

It appears to me that the efficacy and importance of preventive measures cannot be too strongly impressed on parents and guardians, since they can make or mar the power of control, and indeed the whole mental and moral destiny of the children intrusted to their care, just as surely as they can determine their bodily health and fitness—largely, indeed, by the same means.

How many parents realize that most cases of epilepsy in adults are found to have been preceded by convulsions in infancy, or by incontinence of urine—in other words, by nervous explosions and irritabilities induced mainly by wrong feeding and otherwise careless or ignorant rearing! How many parents grasp the fact that early indigestion robs the organism of power of control in every direction in after-years, and is a prime factor in the vices of puberty and adolescence, besides rendering the individual an easy prey to vice and insanity throughout life! Education in parenthood offers, I submit, the main hope for the reduction of insanity.

The clear conclusions bearing on the above, which are set forth in Professor Lúgaro's remarkable and authoritative book ("Modern Problems in Psychiatry": Manchester University Press, 1909) appear as hopeful as they are convincing. After dwelling on the widespread havoc wrought in the brains of children by parental alcoholism and syphilis—generally regarded as the leading scourges of the nervous system—Professor Lúgaro says, "The infections which arise in the first years of life, and especially the inflammations of the gastro-intestinal tract—the result of unsuitable alimentation during the lactational period—are the most important factors in determining the majority of cerebropathies, and in this way a crowd of idiots, imbeciles, and epileptics is produced, who encumber asylums and are an enormous drain on the internal economy of the country, as also on public charity. All measures directed towards favouring natural maternal feeding, and providing the poor with the means for carrying out artificial feeding according to the most rational methods, form the best means of prophylaxis against the infantile cerebropathies. In the most civilized nations . . . the movement in favour of the use of prophylactic means is very strong and steadily growing. In fact a notable reduction in the infantile mortality has been effected, and along with this a diminution in the number of the deformed, and of children physically and mentally weak from earliest infancy."

The following paragraph taken from my official report of four years ago still expresses what appear to me to be the most important considerations for the mental well-being and efficiency of the race:—

"If women in general were rendered more fit for maternity, if instrumental deliveries were obviated as far as possible, if infants were nourished by their mothers, and boys and girls were given a rational education, the main supplies of population for our asylums, hospitals, benevolent institutions, gaols, and slums would be cut off at the sources. Further, I do not hesitate to say that a very remarkable improvement would take place in the physical, mental, and moral condition of the whole community."

There has been no serious accident or casualty of any kind during the year.

The steady increase of our population demands more ample accommodation in the way of day-rooms. Such additions as could be made to the existing buildings by the ordinary artisan staff of the institution have been effected year by year, but something more adequate is needed at the present time. Another highly desirable improvement, long under contemplation, is the erection of a separate cottage for male patients, similar to the one built for the women some fourteen years ago. The retreat at Waitati serves its purpose, but the above is wanted at Seacliff to give to men the advantage so long possessed by the women patients.

The two new wings at Seacliff supply bedroom-space which was much needed, but the increase of our patients by sixty-six in the course of the year makes it necessary that we should have further sleeping accommodation for women patients and nurses, the nursing staff having quite outgrown the accommodation in the Nurses' Home.

The branch institution at Waitati has proved a great advantage by affording the means of further dividing and classifying male patients.

The farm, garden, and fishing-station continue to supply a large proportion of the food needed at the institution, and in some directions there is an ample surplus. The progressive development of the fishing-station promises to satisfy not only all our own needs, but also those of other Government institutions in the South Island. Arrangements have now been made whereby it is estimated we can insure an average catch of a quarter of a million pounds of fish per annum. Our largest return hitherto has been 100,000 lb. By means of salting, smoking, and freezing there will be no difficulty in making regular and varied provision not only during the summer, but also throughout the winter. We have at present 13 tons of fish stored frozen at Port Chalmers.

The annual expenditure per patient at Seacliff appears somewhat high owing to several misleading factors. Thus the Waitati institution is included under the Seacliff returns, and the nominal cost per patient at Waitati is more than double the cost at Seacliff. This is due to the fact that a great deal done at Waitati in the way of development and permanent improvements is being charged under the head of annual expenditure. Further, the cost per head at the smaller institution is necessarily much higher than at the larger one, a matter which will adjust itself as the number of patients at Waitati increases. The inclusion of Waitati in the Seacliff accounts makes the expenditure at the latter institution appear more than £2 a head higher than it really is, though even at Seacliff a number of minor permanent improvements and additions have been provided for as usual out of annual expenditure during the year.

The exigencies of rapid increase of population make it necessary not only to keep pace in the way of maintenance, but also in the way of extensions and additions in all directions, and, while this necessary expansion and development going on all the time is year by year greatly enhancing the capital value of the estate and premises, there is no provision for showing this in any way in the annual returns. As for repairs, the buildings for the most part are not merely kept from