Proceedings of the Tenth Minnesota State Conference of Charities and Correction Held in Owatonna, November 19-21, 1901

INSTITUTIONAL LIFE FOR EPILEPTICS AND FOR FEEBLE-MINDED, AND THE NECESSITY FOR AMUSEMENTS.

BY DR. A. C. ROGERS, SUPT. SCHOOL FOR FEEBLE-MINDED.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

If ideal homes, only, always had existed I think, or may assume, that there would be no occasion for public charitable institutions. If the best efforts of all people were applied to the idealizing of home, there would be much *less* occasion for public institutions than at present. However, this ideal condition never has existed, nor have the best possible efforts always been exerted to produce it. The sins of mankind, combined with ignorance of the ultimate laws of creation, together with man's laziness or indifference, are the essential causes of extreme pauperism and of physical and mental disease. A noted writer on sociology has said, "If any social institution could stand alone, it would be the family. There are found all the elements for the satisfaction of individual wants and provision for the continuance of the human species. There are the most tender and sacred affections, the most beautiful hopes, the most intense interests. * * * Future citizens are nourished, protected, nursed in sickness, taught the first lessons in friendly co-operation, fitted for social life within the home. * * * There is no other institution, and never can be one, which so nearly can satisfy all the essential desires and affections of men as the domestic group."

The normal child responds to these influences. The foundations of his character, his mental and moral life, are securely laid. The school and the church and the thousands of contacts with, and the observations of people and things complete the superstructure. The fact that there may be several children in the family does not tend to interfere with this educational process but rather to promote it. Last evening the members of the Conference listened to Mr. Hart's admirable presentation of the work of child-saving agencies, public and private, that bring homeless children into childless homes, and the baneful results of institutionalism. It is a fact worthy of note, that while institutions for homeless children began by providing institution life for them, and then developed the idea and practice of minimizing the institutional feature and magnifying the real home feature the experience of the last fifty years in the care of the feeble-minded has reversed this history. The first movement for the feeble-minded was to educate them in institutions and send them back to their homes at the end of a given term of years, as is done with the blind and deaf, while the more rational idea of today is the provision of permanent homes or colonies for them.

The importance of the normal home for normal children has not been

overestimated, but the advent of an *abnormal* child into the home disarranges the whole domestic system and presents a new problem. The mother finds that it requires extra attention and care as an infant, and this increases with age, because of increasing physical growth and continued helplessness. Other family duties must be neglected because of the exactions required of the mother. Under the most favorable conditions the burden is very heavy. Under the usual conditions the care of other children is interfered with, and not infrequently the relations between the normal children and the abnormal child are mutually irritating and detrimental. If the child is physically strong and active, it is the cause of even greater anxiety; and exacts even greater attention and supervision to keep the exercise of its energies within legitimate bounds. Special assistance must be called in, if the family can afford it; and if not either the child is neglected until the condition is disgraceful, or the mother must give up practically all other matters, domestic and social, and wear out her health and even her life in its interest and care without any other result than the protection of a life, useless as measured by human standards, and that satisfaction which the performance of a duty always brings to the conscientious soul. The state, therefore, recognizes the necessity of a new home adapted to the care of such abnormal persons. In so far as the child approximates or realizes physical or mental normality, it should have the advantages of all the best elements of the normal home. It cannot have its mother, but it can have the kind and loving care of those trained to stand in that relation to it, who are interested in its every want, who will subdue its bad impulses, encourage and guide its good ones, and sympathize in its every sorrow. A public institution cannot be to an abnormal child all that a good, natural home is to a normal one, but now it is recognized as *indispensable* to the best interests of both the abnormal child and its natural home.

