for admission which have been received at the State Hospital in Tarrytown since the Lorenz visit, has surprised every one connected with the institution. Just how far these facts have impressed the state officers I am not prepared to say, but the State Commission on Site, headed by Governor Benjamin B. Odell and comprising also Dr. Enoch Vine Stoddard, president of the State Board of Charities, and the controller, Nathan L. Miller, has been for some weeks seeking a proper site, of one hundred or more acres, for an enlarged state hospital to accommodate 500 patients. It is not improbable that ground will be broken before long upon some one of the sites now under consideration.

The writer is told that in other hospitals and dispensaries, in different parts of the country, much interest is shown. Certainly, the indifferent and discouraged sufferer has been stimulated to a greater effort. Mothers who had lost hope for their afflicted children, have been induced to persevere, and the need of greater hospital facilities for the poor, during a long period of treatment, has been demonstrated.

Whatever may be said of Lorenz, two important facts stand out prominently—the poor child, suffering from disease and deformity has been lastingly benefited—and the cause of humanity has been advanced by his visit to the United States.

The Education of Mentally Deficient Children in Special Day Classes

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As interest in child study has increased, educators are beginning to see that one course of study and discipline cannot be fitted to all pupils found in our public schools. Even to-day children unable to keep up to grade are not infrequently accused of indolence or laziness, when the backwardness is due to some mental or physical defect. For many years in this country efforts have been made to care for those who are too defective to be in school, but it is only recently that attention has been given to those who are mentally and physically subnormal. Perhaps none have been more misunderstood than the mentally deficient.

These are the children who, through individual training, will become self-respecting and self-supporting men and women, or, through neglect, will degenerate into the ranks of the defectives and the delinquents. While all to-day agree that the institution should, in most cases, care for the idiots and the imbeciles, there are many with slight defects who should not be removed from the home environment. From the study and investigations of medical experts, it is estimated that one per cent, at least, of our school population is mentally deficient, and needs individual care and attention.

The close relation of the mental and the physical life of the child is now generally recognized; those with mental defects are almost without exception more or less abnormal physically. There are cases, however, of children thought to be mentally deficient, where the defect is really a physical one. Deafness, errors of refraction, growths in the nose and throat, faulty nutrition, may have to answer for what seems to be mental trouble. An examination by a medical expert will, of course, avoid the danger of a wrong diagnosis.

"The causes of feeble-mindedness from a medical point of view are difficult to classify owing to the many kinds of deficiency and the variable states of intelligence which are grouped under this one heading, many of which have nothing more in common than a mere negative
quality—the inability to learn. At the same time some attempt has been made to refer these forms of subnormal development to certain pathological antecedents. According to Dr. Müller of Augsburg, heredity is said to claim seventy per cent of the whole, which means that feeble-mindedness in the child is largely the outcome of evil habits and preventable disease in the parent. The remaining thirty per cent are to be referred to illness arising after birth, especially the febrile diseases of childhood, to malnutrition, to starvation and neglect.1

Owing to the inability to get accurate family histories, statistics are, however, of limited value.2 The knowledge which has been collected in regard to the character and treatment of imbeciles is available relatively for the treatment of feeble-minded. The imbecile type is gravely defective; the feeble-minded touches a higher level, but is often marked by an ‘irregularity’ of development, by ‘half-sharpness.’ Belonging, so to speak, to a separate ‘series’ is the lowest of the healthy, the dullard.3

I.—FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Certain foreign countries have advanced further than the United States in the care of mentally deficient children in special day classes. ‘In Europe, Germany was the pioneer in 1867. Norway followed her lead in 1874, and England in 1892, besides Switzerland and Austria. In Prussia, since 1880, the establishment of special classes, or schools, for defectives has been obligatory upon towns of 20,000 population.’4

Germany. At the Congress on the Education of Feeble-minded Children, held at Augsburg, Germany, in April, 1901, particular attention was paid to this line of work. Their special classes are ‘intended solely for children of inferior brain power who yet possess sufficient intelligence to be amenable to the discipline of their own homes, and who are capable of benefiting by instruction sufficiently to enable them to pass out of school at the limit of school age with a probability of being able to earn their own living.’5

