

Dr. J. F. Munson read a paper on the "Pituitary in Epilepsy."

Miss Helen T. Hill presented an interesting account of the "Work at Sleighton Farm."

A paper entitled "Contribution to the Problem of Idiopathic Epilepsy, Part First," by Dr. Edwin Katzen-Ellenbogen was read by title.

Dr. H. H. Goddard discussed "Teachability of the Feeble-Minded," as follows:

We have recently gone over all admissions of our patients to bring together their records while in the Institution and their family histories. This has raised the important question, "What are we doing along the line of training our children?" They are put into the school department when they come, if they are above the low grade imbecile or idiot. They are kept in school as long as there seems to be any use of it and are given manual work and the three R's daily. These children have been in school from two to six years. To take a concrete example, the following is a report of school progress of a child who tested six by the Binet Scale: "Is doing well in kindergarten; is learning to spell; is learning to read; is learning to write; is learning to count." Such an entry appears once or twice and then one finds nothing more about these subjects. The next report reads: "Is taking interest in basket work; in woodwork; is learning to write." This goes on for a year or so; then the next entry reads: "Is doing well in housework," or "is on the farm." Each child of a mentality of five or six has much the same story. If it is a child who tests seven or eight the three R's prevail somewhat longer. Perhaps he can spell six words instead of three; can count to one hundred instead of twenty; can write a few words more than he did, or the record in manual work says: "Can make quite a basket; can make a wheel-barrow." A later entry says: "Is doing good housework;" or, "is doing well on the farm."

The children who test nine, ten or eleven are the only ones who get to the point where school work seems to have any valuable effect upon them. The exceptional ones learn to read pretty well and to write a fair letter. The letters are childish, but still

the parents are very glad to get them. After they have been out of school a year or two, their letters have a very different appearance than when written under the supervision of the teacher.

In industrial work these high grade children are doing work for which they have been directly prepared by their annual training. Often a boy is doing good work with the carpenter or a girl is doing good work in the sewing department of the Institution.

The question I would like to raise is—if a child has a mentality of six or seven or eight and we know his mental development has stopped, is there any use whatever of sending him into the school department, unless he is too small to go to work and we only wish to entertain him? We know the easiest way to make him happy is to send him to school. A child who tests seven or eight may get a little from manual work. A child who tests nine, ten or eleven will get something from the manual training but practically nothing from any training in the three R's.

Dr. Rogers, Faribault, Minn.: Dr. Goddard's remarks raise in my mind this important question, referred to in previous sessions, viz; What do we mean by mental development as he has just used the term? My own conception of mental deficiency, using the term as synonymous with feeble-mindedness, is that it is a condition dependent upon retarded or arrested physiological development (or evolution), that is not necessarily affected essentially by training. Whether or not this arrest operates suddenly and completely at one definite date in infancy or childhood, or represents a slowing down of the evolutionary process during these periods, it leaves the mental status of the individual at a lower level than that of a normal person of the same chronological age. What the Binet-Simon system is assumed to do, as I understand it, is to determine the intellectual level of the child at the time of examination. If this assumption is correct, and successive examinations by this system show that the level has raised, it would, of course, demonstrate the fact that the evolutionary process had progressed. It seems to me we should

not confuse "improvement" as used in this sense with "improvement" in the sense of having learned things. One has reference to an increased capacity to learn and the other to the accomplished fact of having learned. Teachability depends upon the intellectual level and also upon the mental "make-up" and temperament or, in other words, the balance of mental faculties at a given mental level, including, of course, the emotional state and volitional capacity, both for initiative and inhibition. Teachability, therefore, while existing in some degree at all mental ages, varies in children of the same mental age, so far as it relates to any particular thing to be taught, of the various things that are comprehended at that age.

Now the real purpose of the training, it seems to me, is to improve the pupil in knowledge of certain things, in the ability to perform certain things and to establish a behavior in relation to certain things, all of which come within the range of his capacity. The performance may or may not have been acquired. The boy of a mental age of four that has learned to milk a cow, or the girl who has learned to sew a plain seam, may not have changed the mental age during this process, any more than the normal young lady of eighteen has changed her mental level while learning to become an expert operator in a telephone exchange or a young man who has entered with credit into the learned professions. On the other hand, none of these individuals would have been characterized by any lower level if they had not learned to do these various things. In theory, at least, we should not confuse the average capacity to learn (the mental age) with the performance which teaching develops though it is dependent upon the mental age. The confusion in practice comes obviously from the fact that to determine capacity, one must ascertain content and to think of the content matter rather than the capacity that enables it to be acquired. So in our schools, it is no reflection to find that pupils do not change in mental age, especially if over thirteen chronologically, and if found to do so when under thirteen, it is only what might be expected in high grade mental deficient because of the natural process of evolution, however much it may be slowed down.

