls easily into vice. She cannot in her weakness resist the persuasions and temptations which beset her. When her baser passions are strong, she must oppose not only the influences from without but her own dominating desires. She is not to be condemned and punished, but rather to be pitied and helped in every possible manner." (Bicknell, *Proc. Fourth Indiana State Conf. of Char. & Corr.*, 1895, p. 64.) Many of these poor creatures are easily attracted by an immoral life. Once begun, the pace is rapid, the course is always the same. It is impossible to tell or even to conceive of the depths of degradation to which they go. Dr. Kerlin, in

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1884, in his report to the National Conference of Charities and Correction speaks of moral imbecility, showing its blighting and demoralizing effects. He shows how crime, vice and depravity are spread by neglected feeble-minded or imbecile persons. He says, "There is no field in political economy which can be worked to better advantage for the diminution of crime, pauperism and insanity than that of idiocy." (Proc. Nat. Conf. of Char. and Cor., 1884, pp. 257 and 258.)

One perverted feeble-minded woman can spread throughout a community an immoral pestilence which will affect the homes of all classes, even the most intelligent and refined. The sight of such conditions or a knowledge of them must have a deadening effect upon the finer sensibilities of all.

These defectives usually also become dependents for a part of, if not all, the time. They may depend upon private charities or, when possible, upon the overseer of the poor. They frequently live in the poorest quarters of our towns and cities amid squalor and dirt, or occupy miserable huts in the least desirable localities of rural communities. It is not unusual for two or more families to live near each other or associate together. Marital ties are often lightly regarded. Frequently such bonds have not been entered into.

When these feeble-minded persons become helpless or learn the habit of regular public dependence, they find their way to poor asylums, the children being placed in such orphans' homes as will accept them. To one who visits the poor asylums and orphans' homes where they are received, the idiotic and feeble-minded are striking objects. In every one of the ninety-two poor asylums in my own State, Indiana, there are to be found inmates of this class, the greatest number in any one institution being 25; the lowest, 2. In

many, their presence is emphasized by pitiable cases, individuals who are almost uncontrollable, or by infants, the offspring—in most cases the illegitimate offspring—of parents, one or both of whom are feeble-minded. The records at hand show that there are 970 feeble-minded persons in the Indiana poor asylums. (Rept. Board of State Char. of Indiana, 1900, p. 73.) Almost all these are adults. Many are in some degree helpless and all require more or less care. They have grown up without discipline; they lack such training as is possible with their dwarfed minds or strong hands; they are not only incapable of earning their own support, but, in a large number of instances, are the objects of continual anxiety to those in charge. This is particularly the case with feeble-minded women. Four hundred and eighty unfortunates of this sex are to be found in our county asylums, comprising 49.5 of their total feeble-minded population. Under our system of care it is only by the utmost watchfulness that the sexes are kept apart. Where proper facilities for sex separation are wanting, or the overwatch is not strict, there is to be found a continual increase of feeble-mindedness. This brings an increasing burden of expense upon the tax-payers in such counties.

I am compelled to speak specifically of Indiana, because we know more of the facts concerning conditions that exist there than we do of those elsewhere.

From information received, however, it is believed that they are not materially different from those existing in other States similarly situated. Perhaps in a general way the conditions there may be said to be the average of what is true of all our States.

To quite a large number of our poor asylums the inmates often come and go at will. The absence of the feeble-minded is especially noted during the summer season. They then go to visit friends or wander

about the country. Any kind of shelter will answer their purpose and food is easily obtained. Quite a number of the women return to the poor asylum to become mothers.