The feeble-minded child is a subject for the combined skill of the physician and the teacher. The school with medical supervision is thus the supreme characteristic of an institution for feeble-minded. The practically unimprovable idiot, or the child whose possibilities for improvement are too small to justify the application of the full teaching facilities, is cared for in comfort, his simple wants supplied in a simple manner. Then, after all possible has been done for him, it must be remembered that his arrested mental development in a greater or less degree is a permanent handicap. Thus the number of feeble-minded who are able to cope with the world alone is exceedingly small. From this fact has developed the idea of their permanent supervision.

The children from the training schools have literary ability about equal to that of the pupils in the fourth and sixth grades of the public schools, though there usually is a symmetrical development. The boys may become quite proficient in teaming, care of stock, gardening, and various handicrafts, and the girls in housework, cleaning, laundering, bed-making, sewing, etc. In fact, feeble-minded persons acquire aptitude in almost anything the performance of which depends chiefly upon repetition under the same or similar conditions. And yet they cannot readily adapt themselves to new conditions. The judgment nearly always is poor, and the will usually is

weak about in proportion to the mental development. The social instincts are strong. The ethical and spiritual nature differs from that of other people by the greater lack of control and ability to dissemble. They love companionship and the discussion of bits of news and gossip, athletic games, sports and contests, anecdotes and stories of travel such as children usually enjoy, and they love to attend church and Sunday school. They also love to earn money and thus obtain the things that money will buy, and to feel that they earn and purchase the things themselves. Thus we have a class of people with practically the same fundamental instincts and desires as other people, but for evident reasons not fitted to enjoy them in the general community; hence the idea of the village community, which shall afford the opportunity for the enjoyment of these legitimate desires under proper regulations, and where the inmates' labor will produce its maximum results. This is the place where machinery and everything that tends to cheapen the cost of producing and preparing supplies, either for institution consumption or the general market, has its proper and legitimate place.

Epileptics as a class are very closely related to the feeble-minded and insane, because the disease in childhood prevents mental development and frequently produces insanity both in adolescence and adult life. In fact, as we all know, there are few cases of chronic epilepsy that do not exhibit manifest mental deficiency or degeneration. As the great majority of epileptics are such from childhood and infancy; the great majority are feeble-minded, and both by virtue of the disease and the mental infirmity, are unfitted to live in normal homes. The fundamental purpose of an institution for epileptics, as in the case of a hospital for insane, should be to cure the patient; hence medical influence and supervision must be the predominant one. Experience so far teaches that cures of the disease are very rare, hence the village community idea is also applicable to patients with epilepsy. A community life is appreciated especially by the adult epileptics who seek a retreat from an uncongenial society.

As a large percentage of the patients of an epileptic community are children, they require educational facilities similar to those required for the feeble-minded, except that they are of *lesser* while the medical supervision is of greater importance as compared with the requirements for the latter class. Schoolroom work must be prescribed definitely for epileptics like courses of medical treatment, to suit the individual cases. While epileptics are social, there is one predominant character, with very few exceptions, among patients sent to public institutions, viz., an exaggerated egotism with irritability of temper. This condition is in part a direct result of the disease itself, and in part is due to the indulgence or misguided and excessive attentions of relatives. Introspection and self-interest are thus very likely to prevent the development of altruistic or benevolent feelings or considerations for the personal interest and comfort of others. Thus careful classification is a very important necessity, and this requires the organization of small groups to secure compatibility of temperament and disposition.

The simply feeble-minded, on the other hand, live happily in larger groups. Thus we see in reference to both classes that the functions of a public institution are medical, educational and custodial. Both should have the

privileges of a village community with its schools and shops, its farm, gardens and dairies, its social and religious opportunities. The differences in treatment are based upon the relative importance of medical as compared with pedagogical features and the difference in grouping and classifying.

