

This was, without doubt, a case of congenital Idiocy : although his imbecility was very much aggravated by the extremely injulicious course that was persued with

him during the early period of his infancy.

When he first came under my observation, he was one of the most hopeless and degraded creatures that could be found : presenting to the bodily eye, dressed as he was in his red flannel gown, and lying upon the floor in his own excrements, extremely feeble claims to being called a human being. He had not learned to creep, nor had he even strength sufficient to roll himself upon the floor when laid upon it. Owing to a paralysis of the lower limbs, they were insensible to pain. Mastication, with him, was entirely out of the question. His mother told me that she used to feed him almost exclusively on milk, purchasing for him, as she said, a gallon per day.

Although five and a half years of age, he had not, apparently, any more knowledge of things, their names, or uses, than a new horn infant. In fact, the only sense that seemed to be awake in the least to external influences, even for a time, was that of hearing, and this only when some lively air was whistled or played upon a musical instrument.

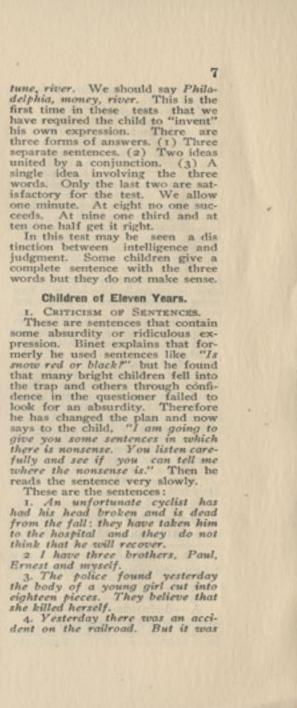
This being the nowner case that could be found to test the feasibility of the plan to develop and educate Idiotic and Imbecile children, it was thought best to undertake his training, although it seemed more like a work of creation than of education. The most sangaine friends of the cause threw discouragements in the way. Yet, by a patient and persevering system of well directed effort, he has been so far developed, that at the present time he walks about the house or in the yard without any assistance ; takes care of himself ; attends to his own immediate wants ; sits at the table with the family, and feeds himself as well as children ordinarily do; talks perfectly well, and is negrainted with the things around him. In short, he has learned to read, and does not differ materially in his usual habits from a lad of four years of age, unless it be that he is more sluggish in Lis movements.

Judging from the above case, and the numerous enes that have fallen under my observation during the past few years, I doubt whether one can be found so low as to be beyond the reach of improvement, provided his instruction and training be commenced at an early age.

JAMES B. RICHARDS.



Dr. Alfred Elwyn - Education, not Incarceration Tap an item to learn more...



moletion of the whole building Thisse

V6*

999

THE Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Training School for Feeble-Minded Children, are under the necessity of appealing to the liberality of their fellow-citizens. In having recourse to the sympathy and aid of this community on behalf of feeble-minded and idiotic youth, the Directors feel that they present a claim for relief, to which many considerations of humanity, duty, and Christian charity, unite in giving force.

AN APPEAL

ON BEHALF OF THE

No form of affliction which, in the dispensations of an inscrutable Providence, is permitted to visit the family circle, is more distressing, or has been heretofore more irremediable, than the physical and mental imbecility of its youthful members. Almost every other cause of grief has its limit of duration, or some means of mitigation; but this is a continuing sorrow, banishing domestic happiness, and causing a desolation worse than bereavement.

Family arrangements, seldom among the rich, and never among the poor, meet the case of the imbecile child; and without such special provision for it, as is made by the establishment of the Training School, its condition must indeed be hopeless and distressing.

Few persons are aware of the large number of the class of unfortunates, for whose care and improvement this Institution is intended, and still fewer of the progress that has been made in restoring them to comparative comfort and intelligence; and yet the records of our own and other similar institutions show, that in a large proportion of instances, these children, under the requisite training, not only cease to be entirely dependent upon others for the most ordinary and necessary care, but become attentive to their own habits and necessities, and have their moral and intellectual faculties so far improved as to make them capable of many of the duties and enjoyments of life.

The Pennsylvania Training School has been in operation for the last six years. It has passed through the various struggles and embarrassments of its experimental period, and is now fairly established, as one of the necessary and most useful institutions of the State. The results of its beneficent system have been highly satisfactory; and the Directors have felt themselves justified, in answer to the pressing claims upon them from many parts of the Commonwealth, in purchasing a farm and erecting plain but substantial buildings, for the better accommodation of that numerous class of the afflicted in whose behalf this appeal is made to the generosity of a Christian community.

