

from the special school classes should have the benefit of follow-up or after-care assistance and help.

In the majority of states, the only provision for mental defectives is furnished by an institution for the feeble-minded, providing care and protection for a limited number of idiots and imbeciles, education and industrial training for the higher-grade cases, with permanent segregation for a certain number of defectives, and with special emphasis upon the life-long segregation of feeble-minded women of the hereditary group. It was formerly believed that it was possible and desirable to have institutions for practically all the mental defectives of the state. This was before the actual extent of the problem was known, and its cost computed, and before the difficulty of securing the commitment to an institution of many of these cases was realized. In practice it has been found very difficult to ensure the life-long segregation of the average defective. The courts are as ready to release the defective as they are to commit him in the first place. However proper and desirable it may be in theory to ensure the life-long institutional segregation of large numbers of the moron class, it is a fact that there is a deep-seated prejudice on the part of lawyers, judges and legislators towards assuming that every moron will necessarily and certainly misbehave to an extent that he should be deprived of his liberty. That such misgivings are well-founded is apparently shown by the studies made of discharged patients at Rome and Waverly. At Waverly, a careful study of the discharges for 25 years showed that a very small proportion of the discharged male morons had committed crimes, or had married or had become parents, or had failed to support themselves.

It has been fairly well demonstrated that the average male moron, without natural vicious tendencies, who has been properly trained in habits of obedience and industry, and who is protected from temptation and evil associations during the formative years, can be safely returned to the community when he has passed early adolescence, if his family are able to look after him and give him proper supervision. A very much larger proportion of these trained male defectives would be suitable for community life if the above described extra-institutional control and supervision could be provided.

The average citizen is not yet convinced that he should be taxed to permanently support an individual who is capable of thirty or fifty or seventy per cent. of normal economic efficiency, on the mere theory that he is more likely than a normal individual to become a social problem.

The after-care studies of the female morons who have received training in the institutions were not so favourable, but many of these too led moral and harmless and useless lives after their return to the community. The study of discharged female cases at Waverly showed a surprisingly small number who became mothers or who married.