G. J. Swendsen, Chairman, State Board of Control: I do not need to say that we are happy to be here today as the guests of Doctor and Mrs. Fulton. You will recall that at our last meeting we decided to have the quarterly conference at Owatonna. However, we changed our plans. Instead of going to Owatonna we decided to come to Red Wing for the reason that Mr. Merrill is having a short vacation and it was rather inconvenient for him to come home for this particular purpose.

The quarterly conference has been held at this institution a good many times. I think it has been about six years since we were last here. We have always enjoyed coming to Red Wing. The scenery here is most picturesque. The location of this institution is perhaps more beautiful than that of any other of the institutions of this state or a good many other states.

It is rather a gloomy day. We all wish we might have had some sunshine, but I hope that we have sunshine in our hearts.

We are going to have a good meeting, I am sure. Most of the superintendents and our friends are here, and we are going to make the best of it.

I am sorry to state that Mr. Flynn, the director of elementary schools, could not be here today. He had a very legitimate excuse for not coming. We are very happy to have a gentleman to take Mr. Flynn's place. Dr. Julius Boraas, professor of education at St. Olaf College, who is to speak to us. He is a member of the State Board of Education. I am sure he knows Red Wing and Goodhue county very well because once upon a time he was county superintendent of schools here. We are glad to ask Dr. Boraas to speak to us now.

MODERN TRENDS IN EDUCATION OF INTEREST TO INSTITUTION SCHOOLS

Dr. Julius Boraas
St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota

We in Minnesota have prided ourselves on the fact that the educational system is arranged like a highway, open from the kindergarten on through the elementary schools, through high school, and through the University. We have prided ourselves on the fact that it is an open highway for all the boys and girls of the state, without price and without any particular difficulties. As one examines this highway he discovers many chances for drifting away from it.

Poverty makes a good many youngsters get off the highway. They start getting off at the sixth, seventh and eighth grades, all along the way. Only about eighty per cent of those who enter the city schools finish the eighth grade. Only sixty per cent of those who enter the rural schools finish the eighth grade. And then through the high school, the college, the university and professional schools, a great many get off the educational highway.

I have sometimes thought that we ought to celebrate a bit where somebody has parked along the way. We have thought it so desirable for everybody to continue all along to the end of the various parts of the highway that we have rejoiced with them only. At the end of the eighth grade, we celebrate. At the end of the twelfth grade, we celebrate. At the end of the sixteenth grade we celebrate. Those who leave the highway between these stations do not receive any glory. They ought to have a little testimonial, a luncheon or something like that.

There are other reasons for leaving the highway. Some of the children become orphans, and are entirely without subsistence. They go to Owatonna. So there is one of the stages along the road where those who are too poor, who have nobody to look after them, leave the highway.

Then there are some who do not seem to be able to steer their course. We give them mental tests, and they go to the School for Feeble-Minded. Of course we have classes for the near feeble-minded in some of the larger city schools, and try to keep them along with other pupils.

Some children have other ailments. Some do not want to behave themselves. So the boys come down here and the girls go elsewhere in the state, and are taken care of in that way.

Some are crippled. They are sent to special institutions.

One of the things we have taken up is the re-education of disabled persons. They are adults. If anybody breaks an arm or a leg or receives some other injury, we look after them a little bit.

As I was county superintendent for eleven years, I have been very much interested in country children. At that time there were many schools in Goodhue county where the children did not have a chance to finish the eighth grade.

I recall one school which was outstandingly different. At that time, more than twenty years ago, practically every child who entered this school finished the eighth grade and many went to high school in Zumbrota or in Red Wing, and continued there until they had finished the course.
When I think of the opportunity which some of the children had of finishing at least the first eight years of school, and then think of others who had no opportunity to do so, I see that there was a highway of a sort, but it was not accessible to all the children on anything like equal terms.

Now we have improved conditions for the children in rural schools. About sixty per cent finish the eighth grade, about the same number that finished in the city schools when I was county superintendent. A little better than sixty per cent finish the eighth grade in the city schools. Of course back of this lies the fact that the country children do not go to school as much as the city children. There is more than a month's difference in actual attendance. When one takes away a month of schooling from a child after age, he does not expect that child to make the progress that could be made if it were not deprived of that time. It is a wonder to me that the rural children have made as much progress as they have here, and it is a question as to which we think a good deal is the training of the rural teachers, which is not what it is for the city teachers.

