

## THE MENACE OF THE FEEBLEMINDED

G. C. Hanna, Superintendent Minnesota School for Feeble-Minded

### PHYSICAL BASIS OF MENTALITY

So far as human understanding goes, mind is unknown apart from a physical body. Mental faculties emanate from brain tissue bathed by the blood stream and are affected by agents that affect the normal action and reaction of these physical factors. Yet we go on discussing the mind without regard to its physical basis, as if mind stuff were loosely connected with the body or wholly disconnected from it and floating in space. This confusion in thinking has prevented any real progress in the understanding of mental deficiency and disorders of the mind, and in the treatment of these cases. Headway will be made when the trouble is understood to be bounded by the patient's skin and the causes are sought in his anatomy. The scientist and the methods of science must replace superstition and the methods of the astrologer.

It will be a new day for the mentally deficient or mentally afflicted person and his family when his trouble is diagnosed as physical and is so regarded by the public. Take, for example, the low-grade idiot entirely devoid of intelligence, whose existence is little more than vegetable, whose only sound is a screech, whose appearance is loathsome and repulsive to those unused to such sights. He is regarded not as a human being, but as an object, a fearful nightmare, only to be avoided and banished from sight. Wherein does he differ from a normal human being? He was born of parents in the same manner, he may have all sense organs intact, he has the semblance of a human being, and he is a human being. Yet people stand apart and apply names to him, such as "idiot" and "nut," that tend to isolate him even from human sympathy. Medical science has discovered that certain diseases are caused by micro-organisms, and a patient's condition is diagnosed according to the type found present. In the case of the idiot, of the insane, and of the epileptic, fear and horror keep us away, and we think of the sufferer as of a different species. The disease-causing bacilli were not easily found and isolated, and it may take several generations, or even centuries, of painstaking scientific endeavor to unlock all the secrets of mental disorder, but why not approach the two problems from the same angle? It never would have occurred to anyone living in the last hundred years to attempt to find physical disease outside the tissues of the body.

This thesis is based on the belief that all mental deficiency, low mentality, insanity, the epilepsies, and mental deviations of all kinds, including criminal tendencies, are due to physical causes; that more than 90 per cent of feeble-mindedness and epilepsy and about 75 per cent of insanity are hereditary; and that no substantial progress will be made that leaves

this theory out of consideration. Consider what endocrinology has contributed in the last 20 or 30 years, and the science is in its infancy! The chemistry of the blood stream seems not less important now than the character of brain tissue itself.

If one doubt the profound influence of physical factors on the flow of consciousness, let him consider the effect of drugs or alcohol. Mental states imitating idiocy, imbecility, insanity, epileptic frenzy, and the actual state of mind that commits the most horrible and revolting crimes are produced by doses of alcohol. Is not the alcoholic idiot just as much an idiot while the physical or chemical state lasts as is the idiot in whom it unfortunately will not pass? Total or partial loss of consciousness is not attributed to etherial factors. The cause is always sought within the body. In the case of the mentally afflicted, including the feeble-minded and those mentally subnormal in varying degrees, it surely is a safe hypothesis to say: Here are individuals who suffer from physical ills. The insane who have had normal intelligence may be mentally restored, provided their physical condition can be restored to what it was when they functioned normally. The laws of nature are immutable, and, given the same conditions, the same results must follow. Unfortunately for the insane, it may not be possible to restore original physical conditions. Destruction of neural tissue or permanent changes may have taken place.

Since the causes of epilepsy have not been discovered, little advance has been made in the treatment of this disease. It is usually progressive, and mental deterioration is more or less rapid, with feeble-mindedness or insanity or both as the final result. The feeble-minded and the mentally dull are so from birth, with some exceptions due to certain diseases or accidents. It is reasonable to assume that if their physical condition could be made to correspond with that in normal individuals, they would become intelligent beings. However, there is no known record of the cure of a genuine case of feeble-mindedness, and no science gives promise or hope that this unfortunate class will ever be normal.

Three groups of thought have attempted a solution of the crime problem. One group considers the criminal a normal individual who deliberately chooses to be a law violator. Punishment, severe and long continued, is the remedy offered. A second group regards the criminal in much the same light, but thinks that, as an erring brother, he can be returned to right thinking and living if only the right influences are brought to bear on him. Imprisonment is not designed as a punishment, and the whole aim is reform of the individual. This is to be brought about by industrial and other training, and moral and religious teaching and inspiration. Quick and easy parole on evidence of reformation, or even suspended sentence, goes with this idea. A third group regards the criminal a victim, not of himself or of his heredity, but of his environment with which, through no fault of his, a cruel and unfeeling world has surrounded him. This group sends roses when the murderer is on trial or in prison; passes resolutions condemning courts, prisons, capital punishment, and society in general; and would quickly free the poor victim from the clutches of the law, with an

apology for society's harshness in even questioning him for his conduct. Society is all to blame. This thesis is in agreement that society is largely to blame for crime and criminals, but little comfort will be found, by those seeking release from jail, in the remedy suggested.

## INFLUENCE OF HEREDITY

Heretofore we have not stressed the inheritance of mental traits, because there has been so large an element of doubt as to the nature of consciousness. It is easy to understand that physical structure is hereditary. Both the plant and animal world confirm this on every hand. When it is understood that mental qualities are based directly on physical and chemical conditions, and this is being proved experimentally every day, then the place of heredity will be established and real social improvement will begin. A good illustration of the effect of the physical on the mental is reflected occasionally in the bringing of a damage suit by the relatives of a patient against a surgeon on the ground that the removal of the whole thyroid gland, in an operation for goiter, resulted in mental deterioration and insanity. Cretinism, a form of feeble-mindedness, also illustrates how disturbed thyroid function produces grave mental defect. Castration and ovariectomy, both of the lower animals and of man, are followed by marked physical changes and by mental effects of the profoundest character, sometimes amounting to a changed nature, suggesting even a different personality.

It is not accidental that an inmate of an institution for the feeble-minded may have a brother at the state reformatory, a sister at the institution for delinquent girls, or an uncle in the colony for epileptics; that his father is a convict, his mother a patient at a hospital for the insane; or that a grandfather died in the poor house. Low mentality and emotional instability, the latter also resting on a physical basis and hereditary, come up in succeeding generations as regularly as other physical qualities. The neurosis of the offspring may differ from that of the parent. Feeble-mindedness may follow insanity or epilepsy. Either of the other two conditions may follow feeble-mindedness, or the three conditions may appear successively in as many generations. The progeny of the moron may be, and often is, idiotic. Some offspring may show criminal traits; others become paupers, alcoholics, and drug addicts. Indeed, alcoholism is more likely the result than the cause of mental inferiority. Alcoholism, syphilis, and consanguinity have practically been eliminated as causes of congenital mental defect by investigations covering the last twenty years.