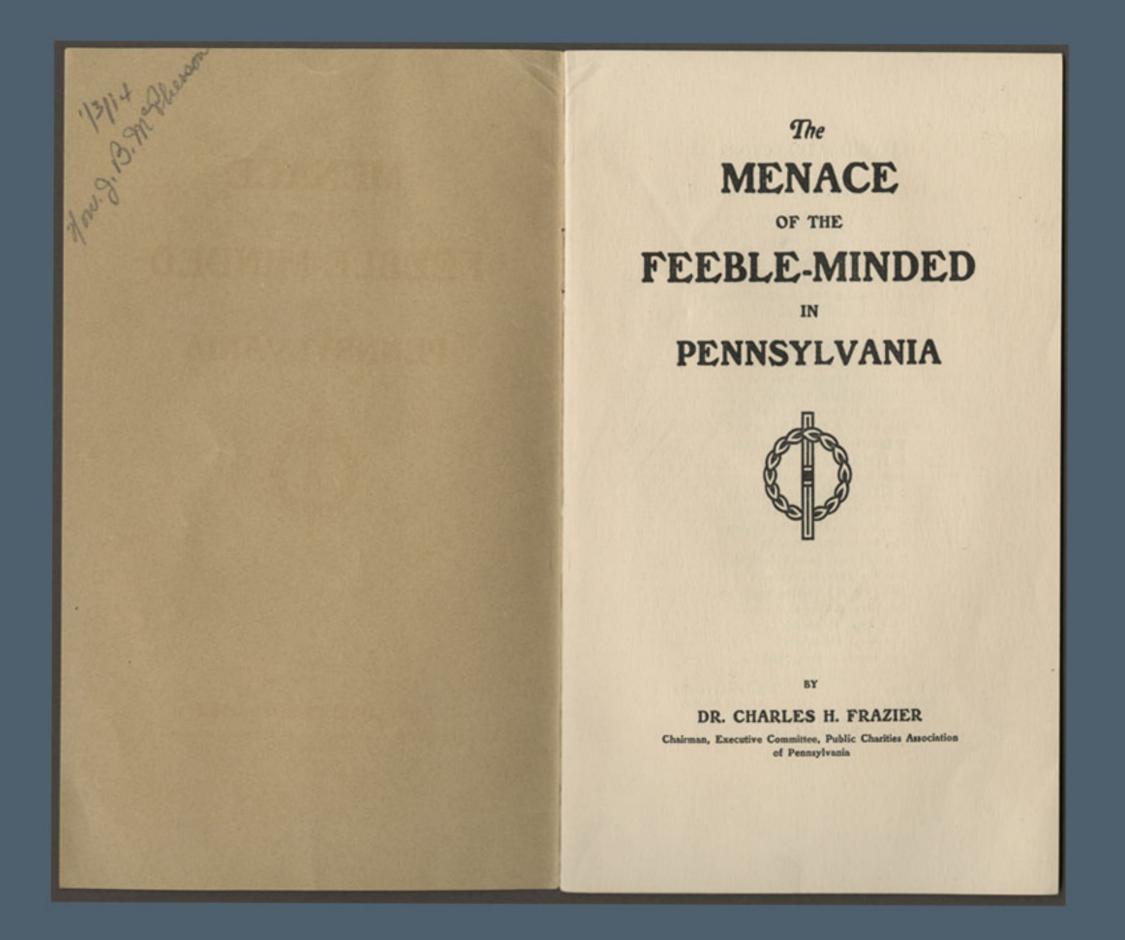
possessed not the affection of a mother. See him in the sick ward of a workhouse, without a friend in the world, for those who are paid for their attentions can scarcely be called friends; see him drawing near to the grave; no comfort reaches his heart; no bright hope of eternal life, through the mercy and sacrifice of the Redeemer, sparkles in his eye; no faith in the promises of God supports him; and no joy on account of the glory of heaven animates his spirit ! Unconscious that death and eternity are near, by little

The work of the

aventer liter and

and little he loses his strength, and the last sound that leaves his lips is the singing of his idiot song. Perhaps, as his unadorned coffin is carried round the corner of the street, on its way to the churchyard, it is met by some of the thoughtless school-boys, who, on asking who they are carrying to the grave, are told that it is the poor idiot boy, whom they used so cruelly to torment. Can you envy them their feelings? or, rather, should you not turn pale if you were one of them ? Perhaps you never knew an

Pennsylvania Training School for feeble-Minded Children.



Case Text