Occupation is a fundamental requisite to happiness everywhere. The necessity for it and some of the suitable forms of occupation for institution people already have been discussed. It is well understood that *so far as* possible occupation always should be pleasant. The philosophy of Tom Sawyer was good. Amusement, which is pleasurable mental occupation, is not different in public institutions or among defective people from that among children or adolescents elsewhere, except that the limitations of institution life and the lack of spontaneity on the part of the inmates make it necessary that an *abundance* of amusements be provided. The teacher and the attendant must make a study of methods of employment that suggest to the mind amusement or pleasant occupation. The ability to arouse in a dull mind the desire for play—the awakening of that interest and spontaneity that are so essential to enthusiastic play—is a valuable part of a teacher's art. A writer who studied feeble-minded children in a large institution observes: "Tell me that one of these boys can play a good game of jackstones or that he is skillful at baseball, and I would rather hear it than that he can name all the states of the Union and locate their capitals. The power of thinking quickly, judging, acting, controlling, willing (needed above all things by these children), is necessary for playing certain games, and find a better field for development here than in any other exercise ever mentioned in a school course." In our kindergarten room, the morning romp out of doors is a part of the daily program, and the little folks come back to their more formal occupations and games of the schoolroom happy and in the best mental condition for the teacher to direct them.

With the intermediate pupils, the teacher frequently brings a room full of "off day" children into good condition by improvising a football field with the scrap basket as a goal, and two or three of the disturbing elements as opposing champions in the unique contest; or perhaps the one who has the most pronounced ability for blackboard drawing will be called out suddenly and the whole class given an ample opportunity, usually made use of, to exercise their respective imaginations sufficiently to interpret the artist's intentions. The extemporary and earnest discussions become ideal mental amusements of educational value, besides exercising a moral influence in banishing the nervous and irritable feelings that had begun to appear.

In the day rooms during the evening, and at times when the inclemency of the weather necessitates confinement to the house, the question of whether it shall be a happy, contented class or a discontented one with open indications of anarchy, is determined largely by the ability of the attendant or nurse to devise attractive amusements. The boy with the floor polisher sees nothing but disagreeable drudgery till it is suggested to him that he is a locomotive, when the activity that immediately is developed in hauling that freight train to its destination, switching and returning it, is something surprising. Bean bags, basketball, or the simple games of blind man's

ball, or the quiet dominoes and checkers often will be the antidotes of disorder. The field sports are always popular with the older boys when the weather permits, and the winter coasting and skating are not to be discouraged for institution people.

Dr. Spratling, of the Craig Epileptic Colony, says that he never knew a patient to have an epileptic seizure while engaged in football, however severe the exercise. And so the bus and sleigh rides, summer picnics and boat rides, for children of nearly all mental conditions, and the annual visit to the State Fair by the brighter children, and especially those who are the trained workers of the community and have no other homes even to visit, serve to break up the institutionalism of the village community.

In closing, let us have in mind with Openheim that: "The opportunity of having fun is one of the mainsprings of life, for it represents the possibility of the easy and pleasant discharge of the youthful energy, of the exercise of expanding capabilities." (P. 220.)

Even the strictest disciplinarian feels a sympathetic Amen as the excited schoolboy rushes out doors at the close of the term with the observation:

"I am going to smile
For a good long while;
School is out,
Vacation's begun,
For 'most three months
I'll just have fun."

—Child Study, June 1900.

DISCUSSION.

PRESIDENT DOW: The whole matter of the forenoon's work thus far is now open for discussion, and we shall be glad to hear from a number.

DR. TOMLINSON, St. Peter: Mr. Chairman, before beginning the discussion I desire to highly commend the paper of Mrs. Welch, and particularly that part of it which referred to the absolute necessity of having someone specially trained in order to instruct the insane. To anyone familiar with an institution for the insane it is easy to realize how completely the time of the ordinary employes, nurses and attendants is occupied in the personal care of the patients and the necessary housekeeping of the wards; so that even if they had either fitness or inclination for other work it would be practically impossible for them to find time to do it at a time when it could be well done. I would add to this another necessity for success in this work, and that is a place to do it. Unfortunately all three institutions, especially ours at St. Peter, are in that characteristic condition of public institutions for the insane, there are three inmates where there ought to be only one; and the space that should be left for expansion or for moving about or getting some variety of change in the daily life of the women is simply used to hold that many more beds to relieve the overcrowding which persists and continues in spite of everything which seems to be done to prevent it.

