

THE STATE TRAINING SCHOOL

By MRS. ELIZABETH CORBETT HOLLIDAY
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How many South Carolinians fully appreciate our voluntary Training school at Clinton? A clear conception of the wonderful work being done there would, it seems, bring every humane heart to a state of full accord.

How our state has done without such an institution until eight years ago is astounding, and how so much extraordinary work has been done by the salvaging crew, so to speak, of that place in so short a time is almost incredible.

An anchorage for the unfortunate of our state who are mentally unable to breast the tide of life is the State Training school, a hospital for mental cripples; a refuge for those who have been hopelessly beaten by life's storms. In other words, the institution might be likened to a port where shipwrecks are towed in and, whenever possible, repaired.

And where does this benighted, broken mass of humanity come from? Piece by piece from your county and mine, your home and mine, while some of the institution's inmates are products of the scum of society, some are unaccountable freaks in the state's best families.

If the public could understand that there is a class of mental deficient that are not insane and yet not fit to be turned loose on society, the State Training school would get a better support. Some one has aptly said that all criminals are mental cripples. Then gather up all that are non compos mentis and work out their recovery or keep them for the remainder of their lives under proper supervision, and the feeble minded race will eventually be extinct. For just such a purpose is the State Training school being maintained.

If there is one sound minded person in the state who is unfriendly toward

the Training school he needs only to visit the institution and look upon the inmates and the noble band of workers who are striving to redeem them.

Children scarcely out of babyhood, the younger they go there the greater hope of a permanent improvement,—young boys and girls, mature and even aged adults, all more or less mentally deprived, 453 in number, make up the school's student body. Some are so short of that which "maketh wretched or happy, sick or well, rich or poor," that they seem scarcely above the animals, while others have been raised to such plains that one wonders if they are inmates or hired attendants.

And how is this unnatural band being handled and taught? By doctors, nurses, teachers and supervisors who understand and love their job. The task is too hard and the pay too small for them to be accredited with working for any other purpose than the betterment of humanity. The uttermost patience, the greatest endurance is required of them. "All the great battles are not fought on regular battle fields." And all of God's servants don't go out as foreign missionaries or home church workers. The reclaiming staff at the State Training school are on duty long hours each day and are for the most part unfailing, patient and kind.

It speaks well for those in authority that the inmates look upon them as friends. The poor, sick-minded things sometimes harbor grudges against each other, and rebel at their restraint, but somehow they do not blame the superintendent with anything that bothers them. On the other hand, they seem to feel that those highest in authority will take their part, bear their burdens and right all their wrongs. They look eagerly for-

ward to interviews with them when all their ills can be aired and righted.

Now what and how are these people taught? Each one according to his or her ability, talent and inclination.

In the school the children are taught as they could not be taught elsewhere. That is, they are taught just what they can learn, and are carried so far as they can go in the line of their bent. Thus the best that is in these unfortunates is brought out and developed. An instance: A little girl found refuge at the institute that could never have made the grades in a common public school, but possessed a lovely voice and an aptitude for singing, where she would have been a derelict if left to the natural course of children. She now stands a chance of a successful career. (As the school is worked enough educational polish will be rubbed on to pass her, she being not so badly behind, mentally.)

And so it goes. Children who cannot learn arithmetic are not forced to pore and strain over it as they would have to do were they seeking education elsewhere. Naturally they love to do that for which they are gifted. So the school even for such as they is run successfully. Some take to drawing, others fancy work, some love literature, others industrial art. And like the saying that the loss of one or more of the five senses strengthens those that remain unimpaired, so it seems that the brains being weak in parts lend extra capacity to that part which is active. Some of the students show almost genius-like ability in their talents.

All of the inmates except those too ill or mindless are given manual training. This line of education is worked upon the same principle as that of the school. Each does that work for which he or she has "the turn." Hence, 13 dormitories, 1 laundry, a large farm and a dairy are all kept in order and operated successfully almost entirely by the inmates. Of course, this does not mean that office work or supervision is done by them.

The tract of land given over to the institute includes 1188 acres. On the campus are the greater number of dormitories, the office, dining hall and kitchen, school building and chapel, doctor's home and other buildings.

About three-quarters of a mile from the campus is a home for the most nervous and broken down women.

One subconsciously calls this building a home. Indeed, it is very nearly akin to that most ideal of institutions.

The home is situated on a hill and is surrounded by pines and other trees. It is occupied by two matrons, and 20 inmates, nervous wrecks of various ages.

They have their chickens, pigs and garden, just like the ordinary cottager. They even go out and wring their broom straw. And around the yard are rock-laid walks and flower beds.

Inside is the dining and living room combined, a homey kitchen and pantry; two large sleeping rooms furnished each with ten snow white single beds from which the occupants can look out of clear-washed windows at waving pines and blue skies; a nice conveniently equipped bathroom; a clothes room in which each "girl," as they call each other, has her own compartment; a long hall and matron's quarters.

The home is furnished with electricity and running water. The twenty women under the supervision of the matrons do the tasks of their choosing. Altogether, the place is kept in apple-pie order. A home atmosphere prevails and home cooked food is served. Why the "girls" even call the matrons "mother" and "mama" so and so.

All doing a share, the work is soon over. By day, leisure time is spent sitting around under the trees or walking through the woods (with a matron, of course), and of evenings the broken, twisted,—everyone in some way is marred—"girls," ranging in ages from 25 to probably 60, sit around and sing, one can bass real nicely—ask riddles, say little speeches and even tell fortunes.

About two miles beyond the women's home is a similar but larger one for men. Connected with it is the farm. It is said that this is the most contented "bunch" at the institute, and that they make quite a success of their farming. Around last Christmas time, 90 fine hogs were butchered at the farm.

Getting all these abnormal people to work in harness comparatively smoothly requires expert skill and management and they are not only trained to bring out their best mentally and manually, but are treated physically. Many a person has "gone through" from hookworm, pellagra, pyorrhea, etc. Their physical condition corrected, they come back to normalcy. By various means, the institute returns to social life, a satisfactory percentage of its inmates. Especially is this true of those who enter as children. About 50 children and grown people were sent out in 1928, and they are making very good adjustment.

The State Training school could extend its good work much farther had it more means, but limited as it is for funds, many needy cases are refused admittance. There is only room for the most urgent. Many, many of our mental shipwrecks are left floundering upon the sea of life. Oh that they could all be piloted into the drydocks at Clinton, where our faithful salvaging crew would do all in man's power to repair them!

Sen. George Fears Foreign Opinion

Washington, July 13.—Senator Walter F. George, Democrat, of Georgia, in a formal statement today declared congress and the administration in framing the tariff bill should consider the effect an excessively high tariff structure will have upon public opinion in other countries.

"I do not put as much emphasis," his statement said, "upon a mere protest by foreign governments against our tariff policies as seems to be placed upon such protests by others, but the matter of particular importance is not the mere protest against our tariff policy, as reflected in the house bill, but the reason underlying the protest.

"The nations have been brought so

close together until the effect of a public act in the United States unavoidably results in the shaping of opinion in other countries and the protests filed with the state department and voiced in the foreign press against the excessively high duties in the house bill are but the reflection of the opinion of the masses of the people in these nations by their official representatives.

"In other words, a protest against tariff duties regarded as unreasonable and as in the nature of an embargo is now reflected in the opinion of the masses of the people and it is the building up of an adverse public opinion in other countries which should address itself directly to the congress, to the administration and to the American people in shaping our present tariff."

Dr. W. T. Hughes DENTIST

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