Some question the influence of heredity when they see great names with unknown or mentally inferior descendants. They forget that two persons are concerned in every birth, and that Copperfields are sometimes attracted to dumb-Dorcas, or that gifted women occasionally marry very stupid men. Some would have us believe that this is one of nature's ways of maintaining a certain uniformity in the race, and of preventing the appearance of super-beings who would be too lonely in this world.

A better understanding of the working of heredity will make men and women pause before entering into life contracts with strains known to be tainted. There is no way to escape the laws of nature. Those of superior intelligence must marry persons of strong mentality if they would have insurance that their offspring will be bright. Mental inferiors must marry mental superiors if they would have even a chance that their children will be bright. The young man who declares that he is not "marrying the whole family," when cautioned about the low mental level of his intended wife's relatives, is just mistaken. It is too late to do anything on his side, but he is deliberately choosing one-half the ancestors for his offspring. If there appear low mentality, feeble-mindedness, insanity, epilepsy, or lesser mental aberration, the old advice to those about to enter on matrimony holds: don't. Likewise marriage of one of a superior with one of an inferior race usually ends unhappily. Amalgamation is disastrous to a higher race.

#### Eminence

Some one always rises to ask how this great person or that one came from low-grade ancestry. The answer is he didn't. Bounderby was as much mistaken about the gutter as a source of great intellects as he was about several other things. Extensive studies made by scientists confirm the truth that something can not come out of nothing in human procreation any more than in the material world at large. Galton's study of about 1,000 eminent men showed more than 500 relatives of equal eminence. He concluded that persons do not attain great eminence unless they have outstanding natural abilities. Cattel's studies of American men of science confirm Galton's conclusions. Cattel found that about half his subjects came from 1/30 of the population. Of thousands of American families that might be mentioned, the celebrated Randolph family of Virginia, which gave to the world in Thomas Jefferson the most brilliant and versatile intellect that America has produced, is but one example. John Marshall, Richard Bland, Robert E. Lee, and other prominent Americans were of this family. The laws of heredity registered no less truly in the ancient world. Alexander the Great had a stimulating environment and was instructed by Aristotle, one of the greatest teachers of all time, but his father was Philip of Macedon and his mother Olympias.

#### Mental Traits

It is sometimes suggested that a slow, plodding person, by dint of perseverance can keep up with the progress of one with brighter intellect, and this is cited as proof that after all it is not heredity that counts, but other qualities. This argument leaves out of consideration that like begets like, and that one's physical being is a sum total of inheritance from his ancestors. Not only brain structure, but organs, glands, everything goes to produce a well or poorly balanced whole. Mental qualities and traits, being based on physical structure and balance, are inherited by the dozen if not by the hundred. Perseverance is just as much an inherited quality as intellect. The whole emotional life also grows out of physical properties and varies and fluctuates accordingly, but, as Professor James notes, if

seems often temporarily out of all proportion to the causative physical factor. However, fluctuation is always within the limits of the permanent conditions set up by heredity. Love, hate, and other emotions vary directly as the general ability and intelligence level of the person entertaining them. Great lovers have ever been great characters. Pompey was not surpassed in fiction in this role. The love of a dullard is but a pale and sickly thing, and not of much price.

#### Musical Talent

No one would seriously claim that a child inherits the ability to compose a sonata or to perform on the piano without any previous study or training. We do know that children have inherited physical entities that enable them to become musical composers and performers of note at a very early age, and that both the composition and the performance would remain alien to the vast majority if taught and trained a lifetime. No symphony dances for expression in the brain cells of most of us. Beethoven, Bach, and Mozart were sons of musicians, and showed their extraordinary ability at an early age. Mozart began his studies at three and was a composer at six. Mendelssohn, whose grandfather was an eminent philosopher and father a prominent and wealthy banker, began his career in the earliest years of his childhood. The Bach family had 30 or more great musicians running through eight generations. It is true that every great artist spends years of the hardest work in mastering the technique of his subject, but ability to concentrate on the task and put forth the long-continued effort necessary to mastery had to come from some place. Peculiar mental ability plus industry, both inherited, are necessary to genius. If genius and a higher order of intelligence habitually appear under good surroundings rather than under bad, it is because the parentage has been the kind that is satisfied with no less than the better things that society holds out as a reward to greater and larger service.

#### Intelligence and Environment

No individual is of low intellect because he lives in a crowded, filthy tenement or shack along the river. The tenement and shack are, with a few exceptions, but the outer reflection of his inner state. The river population of cities will continue just as long as large masses of people are so poorly equipped mentally. Breeding places for crime cannot exist without tenants.

A few years ago, a great builder had a vision of a city without the usual fringe of wretched living conditions. Every worker was to have clean, decent quarters, and to this end every house was equipped with a bathroom with proper fixtures. It was a rude shock to find that some families made a coal bin of the bath tub, while others had never had such a good place in which to store a few bushels of potatoes. Furnishing clean, decent quarters, however desirable, does not always inspire cleanliness. The defective mind is uncomfortable in good surroundings, and longs to wallow in filth, to which it quickly reverts when left to itself. Brand new

jails, finished in marble and containing every modern convenience, are soon spattered with tobacco and filled with filth and vermin unless some mind other than that of the prisoners enforces cleanliness and orderliness. As Robert Louis Stevenson says in *The Amateur Emigrant*, one must make his real migration before he climbs aboard ship if he expects to find himself any different on reaching the other side. Wastrels, vagrants, and drunkards in Dublin are wastrels, vagrants, and drunkards in Boston.

#### INTELLIGENCE LEVELS

The army tests furnish the only real basis of judging the mental quality of our population as a whole, but since 1919 a number of surveys have been made that are of interest. The army tests were applied to a large and representative section of the population, without stopping to get the consent of any individual to be tested. They were uniform or correlated. Two per cent of the white draft tested under 8 years mentally, 5 per cent under 9 years, 10 per cent under 10 years, 17.6 per cent under 11 years, and 30.3 per cent under 12 years. Three per cent of the negroes were under mental 6, 8 per cent under 7, 16.7 per cent under 8, 32 per cent under 9, 48 per cent under 10, 64 per cent under 11, and 79 per cent under 12. The white officers ranked well above the white recruits, their medium score being 17.26 years mentally.