It is true that a student of Seguin might find in this idea an apparent conflict with the theory and practice of physiological education as taught by him and in which we all believe today. The conflict, however, is more apparent than real. Seguin did not teach, nor do modern physiologists teach, that nerve cells can be developed *de novo* by functioning adjacent ones, but only that dormant cell activity can be enlivened and nerve routes rendered less obstructive by physiological activity. It is also true that dormant cell activity and imperfect nerve tracts may hinder the testing of intelligence, so that the child may be assigned to an intelligence too low, that training will bring up to a normal (to him) level and this fact might explain some apparent evolutions found upon re-testing, etc. Of course, in all this discussion we are leaving out of consideration any criticisms of the methods used for determining mental levels. As we are all using one system for the sake of standardization, we may assume that it does the work, so far as this discussion is concerned.

The question of whether or not our schools are doing the most practical kind of teaching or not, is another matter, and one concerning which there is much misconception. While it would be out of place to enter at length into this subject at this time, there is no doubt that we are all obliged to compromise some of our convictions as to the very best training, by conceding something to the preconceived ideas of parents and friends. The influence of the public schools upon the preparation for work in which most of our teachers obtain their educational motives, exerts no inconsiderable influence in modifying new methods. We are almost forced to take certain lines of least resistance, feeling all the time that we are getting too far from Seguin and his philosophy, exemplified by Montessori. I think Dr. Fernald has battled quite successfully with the adverse elements and has kept a little nearer the fundamentals, the training of low grades, than any of the rest of us. His sense training classes have been a great inspiration to our schools. I believe in the training of the feeble-minded all along the line. The fundamental happiness of the whole institution community is centered about the work of the department and the interests it fosters, and from the

standpoint both of the public and the children, the standard should have a very practical character that would prepare for the permanent colony and other industries of the village community, because in it will the great majority of the pupils find their permanent home.

The boys we saw in the sense-training class here are the boys who ordinarily wear out the benches and spend their time in pulling buttons off their clothes. They are the boys who, after a while, will be hoeing corn, pitching hay, or doing other simple work. With children who are a step higher in mentality, the training must be a little more complex. Do not get the idea that these children should be taught to read and write the first thing, as it is clearly beyond the capacity of a great majority of those from whom the parents expect this.

Dr. Fernald, Waverly, Mass.: I have more faith in the possibility of educating the feeble-minded now than I had when I began the work, or when I had been in the work five years. I think it has been much obscured by the fact that our institutions care for extreme types, and when we get very high grade morons we are apt to forget that education with them means an entirely different thing than it does with lower grades. Fifteen years ago, we honestly believed that much of the educational work was unnecessary and a waste of good money. Prof. James said the education of one such boy cost two thousand dollars. After all, when he grows up, he will be a very low grade laborer except under very exceptional conditions. I think we over-emphasized the economic worth of the boy. We lost the confidence of parents; the confidence of the parents of prospective patients; and also lost the confidence of legislators who noticed the deterioration of patients. We found we had developed an unhappy adolescence with no resources. There was nothing to give in the way of a stimulus. About that time, the Association met at Glenwood, and I made a trip to several institutions, very valuable for our institution. I had thought we had no room for some special classes and that we had no money for the purpose. I decided that there were a great many things quite as important as money. I went back home and got a music teacher, and we

paid a great deal of attention to the educational value of music. I think we can easily overlook the cultural value of many subjects. I believe in our work and think that every feeble-minded child should have all the education of which he is capable. If we spend ten years in teaching a boy to read or write a few words, I do not think it is worth while, but for the children who are capable of higher training, I think it would be very unfortunate to eliminate the three R's or anything else that we are now doing. I believe we should do nothing that does not give some definite results. We should get the respect of the pupils themselves; they have to see something definite. The habit of obedience and the habit of attention can be developed with it all. Instead of the troublesome, destructive and disagreeable children, you can develop a group of harmless, useful and happy individuals. I do not believe we are doing our full duty by them unless we do that thing.