Germany cares for these children either in special day schools or in auxiliary classes in ordinary schools. In April, 1901, Germany had ninety-eight day schools and 326 classes, or an average of three classes to a school. The number of children varied from twenty to twenty-five in each class. There were 7,013 children in attendance, and it was estimated that there would have been 60,000 if complete provision had been made. Of the 326 classes, 262 were mixed, twenty-eight for boys, twenty-three for girls and thirteen were classes held in ordinary schools.6

As a rule, the children who are admitted to these special classes must have shown, through an attendance of one or two years in the ordinary school, that they are unable to make satisfactory progress. As the minimum age for compulsory education in Germany is six years, children are seven or eight before they are allowed to attend the special schools. They enter once a year and the initiative is taken by the head-teachers of the surrounding schools, who give notice of their exceptional cases. ‘The children are then visited in their own homes by the head of the special school. In this way he becomes acquainted with the parents and is enabled to enlist their sympathy, at the same time gaining a valuable insight into the child’s surroundings. The child may then be admitted on probation for a few weeks, when he is brought before a committee consisting of the inspector, the school doctor, and the teachers of the child.’7

The special classes are meant solely for the education of mentally deficient children. The blind and the deaf, those with moral perversion, those backward on account of irregular attendance or illness, those backward in some particular subject, the idiots and the epileptics are not considered eligible. It is felt that those who are apparently imbecile should be placed on probation in the special schools, and if the deficiency is found to be too severe,
they should be sent to an institution. On the other hand, if children make sufficient progress after attending the special classes, they are to be returned to the ordinary schools, but it is claimed that a child "when properly selected will in most cases need the care of the special school till the limit of school age."

With the exception of the instructors in needle and kindergarten the teaching is almost entirely done by men. They receive no special training, but those with "special aptitude" are appointed from the ordinary schools, to which they can be transferred at any time without loss of "seniority."

The majority of the congress favored making manual training "obligatory and recommended that schemes of manual instruction should be devised not merely as a succession of mental exercises, but that they should also have regard to the main object in educating the feeble-minded—to enable him to lead an independent existence in after life."

The Leipzig scheme of manual work for boys includes: (1) The performance of set actions and duties, (2) Froebel exercises, (3) cardboard modeling, (4) fretwork, (5) woodwork and drawing, (6) industrial occupations: cane-weaving, matmaking, straw-plaiting and rush-plaiting. For the girls there is knitting, crochet, linen-marking, darning and mending. "Gardening has not been adopted generally, but was recommended by the congress for inclusion in schemes of instruction wherever possible." From the beginning, "special attention is given to articulation and speech; no error or defect of pronunciation being allowed to pass uncorrected."

Of the children who enter these special classes, about eighty-three per cent at the limit of school age are able to find some employment requiring a minimum of skill, and can in time support themselves wholly or in part. The care of the remaining seventeen per cent, however, is a serious question; they return to the community, "a burden, and a danger." This is not right; the congress recommended that those who are found to be beyond the scope of the special day classes should be transferred to institutions before they reach the limit of school age, "where they will have a permanent home under capable and sympathetic supervision with activity suited to their strength and power."

"In Norway, children tested in the special classes are (a) returned to the regular schools if they make sufficient progress; or (b) they remain in the auxiliary classes the whole of their school lives; or (c) are sent to an institution for mentally deficient children if their condition prove too low for special day schools."

England. Special instruction for mentally deficient children was begun in England in 1892. It was made permanent by the defective and epileptic act of 1899, which "empowers provision for the education in special classes of children who, not being imbecile and not merely dull or backward, are incapable of receiving proper benefit in the ordinary public elementary schools."

There are certain carefully specified conditions that must be fulfilled by these special classes. They are so excellent that I venture to give them somewhat in detail:

1. The premises must be approved by the department.

2. No children may be admitted except those who have been ascertained to be defective within the meaning of the elementary education (defective and epileptic children) act, 1899, under arrangements approved by the education department. No child may be admitted at less than seven years of age, or retained after reaching the age of sixteen.

3. Proper records must be made at the time of admission and afterward: (a) As to the child's capacity, habits, attainments and health, (b) as to the family history of the child, (c) as to the progress of the child in the special school or class.