In a certain county in the southern part of the State is a family of sixteen persons, representing three generations. Twelve of its members are the direct descendants of a feeble-minded blind man and his feeble-minded, partially blind, wife. The husband and wife have been inmates of the poor asylum off and on for thirty-five years. Generally wintering in the institution, they spend the summer roaming about the country, living in the woods. In unfavorable weather they seek an old hut or rail pen for shelter. They are said to make a bed of leaves or straw and live on what they can beg, supplemented by wild fruits and nuts. They have a feeble-minded daughter who is also partially blind. She has been twice married and has borne two feeble-minded daughters and three feeble-minded sons. Another feeble-minded and partially blind daughter has spent the greater part of the last twenty-two years in the poor asylum of an adjacent county and has been the mother of four illegitimate children. In this family of sixteen persons, nine are feeble-minded (three of these being also partially blind) and four are known to be illegitimate.

In an adjoining county are a husband and wife, both degenerates, who make the poor asylum their home in winter and live elsewhere in summer. It is no uncommon thing, in the spring following these wanderings, to have the family increased by a little mite of humanity which does not seem as if it could live. Many such children do live, however. This woman has borne eleven children and six of them are alive. One summer the family lived in a little shed built of short boards obtained from dry-goods boxes, old tin and carpets, along the railroad right-of-way, and obtained its liv-

ing principally from begging. This family has just made a beginning. How extensive it may become depends upon what measures are taken. It has probably been an expense of \$1,000 per year to the county.

Occasionally the children of normal parents are feeble-minded. As Mr. Bicknell has well said, there is no method of diverting the course. While it is easily possible for parents of normal faculties through dissipation, vice or disease to produce feeble-minded offspring, there seems to be no method by which the tendency can be reversed and the degeneration, thus easily accomplished, displaced by regeneration and restoration in succeeding generations. (Fifth Rept. of Indiana Board of State Charities, 1894, page 51.)

Usually, and in a large number of cases, feeble-minded children are the offspring of feeble-minded parents. It is equally true that in the majority of cases the children of feeble-minded parents are feeble-minded.

From what has been said may be gathered that the question before us presents two notable evils:

(a) The increasing number of illegitimate children of feeble-minded parents.

(b) The inheritance of feeble-mindedness.

In the office of the Board of State Charities of Indiana there has been collected, from every reliable source, during the past twelve years, a great mass of material relating to this group of defectives. It embraces much that has been gathered by the Indiana School for Feeble-minded Youth especially through the efforts of Mr. Alexander Johnson, its able superintendent. In addition, it contains such information as could be obtained from the Poor Asylum and Orphans' Home records and from the township trustees who are *ex-officio* overseers of the poor. I know of no such a series of records nor one so conveniently arranged. Mr. Ernest P. Bicknell, formerly the Secre-

tary of the Board of State Charities, some years ago prepared two papers based upon a part of this material. (Proc. Indiana State Conf. of Char. and Cor., 1895, p. 60. Proc. National Conf. of Char. and Cor., 1887, p. 219.)

With the fuller amount of data from these records at hand I have thought to present some illustrations obtained from it at this time.

Perhaps I may say a word as to the method of registration used in this work. From all our institutions regular reports are required. Some of these are made monthly, others quarterly. They are arranged with headings for all the principal facts in the individual and family history of each inmate. It is desired to have them filled as fully as the information obtained will permit. In addition to the regular institution records, information is sought as to the age, nativity, sex, color, mental and physical condition, and whether illegitimate. If parents are known we ask for their names and specific information as to whether either is affected with insanity, feeble-mindedness, deafness, blindness, paralysis, or whether either was a pauper, criminal or drunkard. This information, when obtained, is transferred to a card registration, where the cards are kept in duplicate; one series arranged alphabetically, the other by institutions. To the information at hand every fragment that is learned is added.

I have taken from these records some information concerning 511 families in which there is known to be feeble-mindedness. If there was any question regarding any family it was omitted. No such collection of these families has heretofore been reported upon. The number of persons known to be represented in them is 1,924. This is an average of 3.76 persons in each family. 1,343 of these persons are supported in public institutions. It is known, how-

ever, that these are not all the family representatives. They are the family members of whom we have accurate information. In it are included not only direct descendants, but those related by marriage.

