

Yet much can be done to ameliorate their condition. The following extracts from my case-book will perhaps best indicate what we are doing for the children. They give a description of one case (*a*) on admission and (*b*) after one year's residence at the school.

Case X.

Age as far as can be ascertained, 14 years 3 months, probably older.

On Admission.

Height, 4 ft. 8 in.

Weight, 4 stone 1 lb.

Head-measurement, 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ in (microcephalic type).

Small for age; thin; not well nourished; senses perfect; forehead narrow, tapers towards vertex; mouth-breather; hands well extended, with incurved little fingers; cannot concentrate attention; self-control very weak, easily led to do wrong; given to self-abuse; dangerous with young children; prone to steal, and will get up at night and steal food from cupboards. Has been boarded out, and in each case has proved too much for his foster-parents, who had evidently lost all control over this lad. Natural result, formation of all bad habits above referred to. Has been left too much to himself for years. Great desire to get away by himself, and imitate the cries and habits of all animals; in this direction his powers of mimicry are perfect. Can read an infant primer; can tell how many pennies in 6d., also 3 plus 4 = 7. Cannot tell the half of 3, or how many sixpences make 1s., or how many days in a month or a year.

At End of First Year's Residence.

Height, 4 ft. 9 in.

Weight, 5 stone 4 lb.

He has improved considerably physically. He is now able to concentrate his attention on any work taken in hand as far as manual occupation is concerned. Memory improving a good deal. His habit of self-abuse is almost cured. From a mere habit of loafing and idleness, he has developed into a fairly good worker. This boy is easily managed; he can be easily led either for good or ill, and consequently, if allowed his liberty, would become the dupe of persons with a stronger will. His reading is improving, and he is always anxious for books to read in recreation-time. His writing is better: his letters home at first dealt entirely with pigs, cows, and horses; his interest is now more diverse. Generally speaking, this boy has improved a great deal during his first year of residence here.

The boys generally are working very satisfactorily, but it does not follow that they are sufficiently useful to keep themselves by their own exertions. In most instances constant supervision is needed. There is no reason, however, why in process of time some of the young men trained here should not be engaged as permanent members of the staff, where they could make themselves useful in various capacities. It is usually found that their general good conduct and the strict attention they pay to their duties is very gratifying.

Many of the smaller children who were practically unable to dress and undress themselves are becoming quite useful in the matmaking class. This and other sense-training exercises, such as boot-lacing, bead-threading, button-sewing, clay-modelling, &c., materially improve the dexterity of their fingers.

It goes without saying that the State requires a practical return for the money spent in all its undertakings, and there are probably many who wish to know what the country gains by spending money on the education of afflicted children. The more one looks into the question of the training of mentally defective children, the more apparent it becomes that the State is doing the right thing in providing for the compulsory education of all these children who are educable—i.e., those who, in the hands of the expert, can be taught, by arousing their dormant capabilities, to contribute somewhat towards the cost of their own maintenance, or who can be made sufficiently useful to become self-supporting under kindly guidance in a custodial institution.

To those of us who are carefully watching the development of the dormant faculties in the children at Otekaike, it is patent that the State will be amply repaid for the money which is being spent here, inasmuch as we are continually developing useful members of our own community who would otherwise remain absolutely useless units, with physical and mental deterioration slowly but surely awaiting them; and because, too, we are lessening the misery of the world, and preventing the increase of the helpless and hopeless section of the Empire. But this brings me to the question of permanent control, and the necessity for legislation in this direction, on which I will touch later in this report.

In concluding this portion of my report, I think we may well take to ourselves the words of Sir James Crichton Browne, M.D. (one of the Lord-Chancellor's Visitors in Lunacy), which are taken from an address given at the quinquennial festival of the Royal Albert Asylum, Lancaster. In speaking of that institution he says, "It is an institution that, as a nursery for infants of larger growth, as a shelter for the helpless and wayward, as a school for the educable, and as an industrial colony for those capable of contributing to their own support, is doing admirable work." And, later, in speaking of the results of the training institutions, Sir James goes on to say, "Perhaps they have not accomplished all that was expected of them when they were first started, for there were then exaggerated notions as to what education could do for the dwarfed or deformed brain; but, considering the material supplied to them, they have worked wonders. They have not manufactured all these inmates into average men and women, but they have converted to usefulness much waste human material. They have substituted health and vigour for languor and debility; they have infused brightness and happiness into many darkened and peevish lives; and they have eased many homes of their grievous burdens."