The Indiana Committee on Mental Defectives made a report in 1919 covering the survey of the 92 counties in the state. Such a committee lacks both the means and the authority to conduct a survey on the scale carried on in the army. Naturally only the most obvious cases are reported, part of whom are already in institutions. Homes are not searched for husbands and wives with the minds of children. On the basis of mental defectives found, the report places the percentage at 2.11 of the total population, distributed 1.65 per cent feeble-minded, .32 of one per cent insane, and .15 of one per cent epileptic. The feeble-minded are more than five times as numerous as the insane, and the insane twice as numerous as the epileptic. Applying even these figures to the population of Minnesota, we should have, on an estimated population of two and one-half millions, 41,250 feeble-minded, 7,750 insane, and 3,750 epileptics. The latest report of the State Board of Control of Minnesota would indicate that the Indiana percentages are too low. On June 30, 1924, there was a population of 6,881 in the hospitals and asylums for the insane. Milder cases left in the communities would represent nearly or quite as many more. Comparison with the results obtained in examining the white draft indicates that the survey probably took in the feeble-minded under mental 8 only.

Although there are more than five times as many feeble-minded as insane, most states make five or six times as much provision for the latter as for the feeble-minded. Minnesota has one institution for the feeble-minded and six for the insane. This is because an insane patient is more demonstrative of his defect, and may be considered immediately dangerous. We hasten to isolate and treat smallpox or scarlet fever, but the tuberculous, the syphilitic, and those suffering with other insidious diseases, go about

their business, certainly without isolation and often without treatment. It takes a conflagration to attract attention. Our remedies are along the line of hiring more and more firemen instead of reducing the number of blazes. Feeble-mindedness is the unending and ever-increasing source of the other forms of mental defect—insanity and epilepsy; and pauperism, desertion, divorce, dependency, social distress, prostitution, vice, and crime, follow in its wake. It is the spring that must be dried up if there is to be a relief from these ills of society.

#### Recognition of Mental Defectives

The great trouble is that most of the damage is done by the higher grade feeble-minded, who are not recognized as such. One has to be a grinning idiot before the public notices his mental status. Yet these poor creatures do not escape the lust of the vicious. Many an idiot, so low mentally that she is incapable of knowing that she has become a mother, gives birth to one or more children. Even responsible officials may not recognize the real condition of mental 7's, 8's, and 9's, and occasionally prominent citizens, with a love for humanity as their stated motive, can see no difference between these unfortunates and the rest of society. Persons seeking the release of the feeble-minded often use the expression that the patient is no more feeble-minded than they are, and sometimes those who have to see females go out, only to return with other mental defectives in arms, are tempted to agree.

#### The Female

The higher-grade feeble-minded female is a greater menace than the male. The latter is faced with making a living on equal terms with superior intellects, and his condition is more quickly recognized. Fewer marry because of their economic handicap. But mental defectiveness is no bar to the marriage of the female, and no handicap in her sequestration as a wife. Here there is no competition. She cannot be discharged as are other incompetents. She may be a poor housekeeper, without ability to care for or train children, garrulous, silly, wasteful, a human incubator, but nobody thinks much about it unless she may have married a high-grade husband, as often happens. He may wonder what is the matter, or why his children make so poor a showing in school, if indeed he does not have to number mental defectives or rough-necks among them. Many a youth destined to become a factor in the business or professional world is attracted to the pretty face of one of the morons who sit on the back seats in the high schools and smile out such sweet "I don't believe I know" answers to all questions on the lessons. Some of these marriages go to divorce courts, with or without triangle complications. It was the same in the days of old. Socrates sought comradeship away from home, Goethe was maladjusted throughout the earlier years of his life, and Shakespeare found in London companions more congenial than in Stratford. He visited Ann Hathaway, whom he had married when he was 18 years of age, but seldom. Incidentally, these immortals were exceptionally well born.

## A Proletariat

There are those who treat the whole matter of mental defectiveness lightly, and contend that we need large numbers of inferior mentality to perform the mental work of the nation. They overlook the fact that 32.8 per cent of the white population already ranks between 12 and 14 years mentally, and that 30.3 per cent of whites and 79 per cent of negroes are under 12. It is the percentage below 12 that we need have concern about. This country wants no proletariat and needs none. We have no pyramidal or Chinese wall to build, and modern invention is fast replacing needed manual labor with machines. National safety lies in a reasonable homogeneity of our population. Nations that have disregarded or encouraged a proletariat, as workers or fighters, have ended in disaster. Witness Russia today, where the so-called workers are in control. It is a high crime to have brains, and the intelligentsia is being methodically murdered or escapes the executioner's axe by suicide. It will take thousands of years to restore the damage that is being done by destroying the higher levels of intelligence. Rome fell before hordes of barbarians after encouraging a proletariat which, with the colonies, was supposed to furnish the soldiery for leaders of the aristocratic party. But the proletarian militia got in the majority, and dictated the terms under which it would fight, if at all. The beginning of the end dates from the times most similar to our own, the days of Juvenal, Martial, Pliny the Younger, and Tacitus, and extending into the reign of the Antonines; times in which riches, magnificence, and splendor went side by side with want and poverty; when the middle or agricultural class was disappearing, and the government was highly paternalistic, and looked to for everything. Even those who under other circumstances could have taken care of themselves were thankful for the dole. In describing crime conditions, Juvenal tells how murder and robbery flourished on every hand, and how criminals fled to Rome for safety from their rendezvous in the Pontine marsh, in case the latter was raided, even as to New York and Chicago now from the smaller cities.

### PREVALENCE AND COST OF CRIME

Crime is the ever present concomitant of social instability and disorder. It is one of the most serious problems with which society has to deal, and in America particularly has almost got beyond control. There were approximately 10,000 murders in this country in 1923. This is against a record of 60 in England and Wales for the same period. Chicago has its murder a day. New York has twelve times as many murders as London and more annually than any country of Europe except Russia. Washington is 2,000 per cent more murderous than London. In three years mail bandits have secured \$10,000,000. Bank robberies occur so often that they occasion no surprise and little concern. The American Bankers' Association reported 165 bank holdups for the first ten months of 1924. In Illinois, Missouri and Oklahoma alone there were 437 robberies in the last three years. The Bankers' Association estimates the annual cost of crime at \$3,500,000,000,

which is more than twice as much as was spent for public elementary and high school education in 1922, according to the United States Bureau of Education.

The cost of feeble-mindedness, insanity, epilepsy and allied diseases, pauperism, and crime, combined, would more than equal the value of the three principal farm crops for 1924: the corn crop, \$2,405,468,000; the wheat crop, \$1,136,596,000; the cotton crop, \$1,487,225,000.

These three crops constitute more than half the value of the products of the nation's farms, the total for 1924 being estimated at \$9,500,000,000.

A large part of this money is taken directly from the public in the form of taxes, another part in losses, and the remainder in various charities. Community chest and other organizations raise approximately \$200,000,000 a year, most of which is directly chargeable to mental defectiveness or the habits and qualities directly associated with it.