Of this number of persons, 889, 46.2 per cent., were men; 1,035, 53.7 per cent., were women. 1,249—64.9 per cent., 532 men and 717 women, were feeble-minded; 54, 21 men and 33 women, were insane; 44, 25 men and 19 women, were otherwise defective. These last include blind, deaf, paralytics and epileptics. 577, 311 men and 268 women, were normal or their defectiveness was unknown. Every person known concerning whom positive information was not was included in this latter group. In a number of cases there are combinations of defectiveness. One was insane and deaf, another feeble-minded, deaf and epileptic. Consequently, if we undertake to separate them we find there are 79 epileptics, 31 men and 48 women; 35 blind, 17 men and 18 women; 21 deaf, 6 men and 15 women; 19 paralytics, 8 men and 11 women; with combined mental and physical defects 101, 34 men and 67 women. Of these family members, 267, 13.8 per cent., 141 men and 126 women, are known to have been illegitimate.

What about the parentage of these individuals? In a large number of cases the characteristics are unknown. It is a matter of record that in 1,042 cases (over 54 per cent. of the whole) either one or both parents were defective. Of these in the cases of 666—348 males and 318 females, the mother was defective. In the case of 151, 83 males and 68 females, the father was defective, the mother unknown or normal. Both parents were defective in 225 instances, 122 males and 103 females. It will be seen that the records show the mother defective in 34.6 per cent. of the total number of cases noted herein, while only 7.8 per cent. of the fathers were defective, and both parents were defective

A TABLE OF 511 FEEBLE-MINDED FAMILIES CONTAINING 1,924 PERSONS.

	Whole number.	In public institutions.	Feeble-minded.	Insane.	Epileptic.	Blind.	Deaf.	Feeble-minded and epileptic.	Feeble-minded, paralytic and epileptic.	Feeble-minded and blind.	Feeble-minded and paralytic
Males.	889	617	499	20	8	10	3	21	1	6	3
Females.	1,035	726	652	31	10	2	5	31	3	14	7
Total.	1,924	1,343	1,151	51	18	12	8	52	4	20	10

	Feeble-minded and deaf.	Feeble-minded, deaf and epileptic.	Feeble-minded, blind and epileptic.	Blind and paralytic.	Paralytic.	Blind and epileptic.	Insane and epileptic.	Insane and deaf.	Unknown or normal.	Illegitimate.	Total.
Males.	1	1		1	3			1	311	141	889
Females.	8	1	1		1	1	1	1	266	126	1,035
Total.	9	2	1	1	4	1	1	2	577	267	1,924

PARENTAGE OF ABOVE 1,924 PERSONS.

	Mother f. m. Father unk. or normal.	Mother f. m. and ep. Father unk. or normal.	Mother f. m. and bl. Father unk. or normal.	Mother f. m. Father f. m. and ep.	Mother f. m. and ep. Father f. m.	Mother f. m. and df. Father unk. or normal.	Mother f. m. and par. Father unk. or normal.	Mother f. m. Father par.	Mother f. m. Father bl.	Mother f. m. Father insane.	Mother f. m. and bl. Father unk. or normal.	Mother insane. Father unk. or normal.	Mother blind. Father unk. or normal.	Mother ep. Father unk. or normal.	Mother insane. Father f. m.
Males.	307	4	2	3	1		1		8	3	2	23	4		14
Females.	289	7	3	7		1	1	2	7	2	2	14		2	9
Total.	596	11	5	10	1	1	2	2	15	5	2	37	4	6	23

	Mother ep. Father f. m.	Mother unk. or normal. Father f. m.	Mother unk. or normal. Father ep.	Mother ins. and ep. Father unk. or normal.	Mother unk. or normal. Father par.	Mother unk. or normal. Father f. m. and bl.	Mother unk. or normal. Father insane.	Mother unk. or normal. Father blind.	Mother ep. Father f. m. and bl.	Parents insane.	Parents f. m. and bl.	Parents related.	Parents D. and D.	Parents unknown or normal.	Parents f. m.
Males.	1	75	2	1		2	3	1	1	5		10	1	326	85
Females.		61	1	1	2		3	1	1	2	2	12	1	534	70
Total.	1	136	3	2	2	2	6	2	2	7	2	22	2	860	155

FEEBLE-MINDEDNESS AND RELATED DEFECTS, TOGETHER WITH ILLEGITIMACY IN FIVE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN FAMILIES.