The typical country teacher in Minnesota had had one year of training beyond the high school, a very good year of training; but the typical teacher of the elementary grade in the city has had two years in Teachers' College beyond the high school.

Now, considering these two things, the teacher of the country school with one year's less training than the city teacher has, and the country child with five weeks' less training every year than the city child has, does the country child have an equal opportunity with the city child? It would not seem that the country child has an equal opportunity with the city child unless the country child learns a great deal out of school that the city child does not. I am willing to admit that maybe he does. There is a statement in Green Pastures, as you who have read it know, to the effect that the Lord does not expect us to figure out some things for ourselves. But children have to learn to figure out certain things for themselves. If a country boy is given a team of horses and is sent out into the field where there is nobody to direct or supervise him, he must figure out a number of things for himself. If a country boy is given a team of horses and is sent out into the field where there is nobody to direct or supervise him, he must figure out a number of things for himself.

I was county superintendent here for eleven years, and I met many fine school board members. They were nearly all men. I do not believe there were more than half-a-dozen women on the 160 school boards. That was not the way it should have been, but I could not do anything about it and the women did not do anything about it, although they could have if they had wanted to, for they had the right to vote at school elections.

There are some schools in this state today that pay not one mill of special school tax; some that pay over 100 mills. That is an enormous difference.

When I was county superintendent, there was a school district about seven miles from here. The land was very poor, nothing but hills. We who were brought up on the prairies could not see how they could farm on such land. That district had a first-grade teacher at that time, paid the maximum tax and the three-fourths of school.

In another part of the county there was a wealthy district, which had only five or six months of school. I talked with the people, tried to get them interested, had called their attention to the other districts which maintained first-grade schools eight months in the year in spite of the fact that they were situated on poor land. That district could have paid a teacher $2,500 a year, and could have maintained a school that would have drawn the attention of the whole state of Minnesota to it, just as the attention of the entire country was turned to the school conducted by Miss Duni and Miss Everett, but they did not care about that. Their argument was that the school was not as good as the one which they had attended. Look at the farms and the orchards and the places which they had! A schoolmaster came along and urged a better school, they would say, "Show us your place." But he did not have any place to show. They themselves could show tangible things which they had been able to get without going to school.

I think that this is one of the troubles today. There are so many men and women in the state of Minnesota who know so little about the problems of the public school, who care so little, that things go on just as they do. What is the use of talking about being a democratic country when one district pays one hundred times as much as another?

There are other two things I want to talk about.

The curriculum that we have bothers us a little bit—I will say that frankly—and now, with the economic depression upon us, it bothers us more. We are advised to throw away all frills and keep to the three R's. If the three R's were so very important, it would be all right, but I have come to the conclusion that they can be over-estimated. Of course, everybody should know how to read; that is essential. It is nice, too, if they know how to write somewhat.

People do not need to write so very much these days. The telephone is so handy, you never write to your neighbor. And when you write to friends, you spread most of the time apologizing for not having written before. So, really, what we need is back and forth is not of much significance.

Much of what we read is not very important. When I look at the things on the news stands in drug stores, I ask myself: "Do you sell very much of this?" The answer is always, "Yes." Then I look for a magazine that should be on the stand, but learn that there is no demand for it; it is not there. Then I wonder whether it is necessary for the citizens of Minnesota to be able to read.

Arithmetic does not seem necessary at all. They do not use it in banks. They use it in business stores. Really, I wish in these stores and business stores, there is one pound of Primost and a pound of cheese. There were two items. What do you suppose that nice-looking little girl who waited on me did? Instead of adding it in her head, as she should have done, she stepped over to a little machine, pressed down two or three keys, worked a lever, and in a moment brought me a little slip showing the cost of these two articles. Nobody needs arithmetic any more.

The three R's did not save us from this economic depression—but keep them and throw away the frills! Almost everybody needs a little music these days. One should at least be able to whistle to keep up his courage. And it would not be so bad to be able to sing a little bit if one sings the right songs. Everybody should know a little about art. We shall not be able to buy many pictures and paintings, but little homes should be cozy inside, and somebody should know how to make them cozy, livable, attractive, and ought to learn it somewhere. Yet people in Minnesota say we must throw away these things and keep the fundamentals.