I want to speak first and particularly of the importance of occupation in its relation to the treatment of the recent case rather than the mere occupation of the chronic. And Mrs. Welch has rightly laid stress upon the importance of this occupation being creative work rather than mere manual occupation. In training even the normal child, as Dr. Rogers has called your attention to in the abnormal one, it is found to be essential that he should make something in which he exercises his own mental capacity. How much more essential must this then be to one who has not yet reached full mental capacity or who, on account of disease, is going backward, is losing that which he gained by his training and education, and not only that, but is losing first that which he gained last. The first capacity which the insane individual loses is that of keeping his attention upon anything. The next is of co-ordinating his muscular movements so as to carry out successfully any undertaking which he begins. The next one and really the most important and the one which is most frequently lost sight of is the absolute fatigue, mental fatigue, especially of ordinary, simple efforts to co-ordinate either muscular movement or mental activity. Therefore in choosing an occupation it must not only be creative, but it must be of such a nature that simple elements can be used and that they can be combined in a simple way. Further, that this labor, the creative part of it at least, must not be used excessively or over a prolonged period, but must be interspersed with something which will not only stimulate to further effort but relax the strain of previous effort. Therefore I have found in my personal experience, and I think it is so with all those who have studied the subject, that in finding occupation for the insane and especially insane women, it is important that amusement should be combined with occupation. And this particularly in reference to those who are restless and mischievous and not easily kept in order. And here is where it is especially important to have some one who is not only willing and desirous to do all she can, but who also has the knack and judgment to enable her to discriminate between different patients and prevent an outburst of petulance and disorder; to stimulate the activity of that one and to direct the misdirected energies of the other into some natural way that will result in profitable employment.

Then another thing that is important in regard to these people and very advantageous, and that is to try to develop those means of occupation toward which they have a natural inclination. There is a resentment toward and a disgust with the manual obligations of the household and especially those which they have had to do excessively in their own homes, but all of them, as Mrs. Welch says, have in them the germs of mental inclination for the ornamentation of their environment, and it requires, particularly to be able to develop this, that the person who undertakes it should have the capacity to distinguish between individuals and be able to find out and develop in the individual patient whatever capacity she may have in this direction and to follow her inclination as far as possible. In practical ways this can be done in the making of her own dresses, allowing her as much latitude as possible in the selection of the material, trimmings and pattern, and giving her an opportunity to participate, as far as she will, in the making of her own clothing. And then as to the room, where it is possible for a patient to have a room. Unfortunately, with us it is not; there are one or two or three in each room; they were made originally for one patient. Where it is possible and where there is the room, they should be encouraged to make such things as can be utilized in the ornamentation of their own personal surroundings, and where two are together they should be encouraged to combine their efforts in this direction.

With regard to outside occupation for women: Unless we look at it purely from an economic standpoint and try to make them earn something towards their own support, I don't believe with the class of people which we usually have in the hospitals that much can be done, that is much that is stimulating or of advantage in the actual treatment of these people. It may sometimes be advantageously carried on with some individuals in the care of the garden. In my own district I do not believe, from my experience, it would be possible. Some years ago I made a very persistent effort to encourage the women to have flower gardens, but with one or two exceptions it was without success, and it took the time of the employes from other work in connection with other patients, which failed to make it compensatory. In other words, more time was occupied in getting two or three women to work in the garden than was required to get twenty-five or thirty women to do something else which would be better for them all. There is something we have to guard against—the ability to pick out one or two patients that are easy to get along with and have some inclination or aptitude which is conspicuous in making them a show at the expense of those who require more care and trouble to get to do anything. That is one of the greatest temptations I have found in regard to occupations in institutions, to try to get two or three people who will be made a show at the expense of the rest of the patients. It is not the one who knows,

not the one who is attractive, not the one who is easily taught, not the one who can do things very nicely and brilliantly we ought to give our time and attention to; it is the one who can't and does not do anything that needs our attention more. And it is not those occupations which are attractive publicly and which make the best show when the visitors come to the hospital; it is those which may not be seen at all or their effect not shown to the stranger, but which really aids in the cure of the patient more than anything else.