	Whole number.	Feeble-minded.	Epileptic.	Insane.	Blind.	Deaf.	Paralytic.	Illegitimate.
Males.	889	532	31	21	17	6	8	141
Females.	1,035	717	48	33	18	15	11	126
Total.	1,924	1,249	79	54	35	21	19	267
Number of families.	511							
Average number of persons to each family.	3.76	1.54						
Percent. of whole number		64.9	4.1	2.8	1.8	1.	.9	13.8
Percentage of males.		59.8	3.5	2.3	1.9	.6	.9	15.8
Percentage of females.		69.3	4.6	3.1	1.7	1.4	1.	12.1

in 11.6 per cent. instances. One cause of this difference, perhaps the chief one, is that the mothers, for various reasons which will occur to you, are often known when the fathers are not. The parents of 860 of the 1,924 children, 326 men and 534 women, an aggregate of 44.6 per cent., were either unknown or were known to be normal. In but 22 instances (1.1 per cent.) were the parents reported to be relatives. This was true in the case of 10 men and 12 women.

The physical and mental condition of the parents of these 889 males is more specifically given as follows:

Mother defective, father unknown or normal.....	348 or 39.1%
Father defective, mother unknown or normal.....	83 or 9.3%
Both parents defective.....	122 or 13.7%
Parents unknown or normal.....	326 or 36.6%
Parents related.....	10 or 1.1%
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	889 99.8%

141, or 15.8 per cent., of the males are illegitimate.

The physical and mental condition of the parents of these 1,035 females more particularly stated is as follows:

Mother defective, father normal or unknown.....	318 or 30.7%
Father defective, mother normal or unknown.....	68 or 6.5%
Both parents defective.....	103 or 9.9%
Parents unknown or normal.....	534 or 51.5%
Parents related.....	12 or 1.1%
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	1,035 99.7%

(‘Defective’ in the above means either mentally or physically defective.)

Of the 717 feeble-minded women, 163, or 22 per cent., have had illegitimate children. These 163 women have had 248 children, an average of 1.52 each. They range in number from 1 to 8 to the mother.

Perhaps it is well to refer to a few illustrations of the ancestors of the persons whom we have been discussing.

In one of the county poor asylums of Indiana, years ago, were a man and his

wife, who are reported to have been of a low grade of intelligence, if not actually feeble-minded. The direct descendants of this couple, with those who entered the family through marriage, number 67, comprising three generations. One of the men, who is fairly bright, has raised a good family; another is an intelligent barber; two men have served in the army, but the majority of the family are feeble-minded, illiterate and of low morals, and their history is one of drunkenness, prostitution and crime. The marriage relation has been lightly regarded, and doubtless many of the unions were those of common law. Some of these persons are self-supporting, but a much larger number of them are or have been supported by the public in county or state institutions.

One woman I recall is the mother of eleven children, ten of them by one husband, one by another. A feeble-minded man whose history is known to us, was father of twenty children but was married several times.

Another group of 241 families in which there are two or more generations of feeble-mindedness has 970 persons who are blood relations, that is an average of 4.02 to each family. Of these families, 221 have two generations of feeble-mindedness, sixteen have three generations, three have four generations and one has five generations. The number of direct descendants who are feeble-minded is known to be 726. That is to say, 74.8 per cent. are feeble-minded. Does anything else reproduce itself so surely? In addition to this there are 25 who show other evidences of defectiveness. But 197 are normal or their mental and physical condition is unknown.