### THE STUDY OF CRIME

The ills of society that absorb a large part of the productive energy of the agricultural workers, or of almost half the nation's population, certainly merit the efforts of the best brains in the country. And these ills will ultimately reduce to one problem, that of low or distorted mentality, which will be found due to physical qualities traced to heredity. It is already known that pauperism has its genesis there, and close and long-continued study will discover the same source for most crime.

### Psychopathic Laboratories

People naturally shy at suggestions for psychopathic hospitals and laboratories. They think that such institutions merely furnish a means for letting criminals escape the consequences of their acts, and this has been true in far too many instances. There are those who would not go so far as to free offenders on the basis of the findings of a psychopathic laboratory, but who consider it necessary to build and equip suitable hospitals wherein the convicted may be confined. They think it a grave injustice to send a mental defective to a reformatory or prison. As a matter of fact, if no murderer were ever put to death and no criminal sent to prison except those absolutely sound mentally, there would be no executions and the prisons would become lonesome inclosures. The purpose of a psychopathic laboratory is to find out the mental status of the subject. The prisoner need not be freed nor sent to a "hospital" from which he could escape a few hours later. The institutions we have are adequate in type and structure for the care of our prisoners. Few men are going to stay long in prisons from which escape is easy, and walls are still necessary. It would be possible to classify prisoners according to their mental and physical condition and work out their entire treatment on that basis. This means that every prison should be a laboratory, a hospital, and a school, headed by men deserving the rank and pay of university presidents, and officered by the highest type of men possible to obtain. Proper value would of course

have to be attached to experience. In states where prison officials are appointed through political influence their tenure is ended with changing administrations. This has prevented the training of such a group of thinkers as will be necessary to solve crime problems.

#### Mental Status of Prisoners

Those who have an opportunity to observe closely the populations of correctional institutions, reformatories, and prisons, know that mental defect, which should be understood to include all forms of mental instability, even though the subject has the knowing faculty apparently unimpaired as is often the case with the psychopath, is the big factor in the responsibility for crime. They also realize how closely it is related to heredity when they trace the family connections of prisoners. Mental examinations in these institutions have revealed that from 30 to 80 per cent of the populations are definitely feeble-minded. A large per cent are insane when convicted or become insane after imprisonment, their condition being erroneously ascribed by some to the rigorous treatment accorded them as prisoners. Some are epileptics, and still others are emotionally unstable. Drug addicts and alcoholics are counted in every prison population.

According to the Report of the Georgia Commission on Feeble-mindedness, printed by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1919, 72.5 per cent of the inmates of the state prison graded 12 years or under mentally. This was a mixed population of whites and negroes. Ninety-four per cent of the negroes tested 12 or under. Of the women prisoners confined at the women's branch of the prison, 78 per cent had a mental level of 12 years or under. Forty-two and two-tenths per cent of the males admitted serving previous commitments and 23.8 per cent of the females. Examinations in typical Georgia jails gave similar results. Thirty per cent of white inmates and 73 per cent of negroes showed mentalities of 10 years and under. To use the language of the report, "Seventy per cent of the inmates of these jails either are subnormal mentally or are handicapped by such serious pathological mental conditions as feeble-mindedness, epilepsy, mental disease or deterioration." Chapter 12, Volume 15, The Memoirs National Academy of Sciences, reports that 66.4 per cent of the white offenders at Camp Dix were below the average, or C rating (about 13 years), and only 10.4 per cent above it. Twenty-one per cent had an intelligence rating of E, designating a mentality of about 9 years and under, too low for military service. Comparison with the white draft shows that these low-grade men are two to three times as likely to commit offenses as men of average intelligence and from four to six times as likely to get into trouble as are men of superior ability.

It is known to all who are experienced in penal work that homo-sexuality, which is coming to be regarded by neurologists as a type of degeneracy belonging to mental deviation, probably to dementia praecox, flourishes in every penal and correctional institution in the land unless recognized and controlled by a strong hand. Some reformers, who have sought to find a solution to the crime problem in fads and fancies while ignoring the facts

of biology, have not only overlooked this condition entirely as an indication of mental inferiority and irresponsibility, but have been apologists for loathsome practices, if they have not in truth condoned them.

#### Prostitutes

Examinations of prostitutes at Newport News during the war showed 88 per cent below the age of mental 11. Fifteen per cent of the whole group studied revealed, on psychiatric examination, other abnormalities, such as alcoholism, drug addiction, epilepsy, and dementia praecox. These results compare with the findings of the Georgia Commission, and with reports from dozens of other reliable sources. Prostitution is the principal source of the insanities resulting from syphilis, paretics forming about one-fourth of the insane hospital population. Most of these cases die within one or two years after confinement. The remainder of insane patients are principally dementia praecox and manic-depressive cases, both hereditary. Hence insanity is a disease almost 100 per cent preventable. It will not be prevented so long as we allow the bulk of mental defectives to go on breeding their kind undisturbed in the community, or so long as we shuffle them in and out of institutions with no check on procreation while they are out. The same conditions apply to the penal and correctional institutions where there is no thought of interfering with the reproductive powers of known defectives as they go forth on parole or have their liberty between sentences.

#### Detection, Conviction, and Punishment

Offenders, whether feeble-minded, psychopathic, or borderline, know what is expected of them and they are influenced by such considerations as sure and speedy punishment or the failure of courts to convict. Those who argue that punishment is no deterrent are blind to the facts. While industrial and other conditions in Great Britain have not been as good as in this country for the past few years, yet the murder rate there has been less than two per cent of our rate. British justice is proverbial. We need high-grade police systems undisturbed by politics where cities will have the benefit of an accumulation of experience and training on the part of its officers. We shall also have to quit arresting and trying for murder those brave members of the force who, in the course of their duties in protecting the public, occasionally kill a gunman resisting arrest. Commendation and not censure is merited. The chief of police has need to be a high-power executive who can select and train intelligent men in the service with the assurance that they will all belong to the system for life if they wish. We have been woefully short in the detection of crime.

The judicial system should be so organized as to attract and hold qualified and fearless judges, who will see that justice is done to all concerned. Every little while press dispatches recite actions of courts that are hardly believable and that are calculated to cost such courts the entire loss of confidence of the public. One dispatch recently related how a judge had held a young man in contempt of court and fined him for not appearing

at the city hall to go to Sunday school with him on Sunday morning as ordered. The man had been fined on Saturday for intoxication and the sentence to accompany the judge to Sunday school was added. It developed that the judge was the superintendent of the Sunday school and was in an attendance contest with a class in another city. Such incidents are happening so frequently that some way should be found to keep courts from imposing sentences not defined by statute. Neither horse play nor child's play belongs to the judiciary.