4. The children must, from time to time, be inspected by a medical officer ap-

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1 Special Reports on Educational Subjects, v. 3, p. 596. 2 Ibid, p. 596. 3 Reprint from The Teacher, p. 5.
pointed for the purpose by the school authority, and records of such inspections must be kept. Provision must be made for the examination, from time to time, of every child, in order to ascertain whether he has attained such a mental and physical conditions as to be fit to attend an ordinary class in a public elementary school.

(5) Every special school or class must have managers especially appointed, who will undertake to visit the school or class from time to time during school hours.

(6) The children must not for any lessons be mixed with the children of the ordinary public elementary schools.

(7) Each class must have a separate teacher of its own.

(8) The principal teacher must hold the certificate of the Education Department or of the National Froebel Union. As a rule, men will not be approved as teachers of special schools or classes.

(9) No one under the age of twenty-one will be recognized as a teacher in a special class.

(10) Her Majesty's inspector must annually approve of all the staff employed. The withholding of approval of a teacher as a special teacher of defective children will in no way affect the teacher's qualification for teaching in ordinary schools.

(11) The number of children in average attendance may not exceed twenty for each class, except that, if the number of classes at a center exceeds two, there may be an average attendance of thirty in each class after the first two.

(12) Before any teacher is recognized as a principal teacher she must have at least six months' experience in a special school or class approved by the department.

(13) The hours during which a special school or class is opened must not exceed two and a half in the morning and two in the afternoon.

(14) The time table must provide for:

(a) Instruction in the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic,
(b) singing and recitation,
(c) object lessons,
(d) drawing,
(e) needlework for girls,
(f) physical exercises,
(g) manual instruction.

(15) As a rule, not less than six hours of manual instruction must be given weekly to every child.

(1) The forms of manual instruction approved by the department, for special schools and classes are these:

(a) Suitable for younger children: paper-matmaking, clay-modeling, macrame-work and various other forms of string work, pricking, coloring, and kindergarten sewing, basket-making, paper-folding, bead-threading, paper-cutting and mounting, building with cubes, worsted-work, needlework.

(b) Suitable for older boys: Woodwork of various kinds, shoemaking, basket-making, modeling in pasteboard (the German pappe-work), chaircaning, matmaking, tailoring, gardening and farm work.

(c) Suitable for older girls: Cookery, laundry work, practical housewifery, needlework.

Out of the minimum six hours per week of manual instruction not more than two hours may be devoted to needlework.

The superintendent of the London special schools says:1 "Between March, 1900, and March, 1901, seventy-two boys and fifty-six girls (total, 128) have been examined for admission to special instruction schools and rejected, being 'imbecile.' Besides these 128 imbeciles, directly refused admission, forty-seven boys and nineteen girls (total, sixty-six) have been dismissed after having a fair trial in school as they proved to be uneducatable."

"The work in the schools has progressed well, and has been favorably reported upon by Her Majesty's inspectors in each division. It is most gratifying to find that 102 boys and eighty-eight girls during the year (total, 190) have been promoted to the senior departments where they can now intelligently follow the instruction given to ordinary pupils and, whilst no doubt they are backward for their age, they no longer swell the numbers of standard 0.

"Besides the ordinary rudiments of instruction 333 boys and 349 girls (total, 681) have been taught in the schools for cookery, and 187 boys and 321 girls (total, 508) have received instruction in

1 School Board for London Special Schools Sub-Committee, July 22, 1901, Reports of the Superintendents for the Year Ended Lady-Day, 1901.
laundry work; and forty-two girls have passed into the housewifery classes, and 319 boys into the manual training classes.

"Many of the boy cooks, it is hoped, will find employment in the kitchens of hotels, etc., when they will, with advantage, supplant the former kitchen maid.

"Fifty-three boys and thirty girls (total, eighty-three) who have left during the year are now wage-earners, and some parents who are keeping their girls at home testify to the useful and ready help they receive from them.

"A modified form of Swedish exercises is given in every school, and though it takes a long time to get the lowest class to obey the spoken word of command, it is found that the majority are able to do so after months of training; of course, care is taken that only suitable exercises are given to specially delicate children.