In the first generation 103 men and 203 women (306) were the parents of 248 children. Of these 84 were males and 164 were females. It is observed that almost twice as many women as men were known

as parents in the first generation. The reason is the women were principally poor asylum inmates who were permitted to leave the institution and either live among relatives of a similar stage of mentality or roam the country. They returned to the poor asylum as a maternity house and nothing was learned or recorded of the paternity of many of the children.

persons, 304 males and 224 females. Of these, 26 were parents of the third generation. Of the latter seven were parents of the fourth generation. From it came the single parent of the fifth generation. In the first generation there were 267 individuals of 306, or 87 per cent., who were feeble-minded; in the second generation 386 of 548, or 70 per cent., were so recorded; in the

A TABLE OF 241 FAMILIES EACH CONTAINING TWO OR MORE GENERATIONS OF FEEBLE-MINDEDNESS REPRESENTED BY 970 INDIVIDUALS.

No. families of 2 generations of feeble-mindedness	221
" " " 3 " " "	16
" " " 4 " " "	3
" " " 5 " " "	1
	241

Total No. of persons 970. Average to each family 4.02.

	Total No. of persons.		F. M. .		Ins.		Ep.		Df.		Bl.		F. M. & Df.		F. M. & Ep.		F. M. & Par.		F. M. & Bl.		F. M. Bl. & Ep.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1st generation.	103	203	84	164	5	17	1	1			3	1		1		3	1	3	3	6		
2d "	304	244	199	157	4	5	2	1		1	2	1		3	8	11		1		3		1
3d "	48	47	25	31				1							2					1		
4th "	9	11		7		6																
5th "	1		1																			
Total.	465	505	316	358	9	22	4	2		1	5	1		4	10	14	1	4	3	10		1

	F. M., Par. & Ep.		F. M., Df. & Ep.		Par.		Ins. & Ep.		Ins. & Df.		Unk. or Normal.		Illegit.		
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
1st generation.		1		1	1			1			5	4		3	Parents of 3d generation, 26 " " 4th " 7 " " 5th " 1
2d "	1	1	1						1		87	59	46	26	
3d "											20	15	15	15	
4th "											2	5	1	1	
5th "													1	1	
Total.	1	2	1	1	1			1		1	114	83	63	44	

Most of the families obviously are of two generations. The child and parent are reported, and often nothing has been learned of an earlier ancestor. Where there are three or four generations some of the older members are dead, so that the amount of information concerning them is scant. On the other hand the later generation is represented by one or more children, many of them so young that their mental state cannot be determined.

In the second generation there were 548

third generation 59 of 95, or 62 per cent., were so noted; in the fourth generation 13 of 20 cases, or 65 per cent., were given as feeble-minded. In the fifth generation the single representative is reported as feeble-minded. The aggregate showing, as noted, is that 74.8 per cent. of the descendants of these feeble-minded ancestors are feeble-minded. Other defects among the children are noted as follows: insane, 3.4 per cent.; epileptic, 3.8 per cent.; blind, 2 per cent.; deaf, 8 per cent.; paralysis, 9 per cent.;

both mentally and physically defective, 5.5 per cent. 107 or 11 per cent. were reported as illegitimate.

It will be observed that the feeble-minded and blind are more common than any other combination in the first generation, while in the second and third generations there are more feeble-minded and epileptics.

In one neighboring county a feeble-minded woman, who, according to the records in our office, has been in the poor asylum over twenty years, was the mother of two daughters, to whom she transmitted her mental defect. One of these feeble-minded daughters, Rachel, has been twice married, and has borne eleven children, three of whom are now dead. Her second union was with a negro. Her children are very ignorant, but so far our records do not show that they have been inmates of any public institution, with the exception of one son, who has been in prison. The other daughter,

sons have been the result of this marriage. One of the daughters is feeble-minded. One of the sons, also feeble-minded, is a natural criminal. The direct descendants of the feeble-minded woman first mentioned number twenty-nine, and in the past ten years twelve of these persons have spent an aggregate of twenty-two years in the poor asylum and orphans' home of the county. The total family members reported number forty-seven and extend over five generations.