Now every advantage seems to be with the criminal. The defense invariably is able to make a case out of all proportion to the efforts of the state to convict. Expert witnesses can be employed by those who have the means; and those who haven't seem to be able to escape detection, conviction, or both, in a vast majority of cases, although a noted criminal lawyer says feelingly that only the poor go to prison. Perhaps there is some truth in this from the standpoint intended. There is more truth in it because the defectives who commit most of all crimes are also ne'er-do-wells from their lack of mental strength or balance.

Even morons do not undervalue the leniency of courts. Recently when two youths escaped hanging because they were under age, two girls and their male companions who killed a woman in the same city declared they shouldn't and wouldn't hang because they, too, were under age. They were right. All four of the defendants were acquitted and were released. More recently a well-known prize fighter and a preacher and his paramour, on trial for murder, were successful in saving themselves from the gallows, receiving prison terms instead. The prize fighter got off with a sentence of from one to ten years because it was adduced in court that his parents and a sister had been of unsound mind, with a record of commitment to a hospital for the insane. The preacher and his fair parishioner had disposed of a wife and husband, respectively, by the poison route. Testimony was to the effect that the minister engineered both deaths, but an alienist testified that he had the mind of a ten-year-old child, and this evidently had great weight with the jury. It is quite likely that the truth was told in both cases respecting the mental status of the defendants, but that would have constituted no valid reason for freeing them.

Far too many offenders make pleas of insanity or other forms of mental irresponsibility with the expectation of going free, and they are too often right in their calculations. The trial court hears the evidence and decides that since the defendant was shown not to be responsible he should be freed—a strange conclusion. Likely there is no suitable "hospital" for such a case, or the "brain storm" has passed, never to recur again. If these defectives knew that a plea of mental deviation would be taken for what it is actually worth and that proof of such mental condition meant life confinement in a hospital from which there would be no escape, there would be a letting up of the crime wave.

## MENTAL DEFECTIVENESS IN THE SCHOOLS

The effects of mental deficiency are not confined to the underworld. Our educational efforts are being undermined by it. The school system of America was established and has proceeded on the theory that all pupils could be advanced through the various schools provided, without regard to their inherent capacities. The old-time orator harangued student bodies with great fervor on the wonderful opportunities afforded by the schools in particular and the land of the free in general. The parents of any boy might swell with pride at the thought of their youngster becoming president of the United States and many and great were the rewards immediately ahead for all within the sound of the speaker's voice. Many a life disappointment has come from taking this theory too seriously.

### Inherent Capacities

The report of the results of the army tests indicates that more than 4 per cent of the white population is below 13 mentally and 89 per cent of the negroes, who ranked three years lower. At Camp Lee the experiment was tried of separating some of the negro recruits on the basis of skin color for the purpose of comparing intelligence ratings. This experiment demonstrated the effect of white blood. The lighter negroes invariably did better than the darker ones by from one to two mental years, and the percentage of darker negroes was greater among the illiterates than among the literates. At the conclusion of the chapter of the report on "Statistics on Education and its Relations to Intelligence Examinations" is the unqualified statement "Distinctly more than average intelligence would seem to be prerequisite to a college education and almost as strictly a prerequisite to graduating from or even entering high school." The C, or average group, mental age 13 to 15, contained 29.47 per cent of the white draft and 8.2 per cent of the colored. Only 23.3 per cent of the white draft and 2.8 per cent of the colored tested in the C+, B and A groups, above mental 15, and distinctly above the average. If to these are added the mental 14's (14 to 15 mentally), and this is the age of the average high school freshman, the percentage of whites with mentality above the grade school level will stand 36.3; and of colored, 5.6.

### School Attendance Laws

State school attendance laws and the proposed amendment to the constitution of the United States, giving Congress the power to enact a law prohibiting the labor of "children" under 18 years of age, clearly are framed without reference to the above facts, if the purpose of the law, as avowed is to keep all persons in school until they reach the age of 18 years. The proposed constitutional amendment is aimed particularly at the southern states, where large numbers of negro "children" under 18 years are employed in the cotton fields and in the mills. Seventy-nine per cent of the colored draft rated below 12 years mentally, sixth-grade intelligence, and their average mental age was only 10.1 years, or fourth-grade intelligence. At Camp Funston nearly a thousand negroes were examined by the Stanford-Binet

scale. They rated between five and nine years mentally, with considerably more than two-thirds showing a mental age of either six or seven. Imagine these men in high school! To try to hold either negro or white children in school beyond their inherited capacities would be like starting a draft horse in training to trot a mile in two minutes. You would train him to trot as fast as he could and after that all effort would be wasted. He would not make the mile in two minutes if trained until the age set in the proposed constitutional amendment. He simply is not that kind of a horse. The proposition is a violation of his ancestry.

Keeping children in school after they have reached their maximum accomplishment furnishes a good illustration of the effect of environment. Every living thing is affected by its environment and in turn affects it. The feebleminded and the simple-minded are greatly affected by their surroundings while those inheriting superior ability strongly affect, or even entirely make, their own environment. As has been observed, it is only the dead fish that always go with the current. Compelling the dullard to remain in school after he has passed the years of controllable childhood first makes him a truant, punishable by law by confinement in a correctional institution, and later a vagabond and criminal, when denied an opportunity to work and make an honest living. But this is only one side of the picture. Forcing large numbers of persons of inferior mentality into the high schools is seriously influencing not only the standards of scholarship but also the social standards of the student body. Courses of study in particular subjects must be diluted to bring them within the range of the lower mental levels, and electives in "easy stuff" must be provided to allow credits enough for graduation. This is a decided disadvantage to the brighter students, and it is a distinct loss to society not to have such students make the best of their high school years. Social standards are pulled down to the jazz of the borderlines, whether the latter walk to school or come in limousines. The morals of a whole student body suffer when older pupils, with no interest in school and with more knowledge of the world, are forced into the classes. In passing large numbers of mental 13's and 14's through high schools, many totally unfit to pursue collegiate work are appearing at the colleges and universities for admission. Money has to be provided by taxation from an already over-burdened tax-paying public or by raising big endowment funds to meet the additional expenses of increased attendance. This would all be very well if the students admitted were all of college grade, but some, as stated above, do not and never will have the capacity for work in higher educational fields. Others have graduated from the diluted courses of the preparatory schools and can become acceptable students only after further preparation, unless the colleges and universities in turn dilute their courses of study. Unfortunately this is being done, and in many institutions (originally) of higher learning, it is a social handicap with the main student body to do high grade work.

