

work, the cultivation of regular habits, and the judicious use of simple aperients, I am glad to be able to report that the epileptic attacks gradually became less frequent. It is now considerably over twelve months since the lad had his last seizure. Another interesting case is that of a lad about fifteen years of age who was admitted nearly twelve months ago. This lad had been boarded out, but owing to his epileptic seizures no foster-mother could be found who would undertake the responsibility of looking after him. He was therefore admitted to this school. Soon after admission I discovered that he had slight epileptic seizures at night but never during the day. His diet was carefully watched, and an occasional dose of bromide given in the evening. As he was not physically strong enough to work the whole day outside, he was placed in the school for morning lessons and allowed out for garden-work during each afternoon. His health has improved considerably, and it is now nearly six months since he had his last epileptic seizure. I have great hopes of his improving still further. Both these lads are taking an interest in the treatment, and it is worthy of note that on those days in the week when the children's second course is a boiled raisin or fruit pudding both boys refrain from eating this pudding, as they find it does not suit them. The two other cases are not so hopeful. The elder of these two cases is a hemiplegic epileptic mute, and over twenty-one years of age. By carefully graded exercises this lad is now able to use his paralysed arm, and can use a wheelbarrow and work fairly well at French knitting.

#### SCHOLASTIC WORK.

During the year our teaching staff has been considerably strengthened by the appointment of two additional lady teachers. A teacher who has had experience in dealing with mentally deficient children in England is expected to arrive in New Zealand early in 1913. The strengthening of our teaching staff will enable us to adopt a much more effective system of classification with regard to our school-work.

I have ordered a complete set of Madame Montessori's apparatus to use in the education of our low-grade cases. Much already has been claimed for this system of auto-education. This didactic material has been provided for the early education of normal children. The evolution of what may be termed this revolution in the methods to be adopted in the early training of young children was undoubtedly the result of Madame Montessori's experiments with deficient children. In one of her opening chapters the Dottorressa remarks, "The voice of Séguin seemed to be like the voice of the forerunner crying in the wilderness, and my thoughts were filled with the immensity and importance of a work which should be able to reform the school and education"; and later, "Signor Talamo's invitation gave me a wonderful opportunity for applying the methods used with deficient to normal children." That the Montessori apparatus, with modifications, will be of great service to us in our efforts with the lower-grade cases is apparent to all of us who have tested the mentality of our children and discovered their amount of retardation and their exact "mental" age.

I hope in my next annual report to give you a full account of my experiments with the Montessori system. If I can achieve such marvellous results as the Dottorressa did in Rome I shall be more than compensated for the difficult task. We find her stating in her book, "I succeeded in teaching a number of the idiots from the asylums both to read and write so well that I was able to present them at a public school for an examination with normal children, and they passed the examination successfully. These results seemed almost miraculous to those who saw them. To me, however, the boys from the asylums had been able to compete with the normal children only because they had been taught in a different way."

#### FARM AND GARDEN.

Outdoor occupation in the form of farm and garden work has proved of great advantage to our children. Many of these children take a very intelligent interest in the work, and some of them under guidance can accomplish work which would, if valued, practically pay for their maintenance. This is very satisfactory, but it is necessary to point out here that such children if allowed out into the world could not earn their own living, and would probably lapse again into the same idle habits they had acquired before coming into residence. They live very happy, useful lives, but outside the shelter of the institution they would be imposed upon, as most of them have no knowledge of number or money, and are quite incapable of continuous effort except under kindly supervision and direction.

I have, &c.,

The Inspector-General of Schools, Wellington.

GEORGE BENSTEAD, Principal.