One group of 13 feeble-minded families is recorded containing 68 individuals. Of these there were 18 in the first generation; 26 in the second; 24 in the third. With these degenerates it is not always true that when there is a little child there are three persons in a family. The paternity is not always known and in many cases we are compelled to count two persons, the mother and child. All the members of the first generation were feeble-minded; twenty

A RECORD OF THIRTEEN FAMILIES OF THREE GENERATIONS EACH.

	No. of persons.		Feeble-minded		Insane.		F. M. & Ep.		F. M. & Df.		Deaf & Dumb.		Unk. or normal.		Illegitimate.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
First generation.	7	11	6	9		1	1	1								
Second generation*	7	19	6	14					1		2		1	2		2
Third generation.	14	10											14	10	5	6

Kate, had four children, all girls, two feeble-minded and two illegitimate. The two feeble-minded daughters have spent much of their lives in the county poor asylum. One of them, Nancy, became the third wife of a feeble-minded, paralytic man, and one son and three feeble-minded daughters were born to her. Her husband's second wife had a feeble-minded daughter, who married an insane man, and they have one child, a son. Nancy's feeble-minded sister, Lou, married a feeble-minded man, and three daughters and two

* No. of persons in 2d generation who had children = 12.

of the second generation showed the same defect. The mental condition of the third generation is not given. The reason is that they were reported when they were at an age at which it could not be determined. Eleven of its members, however, are reported as illegitimate. The 11 women in the first generation were the mothers of 26 children. The 24 members of the third generation are the children of 12 of these. It will be noted that when the younger members of a generation are born in an institution, or become inmates very young, their mental condition cannot be reported and often is not known unless they are readmitted when

they become older and the psychosis can be determined. Neither the husbands nor the wives of the members of this group are counted in this table. Those enumerated are the direct descendants of the persons in the preceding generation.

It is not unusual to find in a poor asylum three generations of feeble-mindedness. Not long since, the speaker had grouped before him, at a poor asylum in the southern part of the State, four generations of feeble-minded persons—father born in 1817, daughter, granddaughter and great-grandson. There are nineteen members of this family; nine are feeble-minded and four are illegitimate. Most of them have been inmates of the institution where they were seen. Some of them recur to it from time to time yet. This is not a single instance, for in other poor asylums an equal number of generations, similarly afflicted, can be found, and in fact there are instances where five generations have at one time or another been inmates of such a county institution.

Years and years ago a single man here and there—a prophet in a strange land—began to call attention to the condition of the idiot. They were treated as animals in confinement. At the beginning of the present century the first institution was built for their care.

Dr. Walter E. Fernald tells us that the first recorded attempt to educate an idiot was made about the year 1800 by Itard, the celebrated physician-in-chief to the National Institution for the Deaf and Dumb at Paris, upon a boy found wild in a forest in the center of France, and known as the 'Savage of Aveyron.' This boy could not speak any human tongue, and was devoid of all understanding and knowledge. Believing him to be a savage, for five years Itard endeavored with great skill and perseverance to develop at the same time the intelligence of his pupil and the theories of the materialistic school of philosophy.

Itard finally became convinced that this boy was an idiot, and abandoned the attempt to educate him. (Proc. Nat. Conf. Char. and Cor., 1893, page 203.)

In 1818 the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, at Hartford, Conn., the first institution of its kind in this country, gave the first instruction offered in the United States to idiotic children. Following this several attempts were made in teaching such children in France, Switzerland and Germany. But a few could be cared for. Slowly the thought of the possibility of their improvement spread. The progress of the work was slow. Individuals were interested and pressed into it. Finally a state took some interest.