I referred a few minutes ago to the importance of combining amusement with occupation and especially with those who are mentally enfeebled, who on account of their feeble condition combined with their mental disturbance are unable to work for any definite length of time without great fatigue. Along with this amusement may come some of the forms of physical exercise which come under the term of general physical culture or gymnastics. And it is astonishing the work that can be done with this. For instance, you take a party of women who have been occupied for an hour or two hours or longer with some manual labor or with sewing or with some other effort which required some attention and concentration; let them drop it all and simply get them up and march them about the room or let them dance some simple figure, or with dumb-bells carry out some of the simple movements which are easily learned and quickly taught, and it is astonishing what a change it will make in their general condition. They will sit down and work much more promptly afterwards, more satisfactorily, and they will talk about it for several days, and each will be eager for this kind of effort.

If you will excuse a personal allusion I would like to relate an experience I had in this direction some eight or ten years ago. I think I began with eight women who were regarded as chronic, and were chronic in one sense, in that they were mentally enfeebled, all of them more or less violent and destructive, one of whom it was almost impossible to keep any clothing on. I got them into a room. Some one played the piano, and I simply started around the room and asked them to follow me. They did; not only around the room but all over the room and in all sorts of shapes, turning somersaults, rolling over the floor, tripping each other and everything else. But I didn't pay any attention to them, let them do just as they pleased. The next day we took fifteen minutes of the same thing. At the time those fifteen minutes were up they were walking in line, following me in single file around the room. The next day we tried some variation of the step, some counter-marching. Thus step by step I gradually led them up until I got them standing in a row and put them through the ordinary marching exercises of soldiers, and from this to the dumb-bells and from the dumb-bells to the Indian clubs. Inside of a year out of these eight women, four had gone home. The other four, whose condition was hopeless so far as recovery was concerned, have been useful members of the hospital population ever since.

This illustrates two points with regard to occupation: First, what can be done in curing recent cases; second, what may be done in making people who are destructive, constructive, and making people who are mischievous and difficult to manage useful members of the household.

Now one more point, and that is that we have always to consider in institutions of the insane the attitude of the patient towards her environment. It must be understood that that is always one of resentment. After a time it wears out. Even when the patient becomes demented there is always an attitude of resentment, a feeling that she ought not to be in the institution, that there is some misunderstanding at least, that her family is not treating her right, that her husband has neglected her, lost his affection for her, the children no longer care for her, and at any rate she ought not to have come, that it was not necessary, she could have gotten along at home. This is one of the greatest difficulties in getting the women to do any work. She feels that she does not want to do it because it is simply adding insult to injury to ask her to work. Then it takes away her desire to do anything—this very same treatment. Consequently we have got to begin not only by coaxing these people, but by putting something before them which will attract them, and therefore entertainment not only should always be combined with efforts in this direction but it should precede them; and this entertainment must be of such a nature that it furnishes not only a stimulus to the patient but a novelty as well;

and it has got to be varied, they soon get tired. They have no intellectual desire in the matter and no intellectual interest in the entertainment. Therefore you have got to have the novelty to take the place of it and stimulate in every way you can. Mrs. Welch went so thoroughly into the practical means that might be used in this direction and I have already taken up so much time that I think I had better sit down and make way for somebody else.