"The botany specimens supplied weekly from the parks are much appreciated. The oral lessons on the specimens being followed by a copy from nature in clay or brush work, thus the chief facts to be learned are impressed upon the mind by hand, ear and eye.

"Physically and mentally, the teachers strive to make every child profit by the instruction given, so that each, according to his ability, may enter the ranks of the wage-earning community."

On March 25, 1902, there were sixty-one centers for mentally deficient children, with 2,882 on roll and an average attendance for the year of 2,180.

II.

Providence. In the United States, the city of Providence, Rhode Island, was the first to take up the work of day classes for mentally defective children. In October, 1893, three schools for special discipline and instruction were organized and made a part of the public school system. The teachers in the regular grades experienced so much relief when their disorderly pupils were removed that they soon urged the transference of those who were mentally deficient. The latter were tried in the disciplinary schools, but it was found that treatment suited to "active, mischievous boys" was not suited to "feeble, plodding" children. The result was that in December, 1896, a special class was opened for those mentally subnormal, followed by a second in December, 1897, and a third in December, 1898.1

Feeling that physical development must precede mental with these children, there are daily exercises "to train their muscular systems to a regular and ready response to commands given by the teacher." Other exercises are planned to develop the different faculties, the attention, memory, judgment, choice, etc. All sorts of games are played; they are considered merely fun by the pupils, but each has some educational value. Raffia work, clay modeling, and kindred branches form an important part of the daily curriculum. In connection with the work just mentioned, primary work and a modified kindergarten course are given. The schools for backward children have both boys and girls; the aim is to keep the number in each class between twelve and fifteen. The teachers are taken from the primary and kindergarten grades.

The children are selected by a supervisor who has charge of these pupils in conjunction with the kindergartens. The superintendent of schools in the spring recommended that they be chosen by a board of physicians, a suggestion that has not been carried out. The sub-committee having the classes in charge, is largely made up of physicians, however, and they are consulted in doubtful cases.

Out of the eighty-two who had been in the classes between December, 1896, and June, 1900, it is interesting to note that five had been returned to the regular schools; seven, able to do grade work, for some particular reason, had been sent to the schools for special discipline and instruction, and sixteen, over fifteen years of age, were earning their living wholly or in part. "With five exceptions (one a case of paralysis, one of epilepsy, two, too old to be improved, and one too low grade), all had made some improvement, and in many cases, improvement in a marked degree."2

In regard to the class of children in the schools, Mrs. Esten, the former supervisor, says: "The high grade of feeble-

minded or backward children found in our schools is but slightly mentally defective; indeed, so nearly normal are some of them that their defects would only be noticeable to a discerning teacher or to persons who had made a study of this class, and many are bright and attractive in appearance, but all are weak in will power, deficient in reasoning power and judgment, hence easily influenced for evil.\(^1\)

**Boston.** In Boston, the movement for the care of mentally deficient children in special day classes began late in 1898. At that time, Mr. Seaver, superintendent of schools, sent circulars to the masters of the different school districts, asking them to report the number of very feeble-minded children in their respective districts, together with the teachers’ report of each case. Two hundred children were reported, varying in age from five to seventeen, the majority being between the age of eight and twelve. Even though only extreme cases were asked for, it was considered that the estimate was too conservative; in some school districts containing over a thousand pupils, no children were reported.\(^2\)

The first teacher appointed had had practical experience with feeble-minded children, so she spent two months in examining the cases recorded by the masters. Most of them she found to be distinctly feeble-minded. She says: “A few appeared to be the ‘bad boys’ of the school who could not, in a restricted sense, be termed feeble-minded. Among the number were children of all degrees of deficiency, from the hydrocephalic idiot and the cretin, to the apparently normal child. There was also a good number of epileptics and moral imbeciles, both classes of whom are particularly afflicted, needless to say; but it seemed wiser not to class them with the others.” . . . In several cases it seemed wise to suggest that children be taken to Waverley [the state school for the feeble-minded] for an examination by Dr. Fernald,” and “in some instances it resulted in an application being made for admission to the institution.”\(^3\)

The first class began its work in January, 1899, and the second, in December of that year. At the close of the last school year, there were seven in operation. They are designated only as “Special Classes,” are held, as a rule, in the public school building, their sessions being from nine to one. Six of the classes have both boys and girls; one has only girls; they are limited to fifteen on roll.