I read an article a few weeks ago entitled, "What Shall We Do With Our Nell?" It seems she was not very bright. Still she was bright enough so that she did not need to go to a school for feeble-minded. When we talk about brightness in school we mean brightness in arithmetic, algebra, geometry. Nell was not bright in those ways, so they said: "What shall we do with our Nell?" Nell never will be valedictorian or salutatorian; she may not be able
to graduate the way the school is doing things, but she is a fine girl and we
make a lovely wife.

What does she need as a wife? She needs charm. Can the school give
her that? When she goes to school, does she come home more charming
than when she went away in the morning? Can she learn to adapt herself
to people so that when she sees Prince Charming and looks at him the sec-
tond time he comes right along? She must have ability to select the right
man and to make him a nice home. When she comes to the door, will the
guest feel welcome at once? Can she cook a nice dinner? When you sit
at her table, do you get wonderfully stimulated and cheered? Homes like
that we need.

When I think of some of the girls that I have seen as valedictorians and
salutatorians in schools, who could not make a good wife for anybody, I
should not want to be invited to dinner in the homes over which they may
preside.

A few weeks ago I saw a girl carrying a big load of heavy books. Her parents
were very anxious that she should be valedictorian or salutatorian. That
is a great ambition when people have it. She never got to be either. She died
before she got that far. She was not getting the right kind of training to
fit her for living anywhere.

How much algebra and geometry would you ladies say a girl would need
in order to be a good housewife, neighbor, and member of church organiza-
tions like the Ladies Aid, the League of Women Voters, and other organiza-
tions?

And you men, if you were going to advise a young man looking for a
helpmate for life, would you advise him to select the girl who had at least
ninety-five in algebra or geometry?

We want to have schools that fit the boys and girls for living. We talk
about that very eloquently in our educational conventions. When I see men
and women trying to get the kind of lives which many of them don't have,
and get worried about our schools. We can argue with people today and, they say:

"Keep out the frills and keep the other things." If we are going to keep
fit her for living anywhere.

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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN
IN MINNESOTA

Kenneth Nilson
Assistant Director of Re-education and Director of Special Classes,
State Department of Education

Mr. Chairman, Friends: Several times I have revised my plans of presenting certain facts to you this morning, and the last time I revised them was within the last fifteen minutes.

The work which I represent has two phases: the one is vocational rehabilitation of the adult disabled, and the other is special work for the handicapped in the public schools of the state. Both have a point of common interest with the work represented by members of this audience. The two are very closely related: the one is concerned with adults; the other, with children.

Special classes in the public schools of Minnesota are so called because they attempt to give an opportunity for special training to children who are handicapped mentally or physically.

There are five types which the state of Minnesota aids in the public schools. They are the physically handicapped, the deaf and the partially deaf, the partially blind, the crippled, the mentally subnormal, and, finally, the speech defectives.

This work was begun in 1915. Acts were passed by the legislature at that time which indicated that four types—the deaf, the blind, the mentally subnormal, and speech defectives—could be organized specifically in the public schools so as to receive state aid for the instruction given. In 1921 the legislature passed an act providing certain instruction for crippled children in public schools and provided definite classes were organized in their behalf.

There are less than 300 such special class teachers in the state: Teachers for the deaf, the blind, the crippled, speech defectives, and mental defectives. There were 233 of them in the year 1931-32, of which Minneapolis public schools had 132, St. Paul had 53, Duluth had 39, and other public schools in towns and smaller cities had 218 teachers.

In the discussion which follows particular mention of the city schools is made as against those out in the state. That may not be fair from some standpoint, but there is a purpose in showing it. It is well to show that the well organized school systems take more frequent advantage of such opportunities. Whether desirable or not, the fact remains that they do so.

It will be observed that the teachers of special classes in school systems other than St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth, number 116 out of approximately 300 such teachers, or slightly more than a third.

The pupil enrollment in the three cities and out in the state is approximately as follows: Of the 7,300 pupils of all the types of pupils throughout the state, 3,400 or more are in Minneapolis; 1,300 or more, in St. Paul; more than 600 in Duluth; and about 2,500 in other cities and villages. The number 3,400 represents about 30 per cent of the entire enrollment.

It might be interesting to learn the counties which are represented in this program. There are 30 of them, as follows: Beltrami, Blue Earth, Brown, Chippewa, Clay, Crow Wing, Dakota, Douglas, Freeborn, Goodhue,