#### Classified Schools

If the real brains of the youth of the country are to be saved for the nation's development and advantage, more premium must be placed on high scholastic attainment and better opportunities provided for its exercise. In all large cities high schools are bigger than they should be for the best results. Since several separate buildings have to be maintained, and reducing the size would further increase the number, it would easily be possible in the larger cities to have several types of high schools suited to the mental levels of those attending. Some of these would have four years' course some two and possibly some only one year's. Some could be boys', other girls' schools. One at least could be a classical school maintaining undiluted courses in Latin, English, mathematics, the sciences, and other studies required for college entrance. Only such students as passed mental tests showing their capacity for higher learning would be admitted. In the girls' schools having one or two years' courses, no effort would need be made to teach purely academic subjects. The course would cover domestic science, the care of children, habits of industry and saving, cleanliness and social behavior. Since by far the largest percentage of high school girls will soon become the mothers of the country, many of them before they are out of their childhood (according to the limit set by the proposed federal amendment), such training given under the conditions indicated would be most valuable and much better done than under prevailing conditions. Likewise boys would be taught special subjects bearing on their future usefulness. Here the problem is harder, for real skill in trades is found to be proportionate to the intelligence of the tradesman. However, certain trades require less mentality than others, and assignment would have to be on the basis of the showing made in mental examinations. These problems are more or less local and can be best worked out in individual communities and states. There is no occasion for more Smith-Hughes, Shepard-Towne or other 50-50 acts allowing the people to tax themselves nationally from their left-hand pocket provided they extract a like amount locally from the right hand, and giving the United States government control of the education and training of their children and numerous other functions.

#### A Secretary of Education

The proposed addition to the president's cabinet of a department of education is of the same piece; \$100,500,000.00 is required to run the department the first year. Later on it may be expected to gather up a personnel as large as that of any other department and spend as much money. Some of the items of the bill as drawn are as follows: \$7,500,000.00 annually for the instruction of illiterates over 14 years of age, \$20,000,000.00 annually for the promotion of physical education and \$7,500,000.00 annually to teach immigrants to read and write the English language. Already we have the United States Health Service connected with the treasury department at Washington, and bureaus on top of bureaus sending emissaries all over the United States to tell the ladies in far-away districts whether it is better to put their children in dresses or rompers, and disseminating other informa-



tion of like nature. The expense accounts of the trips of these agents from Washington to San Francisco and elsewhere would make interesting reading matter for the taxpayers. Those who have seen government bureaus and agencies trying to function in Washington for a country of more than a hundred million population cannot but feel that, with one person in every 12 gainfully employed working for some form of government and with a total yearly expenditure of \$10,000,000,000.00 in taxes (more than the value of all farm crops raised annually in this country), to cover the cost of all government in the United States, we have gone far enough in the direction of employing ourselves to look after ourselves.

#### The Value of Employment

While state compulsory school attendance laws are justified for children under 14 years of age, their extension to apply to those up to 16 and 18 is of doubtful value, especially when it is considered that the lower mental levels reach their maximum school accomplishment by the age of 14, and works a real hardship both on the well-to-do and on the poor. Those of us who have sons but have no work for them are obliged to watch them grow up in idleness, because employers do not wish to be constantly inspected and watched by enforcement agents, nor do they have the time or inclination to study out all the details of long drawn-out statutes relating to children. Their easiest solution is to require all workers in school vacation time, as well as during the remainder of the year, to be above the age limit set by the statute. The poor, who would be materially aided by having 14 to 18-year-old children employed, are deprived of this help and the community makes good the deficit by community chests and other charitable means. Surely it is not injurious for a boy to work reasonable hours. On the contrary, there is no stronger factor in his proper development than regular employment. To increase employment is to decrease delinquency, and to withhold employment is not only to encourage delinquency but to enlarge the demands on charity.

#### RELATION OF MENTAL DEFECTIVENESS TO CHARITY

Every year the numerous charitable organizations find it necessary to increase their budgets. The cry is always for more, and already it is necessary to form organizations that can exert influence in order to raise the amounts required. It is no longer charitable giving, but assessments through drives and quotas. Originally all charities were intended to afford temporary relief to worthy members of society who, through misfortune and circumstances beyond their control, were in need of help. Now the largest percentage of money raised for charitable purposes goes to persons and families who are born incompetents and who have to be directly aided or managed year in and year out. It is safe to say that the 10 per cent of the population under 10 years mentally claims 90 per cent of all money and effort expended in this way. Many families appear on the records of six or eight or more organizations. A mentally defective father has difficulty

in getting and keeping employment. A mentally defective mother cannot properly care for her home or family and is wasteful and irresponsible. Large families are the rule with mental defectives. Given, then, a father of poor earning capacity and interrupted employment or one who spends a large part of his time in jail, a mother wasteful and unable to look after her household, or both, throw in a number of children, and here will be found want, misery and disease, as is so well illustrated by a recent news dispatch:

#### MOTHER OF 16 AT 35, HAS MIND OF CHILD

Father Jailed, Family Starving—Wife's Mentality  
Pronounced That of 8 Year Old

Carbondale, Ill., Jan. 19.—Wed to a man three times her age when 14 years old, now at the age of 35, Mrs. Bertha Ledbetter, wife of Rufus Ledbetter of Hallidayboro, near here, is the mother of 16 children, including one set of triplets and three sets of twins. (And the poor woman has 10 or 15 years to go.)

Mrs. Ledbetter was examined yesterday by a commission of physicians who pronounced her feeble-minded with a mentality of an 8-year-old child.

A few days ago the family was found lacking clothing and food. Charity organizations furnished the family aid. Ledbetter, the father, has been in court charged with violation of the prohibition law.

Under these conditions, a kind and sympathetic public is bound to relieve actual suffering, especially of helpless children. But a contributor to these constant calls for funds has a right to know what part of his contribution is going to affect the problem for the better, and what part makes it possible for the mentally incompetent to carry on and aggravate the situation by bringing forth more of the same strain. It used to be said that the Iowa farmers raised more corn to feed more hogs to buy more land to raise more corn, and so on ad infinitum. The relief of the mental defective in society constitutes a similar circle but there the parallel ceases, for this circle is a most vicious one.

Social work is sometimes criticized because so much of the money spent goes into overhead. The answer of social workers is that it should all be overhead. This view is sound provided the total is a diminishing factor, for it ought to be the aim of all relief to make further aid unnecessary. If helping incompetents to walk results only in a lengthening line on charity crutches, is it not time to get at the root of the trouble? If one-half the money raised for charitable purposes were applied to the prevention of mental defectiveness, real progress would begin. Ernest P. Bicknell, when secretary of a board of state charities nearly 30 years ago, expressed the matter thus: "Feeble-mindedness not only tends to perpetuate itself through heredity, but it fills the ranks of vice, contributes heavily to crime

and swells mightily the hosts of pauperism. Our best efforts will be necessary if we check this rising tide of evil. The three children (several other members of the family have been counted since) of feeble-mindedness—Idiocy, Pauperism and Illegitimacy—are monstrosities from which we must protect ourselves." We have not protected ourselves, and the "rising tide" continueth upward.