Four of the teachers were well fitted for their positions, having had previous experience in similar work. And the city has provided a training for the three appointed during the last year. Teachers were carefully selected from the ordinary grades, and after observing methods in the special classes in Boston, they spent some three months in studying the work of the schools for the feeble-minded at Waverley, Mass., and at Elwyn, Penn. During this time of preparation both salaries and expenses were paid by the city. The aim is to have the teachers appointed to the special classes feel that they have been promoted.

The teaching in the special classes is based on the theory that the physiological training of the hand arouses some action in the brain. Stress is, therefore, laid on manual work which includes sloyd, clay modeling, basket weaving, sewing, and raffia work. The instruction in the usual school branches is largely a modified form of the kindergarten, with work of the primary grades for those who need it. Emphasis is placed on games, and the children are taught to play.

The plan in Boston is to have the true imbecile cared for in institutions, the feeble-minded in special classes, and the normal, but very dull children, in ungraded classes in connection with the regular schools. There are without question some of the first type in the special classes, but the authorities are naturally unwilling “to exclude from school any child for whom suitable provision cannot be made elsewhere.” The institution at Waverley is so crowded that admission cannot be obtained for many who need its care.\(^4\)

The three classes formed during the

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past year were selected by Dr. Arthur C. Jelly, after examination of a large number of cases reported by the teachers. The superintendent says: "Incidentally Dr. Jelly has succeeded in persuading a number of parents to send their children to Waverley, the children being beyond the reach of any methods of instruction that could be applied to them in the special classes."

Dr. Jelly has three blanks for use in the examination of these pupils, the physician's, the teacher's and the parent's. The data thus gained will doubtless be very valuable in the study of this class of children. That given by the parents, while perhaps the most important, is the least satisfactory, for it is so difficult to get truthful histories from them.

Philadelphia. The work for mentally deficient children in Philadelphia began in July, 1899, under the auspices of the Civic Club and the Public Education Association. The need for such instruction was appreciated when that same year an investigation by the superintendent of public schools showed that there were 662 children in the public schools that had stayed two years or more in one grade on account of mental deficiency, and that 154 had been three years in one grade. The whole number reported as too backward for instruction by ordinary methods in large classes was 1,123. To these must be added 111 whom the attendance officers found at home excused from school attendance. Again, in the public schools for truants and incorrigibles, in many cases mental defect was known to be the cause of the difficulty.

The class was organized for children from seven to sixteen years of age; it was held in one of the public school buildings and had the approval of the president of the board of education, the superintendent of schools, and physicians. Suitable pupils were at first secured through those in charge and through the press. The system and records recommended by the English committee were adopted for the Philadelphia school. A record was kept of every child admitted.

Form A, Characteristics and Attainments at Time of Nomination.
Form B, Medical Examination.
Form C, Medical Recommendation.
Form D, Life History of Child and Family History.
Form E, Progress in Special Class.
Form F, Subsequent Medical Examination, After Six Months in Special Class.

To quote from the report of 1900.

"Of the children now in the school, fourteen have been tested in the regular schools, where they have attended from one and a half to three, six, or seven years, with records of no 'promotion', or, at best, arrival at the door of the grammar school. One child began at four years, and has spent two and a half years in every grade up to the fourth. Those who have never before attended school are seven, ten, twelve, and thirteen years old. Special aptitudes shown are chiefly manual, such as woodwork and drawing, while gymnastics plays its part."

And from the report of 1901.

"Almost every child has improved. These children did not learn in the large classes of the public schools. They do learn when they get one-eleventh instead of one-fortieth or one-eighthieth of a teacher's attention. But a few are able to return to the ordinary grades, yet only apparently improvable children are entered, and after a fair trial any child that does not progress is excluded."