Dr. Charles Bernstein, Rome, N. Y.: The patients who give us the most trouble are the ones who have been taught to read and write. They are always looking for an opportunity to send out a letter or note secretly, and give us trouble in other ways as well. If they could not write, much of the disturbance would be eliminated.

Dr. Walter E. Fernald, Waverly, Mass.: I think these patients would be much more troublesome if they did not learn to read and write. We find that the normal boy or girl often becomes very restless at the time of adolescence. Very few of our patients are in school after they reach the age of sixteen; their interests and their activities are translated into terms of running the sewing machine or the loom, cutting garments, etc. We find such a gradual transition, they are not conscious of it, and this transition should not be overlooked. If the boy of eighteen or nineteen is left in the school rooms to work under an attractive young woman, he is not willing to give it up. He would not be a male adolescent if he wanted to give it up. I have a man, forty years old, who begs every day to go back to the school-room, he wants to be under the beguiling smile of his teacher, a very attractive young woman. But it would be just as abnormal

for the farmer's daughter to go to the district school until she was twenty-four or twenty-five, and the farmer's son would be equally useless if he went to the same school until he was twenty-one. It is not fair to feeble-minded girls to give them teeming vistas which they can never realize in their lives. I believe it is very unfair to both our girls and boys to create in them tastes that will lead to unhappiness and discontent. It is just as unwholesome to have our adolescent boys in high school taught by young women. It is very unfair to the boys. I think the sooner we get our feeble-minded boys in the hands of men with frank, masculine interests, the better it is for them. My boys have women attendants until they are fourteen; we have very few male attendants; I think nine in the institution.

Adjourned.

The Association re-convened in the Hall at 8:30 P. M. with Dr. Keating in the chair.

The committee on organization recommended the following officers who were then elected:

J. K. Kutnewsky, M.D., President, Redfield, So. Dak.

H. H. Goddard, Ph.D., Vice-President, Vineland, N. J.

A. C. Rogers, M.D., Secretary and Treasurer, Faribault, Minn.

The present editorial board was, upon the recommendation of the committee, re-elected.

The auditing committee reported the statement of the Treasurer as satisfactory.

Dr. Rogers, the Treasurer, recommended that certain outstanding debts for Journals be cancelled. On motion of Dr. Fernald, a vote to this effect prevailed.

Dr. H. G. Hardt, Lincoln, Ills.: I believe I voice the members of this association when I say that we have had a jolly good time here. The general freedom and genial hospitality has never been equalled anywhere.

Dr. Frank W. Keating, Owing Mills, Md.: I know for one that I have not only had a jolly good time but will go home with a lot to think about; not only what I have seen in the institution, but what I have learned about the good work the mem-

bers of the Association are doing. From what I have seen here we can all agree that Dr. Haynes is a man whom the Association is fortunate to have as a member

Dr. C. S. Little, Thiells, N. Y.: The population having one feeble-minded person to less than 200 is something that we all feel at home in.

Dr. A. C. Rogers, Faribault, Minn.: It seems to me that the spirit of the institution here is very fine, indeed. It is not always that we find such a congenial atmosphere. I move that a vote of thanks be tendered to Dr. and Mrs. Haynes and the Board of Control for the splendid entertainment we have received during this meeting of the Association; also to Mrs. G. R. Buck, Miss Florence Vincent and Prof. U. S. Wilson, Supt. of Lapeer High School, for their music, and to the members of the Commercial Club and his other many friends in Lapeer who have assisted Dr. Haynes in making this meeting the success it has been. Passed unanimously.

Dr. Rogers: I feel that it has been a high honor to this Association that the Governor of the State has come in and given us his excellent address; that he enters very deeply into the spirit of our work is evident, and that fact should be an added inspiration to us.

The committee on resolutions concerning the deaths of President Carroll and Dr. Knight presented this report:

Since the last meeting of this Association death has claimed two of its esteemed and honored members. Mr. Albert E. Carroll, President of the Association, whose genial manner, combined with strict fidelity, endeared him to all, and Dr. George H. Knight, who from his early days gave of his best thought to all that tended to a better understanding and treatment of the feeble-minded.

We wish herein to give some expression indicating the loss we all feel for these two members who were so long and so intimately associated with us in our work. We miss their companionship, and as we gather each year our thoughts will bring again pleasant memories of the times spent with them.

Behind them they leave monuments of their service to the