#### MENTAL DEFECTIVES UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS

People are beginning to ask where all the defectives are coming from, and why the great increases in expenditures for charitable purposes. Mental defectives are simple-minded or disturbed in their mental processes, and are likely to be unsocial or even anti-social in their behavior. The complexity of modern civilization is too much for them. Give a moron or dementia praecox case a 50 horsepower engine, to which he may add white mule and a six shooter, and the damage he may do will range from destruction of property to wholesale manslaughter, or premeditated murder, as he takes the highway at 60 miles an hour. At least two persons in every hundred are totally unfit to drive a motor vehicle, and ten times that number will always be unsafe drivers because of their mental handicap, yet the driving of these death engines is all but universal. Figures just published for Minnesota show a death rate of 14.7 a hundred thousand of population in automobile accidents, or about one in a hundred deaths. Statistics being completed by the bureau of the census for last year reveal a toll of 22,600 lives, 678,000 personal injuries, and an economic loss of \$600,000,000.00 in the nation at large. Probably three-fourths of motor accidents could be charged to the 17 or 18 per cent of drivers testing below 11 years mentally.

School attendance officers, county and school nurses, and active welfare agencies, have brought thousands of cases of mental defect to light. Modern living conditions in cities turn up others. Flat dwellers may be unwilling to have the mentally unfit as neighbors across the corridor. High rents and living conditions are to be reckoned with. Recently two morons abandoned their baby because they couldn't support it and their car! Vastly extended health work and disease prevention reduce the effect of contagious and other diseases, provide safer supplies of milk and foods generally, and cut down infant mortality, which used to be very great among the lower mental levels. Public-spirited citizens and societies endow homes for children, for cripples, for adults, and for the aged, where the incompetent and the unfortunate are received on equal terms. Now as a special and final inducement to be wasteful of one's income, sunset homes are proposed for old age, but what is being done to make such provision unnecessary by guarding the quality of succeeding generations? This nation is still so young that no one can be sure it will perpetuate itself. Its total history of only 150 years is but a day in the general scheme of things.

Who indeed can be sure that our civilization is the greatest the world has known? A half dozen civilizations equal to ours in most respects, and perhaps superior in some, have passed within the brief span of man's knowledge of human history. It is thinkable, in view of the millions of

years the earth probably has been habitable, that civilizations enjoying the use of everything now known to science and vastly more have flourished and disappeared without a trace. This all but happened to the matchless Greek and Roman civilizations, and would have resulted during the middle ages had the forces of darkness had their way. Priceless treasures of history and literature, of art and architecture were destroyed, but enough was saved to give the modern world a picture of the earlier accomplishments of the race. It may seem inconceivable that man's present knowledge could be wiped out and that the race would again have to feel its way upward by slow degrees, but this could happen through changes in the earth's surface or in reversion to barbarism from multiplication of the unfit and loss of the higher levels of intelligence.

#### THE PRESERVATION OF SOCIETY

We have laid a heavy hand on practices, influences and conditions that undermine the public health or morals. Nobody pleads the sacred rights of the individual when contagious diseases spread, and we have shifted from toleration to positive contempt and avoidance of individuals who cough and spray their neighbors or fellow passengers with disease germs. Lepers have been segregated for life. Valuable property housing unlawful practices MAY be padlocked, causing the owners serious loss. Property may be condemned, either because it is a menace to the public or because it is required for the use of the public, by right of eminent domain, without regard to the feelings of the owner. Why, then, should we be so tender about the prerogatives of those who are mentally unfit to manage themselves, who are an ever increasing burden on the public, who cause both loss of life and loss of property, and who are the principal cause of all human misery and suffering?

##### Immigration

Immigration laws have been framed with the idea of not admitting mental defectives, but no adequate means of examining immigrants has been provided. The result is that thousands of foreign-born defectives crowd our public institutions and mingle with the population at large. The gates will have to be better guarded in the future, if this condition is not to continue.

##### Marriage

Strictly enforced marriage laws requiring certification of candidates by designated, qualified representatives of the public would be helpful; as the chief source of feeble-mindedness, epilepsy, insanity, poverty, and crime, is the offspring of low-grade parents, who never should have been allowed to marry or reproduce their kind. Ten per cent of the white mothers of the country are under 10 years of age mentally, 18 per cent under 11, and 30 per cent under 12, if the results of the army tests are a guide. The corresponding percentages for negro women are 48, 64 and 80. These women, either because they do not share in the knowledge possessed by women of

higher intellectual levels, or because of indifference or constitutional disinclination to act, or from choice, are far more prolific than any other class. Social workers in extending relief to these families not infrequently find one or two-room shacks or quarters with 8, 10 and 12 children to the family, and from 4 to 6 children are very common. American men of science average only a fraction over 2 children to the family and college women with more than 1 or 2 children are the exception. If we are going to allow these feeble-minded women to remain at large with reproductive powers intact, it would be logical at least not to interfere with their instruction in birth control, as practiced by the rest of society. The 30 per cent of mothers under 12 bring into the world almost, if not altogether, as many children as the higher 70 per cent, and the lower levels of mentality would have exceeded the upper long ago if the mortality among their babies had not been so high. With the help of benevolent agencies this handicap will gradually be overcome in so far as disease and lack of care and attention have increased the death rate. Indeed, mental defectiveness with its attendant ills is increasing at an enormous rate. The Royal Commission of England, after a four years' study, reported that feeble-mindedness was increasing at twice the rate of the general population. We know that insanity in this country has increased four times as fast over a period of 40 years.

There are now in the Minnesota School for Feeble-Minded five brothers. There is another brother under commitment who has not been admitted. They are the children of a feeble-minded couple between whom a marriage was arranged for exhibition purposes at a county fair, as a joke—and a ghastly joke it has turned out to be. With the admission of the sixth child the annual expense to the public will be approximately \$1,500.00. As the children are very young and are healthy, their average expectancy, with the care they will receive in an institution, is not less than 40 years. Sixty thousand dollars represents a pretty high priced exhibition.

There are numerous families represented in the institution by from two to six members, counting only brothers, sisters and parents. One hundred thirty-two families contribute a total of 346 inmates on this basis. If cousins, aunts and other relatives are counted, the number to the family runs much higher. The central filing system in the office of the State Board of Control shows a family with nine immediate members scattered among the School for Feeble-Minded, the State Public School, the State Prison, and the State Training School. Another is shown with the mother at one of the hospitals for the insane and three sons in penal and correctional institutions.