The work for defective children was taken over by the Board of Public Education in the summer of 1901. There are at present six classes, five for boys and one for girls, averaging twelve or fifteen in number. A seventh will be opened next month. The members are not all mentally deficient; they receive children, with speech, sight, hearing or nervous defects that make them unfit for "the pace of a large, graded class." The sessions are from nine to two, with a recess at noon for lunch. The teachers, so far as I know, have received no special preparation for their work. Emphasis is placed on manual training, such as sloyd, raffia work and basket weaving. Regular school instruction is given to suit the needs of the individual. During the past.

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2 Report of the Public Education Association of Philadelphia, 1900, p. 11.
3 Ibid, p. 12. 4 Reprint from The Teacher, p. 2.
year it has been the practice to have the classes for mentally deficient children in the same buildings with those for way-backward. The centers with at least three classes; for those most interested in the work felt that to obtain the best results, there must be proper grading of the pupils. “The principals of the elementary schools advise the parents to send their children to these classes at the same time giving the names to the attendance officers who see that they finally are sent there and afterward that they attend regularly.”

In New York, a beginning was made some time ago along this line, but up to last February, there was but one class.

Miss Farrell, who has had charge of the work for the past two years, says: “The class was organized primarily to care for backward boys, but it was apparent to those most interested that the backwardness was directly related to a physical or a mental defect. With this fact established, it became necessary to change the whole character of the work. Instead of working to pull a boy up to backwanlness was directly related to a physical care for backward boys, but it was apparent to those most interested that the backwardness was directly related to a physical or a mental defect. With this fact established, it became necessary to change the whole character of the work. Instead of working to pull a boy up to

At another time, the pupils ranged in grade from the lowest primary to next to the last year of the grammar, and some even needed modified kindergarten work. In spite of these difficulties, each child has been studied individually and his education fitted to his needs.

The chief aim is to create in the boys a love of work so that when they go out into the world they will not join the ranks of the criminal class. For this reason, everything is made subordinate to manual training. Each month some subject is taken as a center, e. g., “The Room Beautiful.” First: What can be done to make “The Room Beautiful?” In woodwork, they make brackets, flower-boxes, etc.; in the bent-iron, picture frames, inkstands, etc. The question: Where does the wood come from? relates the manual work to geography. The kind of wood used brings us to nature study. In like manner, the relation to other subjects is shown.

In November of last year, Superintendent Maxwell sent a letter to the principals of the schools in the city asking for the number of pupils in the regular grades whom they considered mentally deficient. They were requested not to give the names of those who were merely dull or who were physically defective. About 1,200 children were reported. As I have said, the most conservative estimate places the number of such children at one per cent of the regular school population, so that the situation in New York was similar to that in Boston when the same question was asked there a few years ago. Three cases that came to my notice illustrate this fact; in one primary school of 1,300, not a single name was sent in; in one of 1,900, there was one, and in another of 1,200, there were five. Now, children of this class in New York are either not known to be mentally defective or they are not in school at all. In some instances, the teachers are unable to recognize mental deficiency; in others, they are unwilling to do so. They seem to think they are attaching some stigma to a child to call him mentally defective when they are actually injuring him by trying to educate him with the normal.

There had been no general movement

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1 There were several ungraded classes in the city where there were probably some children more than backward.
throughout the city to provide for mentally deficient children, but last February, owing to the interest of the principal, Miss Richmond, in this type of child, two classes were opened in the girls' department of School No. 77, Manhattan. When one sees children gathered in classes of this kind, there is no longer any question about the need for such work. Here, from the beginning, stress has been laid on the physical condition of the children; many, with the parents' permission, have been examined by Dr. Oppenheim who has given valuable suggestions in regard to their care. In one of the classes, thirteen out of sixteen were found to have adenoids; ten had them removed and showed great improvement.

With two classes in the same school, some little grading can be done. In one class where the youngest was nine and the eldest fourteen, the majority showed signs of congenital trouble. Five when they entered the class were unable to articulate. One could not find her way to school alone. In the younger class, where the children ranged in age from seven to eleven years, the types were more varied. Several were simply abnormal physically. In June there were sixteen in each class. The teachers have kept careful records of the physical condition of the children and of their progress in school work—data which will be valuable for future classes. Emphasis is placed on manual training. The teachers were chosen from the ordinary grades, and with the exception of a very short time spent in observing the work in the special classes in Boston, have had to learn methods by experience.

