

they are at best a neglected element of our population whose claims upon us have not so far been recognized.

We ask all members of our profession to whom this circular letter has been sent, to aid in the collection of such information as will enable a fairly correct census of our feeble-minded folk be made, trusting that when the number of this class of defectives is known some proper effort can be made on their behalf.

GOVERNMENT PROMOTION OF INEBRIETY.

The following article taking from our bright contemporary, *The Dallas Medical Journal*, will interest our readers, and we trust stimulate our profession in endeavouring to lessen the accursed patent medicine habit by enlightening the general public of its serious dangers:

"On account of the copyright laws, the United States government not only permits, but encourages, the sale of alcohol, morphine, cocaine and other poisonous drugs. Saloons are permitted only when conducted under the most rigid surveillance of the Internal Revenue Department, pharmacists are not allowed to sell poisonous drugs without a physician's prescription, yet any pedlar may sell unlimited quantities of the vilest government-protected patent medicines without hindrance.

In the Transactions of the Colorado State Medical Society, 1902, Dr. Bumgardner describes the extent of the cocaine habit. Within less than three months there were brought before one of the Chicago police courts not less than forty cocaine fiends, the habit in the majority of cases being traced directly to the use of proprietary catarrh snuffs. In Louisiana and Mississippi its use is becoming so prevalent among the negroes as to threaten their extermination. In St. Louis the habit is so wide-spread that a certain district in the negro quarter is known in police and health department circles as "Cocaine Row." In Roanoke, Va., it is estimated that there are over five hundred cocaine habitues. The cough syrups and soothing syrups on the market, as well as the morphine and cocaine habit