MR. BROWN, State Training School, Red Wing: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to add a few words in regard to the latter part of Dr. Rogers' paper, "Institutional Life for Epileptics and for Feeble-Minded, and the Necessity for Amusements." It is an old saying that "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." A very prominent teacher of youth remarked at one time: "If I am with my boys on the playground I care not who is with them in the schoolroom, I know they will do good work." My observation in connection with the training of delinquent youth for more than 30 years has led me to the conclusion that it is absolutely necessary in order to secure the best results not only to devote a certain portion of the child's time to amusements, but that such amusements should be properly treated. I have observed that the boy or the girl who is thoroughly interested in the games on the playground or in their indoor amusements are those who are progressing most satisfactorily in their studies and in their work; and that the boy or girl who takes no interest in the games of the playground or in the house are those whom it is necessary to watch very closely. They are very apt to be studying mischief. So we have observed that the man or the woman who is the most successful in creating interest in the games of the children is the one who is the most successful in managing those children. We have made a great point of this matter in the management of children in connection with the State Training School. Not only have we organized games of football and baseball and all the games that boys and girls enjoy out doors, but for a great many years we have allowed our children the privilege of going into camp a certain season of the year for about ten days or two weeks. This practice was first inaugurated in 1873, I think, when our school was located near St. Paul. We would go out onto the shore of a neighboring lake and enjoy all the sports that are connected with that kind of life. So now we have our encampment on the shore of Lake Pepin, a beautiful spot, and our boys and girls enjoy themselves there to the fullest for from ten days to two weeks every season. And we consider that we are amply repaid for all the expense attached to that encampment by the increased interest of the children in their work and in their study and in their increased healthfulness. I fully believe in amusement for children and I have not fully gotten beyond the period where I enjoy playing with them, and I hope I never shall. I see no reason why this should not apply to every institution in the state as well as to ours and I really hope that there may be more attention given to this thing in our institutions.

CAPT. FAULKNER: I am delighted to hear these professional men speak of amusement as a safety valve in institution work because it illustrates the value of the principle of order in play the same as order in work, something that has been long recognized, and it also illustrates the truth that there is an advantage in being in an institution which outside people do not enjoy, that is in being so situated that they may enjoy this supervision and this order in play and in amusements. And the outside public are striving in a way through the public playground to bring this same principle into effect. When boys and girls are left to themselves to go to a playground to devise in their own way a plan of amusement, they will succeed after a fashion; but they will certainly not succeed in the delightful and helpful way in which they would if the public playground was intelligently directed. There is a lesson in this not only for the institution people but for people outside the institution in every considerable community where a schoolhouse is located or where people are gathered together. The public playground is coming to be one of the distinct features in city life everywhere to inculcate this habit of order in play. The play in order to be really enjoyable must be intelligently supervised, it must be directed. It is hard for young children—old children as well as young—to take any comfort out of any line of amusement unless it is directed in some systematic and orderly way, and I hope the lesson we are learning from these

gentlemen here in reference to children in institution work may not be lost upon the community at large, of the wise way in which order in play may be brought home to the lives of all the children in the community.

Mr. James N. Tate then presented the report of the Committee on Resolutions. (See Minutes at end of this report.)

MR. GATES, St. Paul: Of course these resolutions are going to be adopted—I hope they are by a very sympathetic vote—and I take great pleasure in saying that the county commissioners were not only in favor of these resolutions, but in urging upon the different boards of commissioners the necessity of appointing a delegate to this annual convention and paying his expenses. We are, fortunately, to meet next year in a city whose board of county commissioners is well represented here today and who can speak of the benefits that this Conference gives to county commissioners and to county officers in general. I think we can ask them perhaps to make a special effort in extending the invitation on behalf of the commissioners of Olmsted county to the different boards of county commissioners of the state to be present with them next year, and I will promise in support of this resolution to do all I can in my work in visiting the county jails and poorhouses and urge upon the keepers of those poorhouses and the keepers and jailers who are in charge of jails, as well as the boards of county commissioners, the necessity and the value in their county work of being in attendance upon these meetings.