In 1846 the first effort was made for legal provision for the instruction of idiots in this country in New York. This was unsuccessful; but a few days later in the same year action looking to similar results was begun in Massachusetts. This culminated in legislation in 1848, providing for the education of 'ten indigent idiots.' Thus began our public institutions for idiotic or feeble-minded children. In New York efforts providing for such a school were repeatedly made, but it was not until 1851 that they were entirely successful and the act passed in that State. Pennsylvania was the third State to begin the work in 1852. It was followed by Ohio in 1857. One after another of our States has recognized the duty of providing education, training and care for these unfortunates. In a number of States institutions of the highest standing have been developed. Dr. Fernald tells us the early history of these pioneer State institutions in many respects was very similar. They were practically all begun as tentative experiments in the face of great public distrust and doubt as to the value of the results to be obtained.

At last it became recognized that those who had given years of study to the idiot

had a right to have an opinion and to express it. Then it came to be believed and advocated that in this class of defectives were many who were amenable to instruction if it were only of the right kind and taught in the right way. The children might be reached and helped.

First it was thought that many of these children could be educated to make their own way in the world. Finally it was decided that while many of them could be taught to be self-supporting under direction, but very few could ever leave the fostering care of the institution. Children they are and children they will be as long as they live. For, though they become old in years, mentally they will still be children.

More and more came the conviction that there should be custodial institutions. These were especially advocated for feeble-minded women under forty-five years of age. They would be safe and with no prospect of reproducing their kind. Now it has come to be regarded as the proper right and duty to retain control over these grown-up children during life. Some states have made a beginning for this purpose.

Never did we appreciate so strongly as we do to-day the untold misery and accumulating expense caused by the lack of control of our feeble-minded population. Their fecundity and animal instincts make them fit subjects for consideration, both on financial and moral grounds, to say nothing of the dangers that beset those of strong minds who have weaker bodies.

The problem presented to us is the manner in which these conditions shall be met. Its solution lies in an intelligent and general knowledge of the subject by the public, preventive measures by legal marriage restrictions and other means, the education of feeble-minded children and the custodial care of feeble-minded women.

AMOS W. BUTLER.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS.

Anatomy of the Cat. By JACOB REIGHARD, Professor of Zoology in the University of Michigan, and H. S. JENNINGS, Instructor in Zoology in the University of Michigan. 173 original figures by LOUISA BURRIDGE JENNINGS. Henry Holt & Co. 1901. 8vo. Pp. ix+498.

Teachers and students alike will welcome the appearance of this admirable text-book because it is practically the only work which treats of the entire macroscopic anatomy of the cat, the mammal most generally available for class-room study. Of the books on the cat hitherto published none unites in itself all the requirements of a satisfactory text-book; they are either inaccurate and diffuse or accurate and meager, while another class which covers parts of the subject exhaustively is not available because incomplete. We believe that, with the aid of this present work, a teacher will find no difficulty in conducting a thorough laboratory course and can cover the entire ground in a college year. The authors are to be congratulated, not only upon producing a book which will secure a higher grade of class-room work, but also upon the completion of an important scientific contribution which cannot fail to stimulate and encourage a wider teaching of elementary anatomy. In one sense this is not an elementary work; the descriptions are scientific and concise, without attempt at popular writing. Moreover, it presupposes a knowledge on the part of the student of such general matters as the nature of tissues, the functions of organs and the meanings of scientific terms. Hence its use would seem to call for accompanying lectures or for previous preparation in courses on histology and general biology.

We are glad to see that the authors have not cast the book in the form of a laboratory guide; structures are described in their proper order and relation, the amount of space devoted to the different systems of organs being determined not only by their relative importance, but also by the amount of work on each which can be expected from the average student. Thus, for example, almost one-half of the entire work is devoted to a description of the bones and muscles, and but one-eighth to the viscera.