

they come before us in various ways. Though children in mind they are often men and women in wickedness and vice, and it may be necessary to place them under restraint, or to protect their property from being squandered and themselves from being robbed. I know no class over whom controversy is more likely to arise, or where we may have greater difficulty in forming a diagnosis. They are not idiots. Many of them have acquired a fair degree of education, can construe a Greek play or master a problem in Euclid. Their memory is excellent and we cannot compare their condition with a former one—for they have never been any better—so that even this test fails us. They have no delusions or hallucinations and are not insane in the ordinary sense of the word. With regard to many there is no difficulty. When a man or woman of forty consents to be treated like a child of ten, to be taken out and amused, and to have ten cents a week pocket money, we have not much difficulty in forming an opinion. But the development of others is not so low, yet they are deficient in reason and judgment and often in conduct. There is a tendency to low and depraved habits, to brutish and sensual enjoyment, to low company, amongst whom they are of more importance, and if remonstrated with they show an absolute disregard for truth and right behavior. To this class belong, I am satisfied, many of the young men and women, and even boys and girls, who are giving our police authorities so much trouble in every town and necessitating the erection of a reformatory. They also crowd our jails and penitentiaries while in the earlier stages. This is borne out by the number which we yearly receive from the custody of these places of punishment. Invariably these cases show signs of defect and degeneracy.

In examining any such individual we must consider his conduct in regard to his environment and bringing up. What might be passed over in the lower walks of life is in the higher evidence of a degraded mental state. Every case must be judged by itself and the question must be asked, is this person able to take care of himself and his affairs? But to sign a certificate is often very difficult, as we may not ourselves witness the insane conduct, all of which we arrive at by hearsay. It is not to be forgotten, however, that imbeciles are very prone to display violent explosiveness of their nerve centres, and this is specially likely to happen as they advance from the period of puberty to adolescent life.

Last of all, there is the dementia of old age, of chronic insanity or brain disease. In the vast majority of such cases the diagnosis presents no difficulties. Loss of memory, loss of atten-