THE PURCHASE AND DISTRIBUTION OF INSTITUTION SUPPLIES.

BY H. W. WRIGHT, SECRETARY STATE BOARD OF CONTROL, ST. PAUL.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The subject which has been assigned to me, "The Purchase and Distribution of Institution Supplies," is one altogether too important and extensive to be treated in a paper such as my limited time from other duties would permit me to prepare for this occasion. I shall not attempt to treat the subject other than in a practical way. All theories as to the kinds of goods which should be purchased, the object of charity which is to be furthered, and the duty and willingness of the taxpayer to provide liberally for the wards of the state, I am leaving for other papers and other discussions; I take it that what is expected of me is to outline, in a general way, what I believe to be a practical system for the purchase and distribution of the supplies required by a public institution.

The proposition in a general way concerns three classes of people, viz.: the merchants who furnish the goods, the institutions which use the goods, and the taxpayers who pay for the goods. The first must be consulted, the second must be cared for, and the third must be considered. Let me assure my hearers that I am not here at this time to recommend or even suggest a dietary for any institution. This paper will not be concerned with whether you have beans twice a day or once a month, whether you believe in the use of brown bread or the finest patent flours. Such questions can only be decided as the result of experience, considering the conditions of the particular class, together with the medical treatment given, and the results to be obtained.

Preceding the consideration of the question of purchasing the supplies, comes the necessity of estimating the needs of the institution. Every superintendent present will agree with me that the preparation of an estimate

covering the supplies required by the average institution for a period of three months in advance is by no means an easy task, and preparatory to discussing the estimate, let me say that every public institution for the care of dependents should have a dietary or bill of fare prepared for a stated length of time in advance. This is desirable, not only in the line of treatment, but is absolutely necessary in order that the supplies required may be intelligently purchased in advance of the actual time of need. Such a dietary should be prepared to cover at least thirty days in advance. It is just as easy, and no more expensive, to purchase the goods required to carry out a well regulated bill of fare as to purchase them without regard to quantity or use, because thought cheap.

When an institution with a slightly varying population has mapped out a bill of fare for a certain length of time in advance, it becomes comparatively an easy matter to estimate the supplies in the line of provisions which will be required by the institution for that length of time. It is presumed that every well regulated institution is divided into proper departments, each with a competent person in charge for the carrying out of the duties of that department, subject only to the direction of the superintendent. These department managers should soon become acquainted with the line of supplies needed in their respective departments. When an estimate is to be prepared, these department managers should be given notice thereof, and instructed to prepare a list of the supplies which they deem necessary for the carrying on of the work of their department. These estimates should be then brought together for the consideration and approval of the superintendent. And right here is where one of the dangers is liable to creep in, in estimating the supplies needed for an institution. The tendency of those preparing the estimate is to list articles which are not actually needed, but because of the uncertainty that they may not be permitted to purchase them when needed, they are put in simply to cover emergencies which they think may arise.

I believe that any system of purchasing supplies should be sufficiently elastic to permit the institution to purchase emergency articles promptly when needed, and I am convinced that no institution caring for a thousand people can foresee all the emergencies likely to arise in three months, and should an estimate attempt to cover such contingencies, it would be loaded up with articles which, in fact, would not be needed, or only in small part. Here, then, comes in the duty of the superintendent to know that the articles listed by the several department heads are such as may be reasonably required in the successful management of the institution. Perhaps in the preparing of the estimates for the provisions where an institution has a carefully prepared dietary, such estimate can be best prepared by the matron or house steward, acting in conjunction with the steward. The person passing upon the supplies should be in close touch with the stock on hand, and should be able to turn to the stock record and verify the amount of any article in the storeroom. The estimate when completed should be the combined judgment of each of the department managers with the final approval of the superintendent after a careful examination.

There are differing opinions as to the best method to be employed in the