New York has a serious problem to face in the care of her mentally deficient children. In certain parts of the city where the classes are most needed (for the parents cannot afford to hire private tutors for their defective children), the schools are so overcrowded that the principals are unwilling to place one hundred normal children in part time classes in order to make provision for twelve or fifteen who are abnormal. But these children must be cared for. In the first place, those reported by the principals and found by medical experts to be mentally deficient, must be placed in special classes. Then means should be employed to discover both those children in the ordinary grades not recognized by the teachers as mentally deficient, and those not in school who have need of the special class.

The Board of Education now realizes the situation. Associate City Superintendent Stevens in his report of last spring, on backward and defective children, says there are "approximately 5,000 of these children in the city for whose better care and training the public school system is responsible." He has suggested the establishment of special classes "at central and convenient points throughout the city." It is thought that competent teachers who have had experience in the various private schools for "defective, feeble-minded, and exceptional children," could be secured to begin the work, and that when a few classes have been formed, others could be started by teachers who have gained some experience as assistants. Then "some of the institutions in and about the city, in which courses in pedagogy are given, or one or more of the schools of medicine, should be requested to offer a course of instruction in the pathology and treatment of the atypical child, and the attempt should be made to form a body of teachers who will be at least fundamentally prepared to undertake the instruction of these children." 1

Mr. Stevens feels that the development of the mental and physical life of these children cannot be separated. He says: "The co-operation of the family physician should be sought, and the assistance of the visiting physician of the Board of Health may be asked for as well. It is also expected that the dispensaries of the city will give active co-operation, which will prove of great service in securing an expert diagnosis in the case of any child who is apparently backward, deficient, or feeble-minded. The attending physicians will endeavor to prescribe, for the parents as well as for the school officer, appropriate treatment for each child." 1

This fall the care of backward and mentally deficient children is again under consideration, and Dr. Elias G. Brown of the department of physical training, has been placed in charge of the work. The

principals have been asked to make a careful canvass of their classes "to ascertain whether there are children in the school who are incapable of making adequate progress in their studies to such an extent as to necessitate special treatment." If such children are found, they are to report "the fact to the district superintendent, who will request an examination."

The cities that have been slow to recognize the need for special day classes can now profit by the experiments of other places. If the work is to be a success, there are certain things that have been found to be essential in the care of mentally deficient children:

(1) Classification—It must be clearly understood that these classes are meant to prevent by judicious training, mental degeneracy, and to remove those who are a hindrance to the well-being of the normal. They must not be considered a substitute for institutions for idiots and imbeciles. But neither must they do the work of the ungraded class, nor receive children who are backward on account of some marked physical defect or those who are morally abnormal.

(2) Medical Supervision—The work of the teacher and the work of the medical expert should go hand in hand. Not only should every child who is admitted to a special class undergo a thorough physical examination, but his course of school work should be outlined by the physician, and he should be kept under medical supervision.

(3) The Teachers—The teachers should have special training for their work. The plans used in Boston and those suggested in New York are practical. It is most important that the best teachers be selected, those who are strong physically, have an infinite amount of patience, and are able to surround their pupils with an atmosphere of love.

(4) The Training—No set course of study can be given; each child must be studied individually. Not only must be receive an education that will develop him mentally and physically, but one which will help him to become self-supporting when he leaves school. Too great emphasis, therefore, cannot be placed on manual training.

(5) The Number—Where there is not grading, the number in a class should not exceed twelve or fifteen. The ideal plan in large cities is to have centers with three or more classes.

(6) The Expense—The question of expense is, of course, a serious one. But shall these children be trained now to become self-supporting or shall they later be cared for in institutions when they have joined the ranks of the defectives and the delinquents? The work of prevention is the more economical.

With those who have studied the problem carefully, there is no question in regard to the need for the education of our mentally deficient children. Such care, moreover, is no longer considered a charity. At the meeting of the National Educational Association held in Boston last July, it was strongly felt that all children who are educable have a right to instruction in our public schools.

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Delegates and their Friends Attending the
State Conference
of Charities and Correction

to be held in Buffalo, N. Y., November 17th to 20th

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