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THE CARE OF THE MENTALLY DEFECTIVE*

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IT is now generally understood that the feeble-minded and the progeny of the feeble-minded constitute one of the great social and economic burdens of our modern civilization. We have much accurate knowledge as to the causation, prevalence, social significance, prevention and treatment of feeble-mindedness, its influence as a source of unhappiness to the defective himself and to his family, and its bearing as a causative factor in the production of crime, prostitution, pauperism, and other complex social diseases. The literature on the subject has developed to enormous proportions.

No province can consistently ignore a condition involving such a large number of persons and involving so great an economic cost and waste. The first step in this Province has been taken. In my 1918 Annual Report to the Honourable the Provincial Secretary, I stated as follows:

"The time has now arrived in this Province when voluntary admission and the establishment of a psychopathic wing in connection with our largest general hospital should be established. It would appear that Vancouver should be the city and the Vancouver General Hospital the hospital. The establishment of such a psychopathic hospital with voluntary admission would immediately have the effect of making the public understand the fact that insanity is a disease requiring early and careful treatment, and would also undoubtedly, in a considerable percentage of cases, obviate the necessity for legal committal.

"If a proper outdoor service was also established in connection with this psychopathic department, great assistance to the Province could be given. If such an outdoor service was in charge of qualified men, it might be hoped that they would be able to pick out many of those types liable to develop psychoses, and to protect them from those classes of stress which they are least able to withstand. The neurotic

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