#### Sterilization

The sterilization of the mentally unfit is a just and humane method of effectually shutting off strains of mental defectives and affording society the protection that it must have, if it is to be preserved on the present or a higher level. Vasectomy and salpingectomy, the former a simple operation and the latter a relatively simple one, are the remedies indicated, although Dr. M. W. Barr, chief physician, Pennsylvania Training School for

Feeble-Minded Children, who advocated and performed sterilization operations more than 30 years ago, recommends castration and ovariectomy. The latter operations leave the patients without sex desire and render them perfectly safe and harmless. There can be no question that these should be resorted to in extreme cases of degeneracy, including rapists. If a changed nature does come about in a degenerate, it can only be for his good and is therefore an advantage to the subject as well as to the people at large. As mental inferiority is recognizable in the feeble-minded, by far the largest and most dangerous group of mental defectives, at a very early age, proper measures should be taken then, before contacts are formed or damage done, and no mental defective should ever be released from any public institution with the power of procreation. Persons who are themselves normal but who are capable of transmitting mental defect because of tainted heredity should not be denied the right of voluntary sterilization.

#### Life Commitment

Commitment of youthful offenders who are found to be defective, and here it is important to find evidences of latent insanity or epilepsy, should be for life and not until the age of 21. Most murders, robberies, holdups and other desperate crimes are committed by persons who were previously inmates of correctional or penal institutions and who should never have been released. The only way to stop recidivism is to hold these defectives in the first place. Every superintendent of a correctional institution has seen inmate after inmate leave his doors who he was certain would commit murder or other serious crimes. There is no excuse for the habitual criminal.

#### Segregation

Permanent segregation of mental defectives in suitable institutions while entailing an initial burden would be far cheaper and better than to allow them to be at large to reproduce. In fact, segregation would cost much less than the actual outlay expended, publicly and privately, on these individuals at present if the upkeep amounted to a per capita cost equivalent to that of other classes of public charges. This would not need to be the case. The higher-grade defectives could be permanently segregated in a way that would make them mostly or entirely self-supporting. This plan would afford the public the protection desired if the relatives and friends of the patients did not succeed in getting them released for longer or shorter periods. This is a big proviso, for experience has shown that the public, with its limited ability to recognize mental defect, is slow to commit persons to institutions for life and not satisfied to leave them there after they are committed. Segregation would be indicated for those who could not safely remain in society after sterilization.

#### Parole

The failure of people to grasp the importance of absolute segregation has led up to the proposal of another plan of handling mental defectives, that of commitment and "parole." The subject is allowed his liberty, usually

after a few years' training in an institution, but is under the watchful eye of an agent of the state. The plan would be ideal if it would work, but it won't with all classes, or with many classes, especially with females. A feeble-minded woman would have to be under constant supervision for a period of 30 years or more, covering her child-bearing age. Such women become the easy victims of the vicious at 40 years of age, as readily as at 16. There are many women in the Minnesota School for Feeble-Minded, who have given birth to their first babies at 30 to 40 years of age, and there is one, at least, who became the mother of several, beginning in the late thirties. Feeble-minded girls are not inclined to be sexually immoral except in the case of an occasional over-sexed or perverted individual, yet they contribute the large percentage of illegitimacy cases, of which there are about 1,500 reported officially each year in Minnesota, and the crimes incident thereto, as infant abandonment and murder. The feeble-minded girl does want the attention of men and is easily induced to comply with their desires. No previous acquaintance or familiarity is required. Any unprincipled man, finding her alone in the house for only a few minutes, may quickly take advantage of her mental helplessness. She wishes to be agreeable, or, as one girl said in explanation of her misfortunes, her "mind was not strong enough one way or the other." That states the situation perfectly. Prostitution comes in the same way. The moron is first a victim and later finds prostitution one of the few pursuits in which a mental 10 can compete and make a living. Officials who tell so proudly how many of their illegitimacy cases they settle out of court by the marriage of the persons involved cannot be sure they have done society a service, or that happiness will flow ever after. The mental status of the brides should first be established.

The parole idea can give a good account of itself for a check-up of a few years, but extend the period to 30 years and the proposition is unthinkable. After 10 years it is safe to predict, and the prediction is not based on fancy, that one-third will have disappeared from sight; another third will have been returned or incarcerated elsewhere after a season of illegitimacy or of vice and crime; and the remainder will be married and running true to form. Of course any kind of supervision is better than no supervision at all.

If people have the native intelligence and stability to support themselves and not be a menace to society, they should never be committed to an institution for the feeble-minded in the first place. This step puts a brand on them that can never be effaced and makes necessary a readjustment when they are released and returned to society. They have also had to experience more or less contact with imbeciles and idiots. The only good derived is a certain amount of training and discipline which could be provided just as well, or better, in their local communities at less expense to the public and with the further advantage of permitting uninterrupted community life.

It is these women ranging in mental age from 8 to 12 years, women in stature and reproductive power, children in mind, who are the mothers of most of the abandoned and neglected children, imbeciles, idiots, insane,

epileptics, paupers, criminals, and misfits and incompetents generally. Their physical attractiveness when young and their demure manners may strongly appeal even to men of unusual intelligence at their most egotistical stage, and win them homes on Summit, Euclid, or Fifth Avenues, or on Riverside or Lake Shore Drives. The introduction of such elements of heredity into highly intellectual strains accounts for curious mental twists of genius, but they are not at all marks of that quality and are a hindrance to its development.

No amount of institutional training, supervision on "parole," or uplifting, will make a moron anything else than a mental defective, capable of transmitting mental defect not only to her immediate offspring but to succeeding generations in widening circles. At least four generations are required to remove the danger of a throwback. A training and a veneer of manners, by which the public is further deceived, may be obtained, but the trainee is a moron still.

#### Mental Tests in Industry

It would help greatly in finding and weeding out incompetents if all business concerns were so organized as to select their employes with some regard to their mental capacities. One taxicab company has found that by eliminating the unfit through mental examination its accidents, accompanied by injuries, loss of life, and claims for damages, have been greatly reduced. Railroads and transportation companies in general would find that careful selection of their employes would not only make for safety but would reduce friction and trouble all along the line. Mistakes in promotion would be less frequent and men of greater capacities would be found to take positions of trust and responsibility.

#### Training of Teachers

Since it is of the highest importance to identify mental defectives in their earliest years, the public school is the natural place to make the identification if it has not been made sooner. It would be possible to train all public school teachers, especially for the elementary schools, to recognize the higher grade feeble-minded, who so often escape detection and who are usually considered normal children by their parents and other relatives. Teachers are blamed for their low marks or failures. These pupils sometimes make a fair showing in the first years of their school life, while the memory is largely drawn on, but fall farther and farther behind as they attempt to advance through the course. A feeble-minded child can not do acceptable work above the sixth grade and is not a proper subject for trade school education, as so many seem to think.

#### Survival of the Fit

It is in the hands of the intelligent people of this country, for they are as yet in the majority, to say whether they will inaugurate a plan for the survival of the mentally fit or continue the present fatuous policy of the survival of the unfittest.