

dren, many of whose parents are American born."

"This neighborhood of first, second and third generation Americans is in strong contrast to the more familiar eastside, where a foreign born population swarms the streets and a strange language meets the ear from every hand. On the eastside, teeming dirt and teeming life struggle for the uppermost. On Fifty-third Street, neither the dirt nor the people are so overpowering; life is more sluggish and poverty more gaping. The contrast is as between watching one race of human beings clamoring up a hill that is hard and rocky and steep, yet ever making progress as against another slipping back into a quicksand, struggling without hope and ever losing ground. Ambition is replaced by indifference, expectation by despair. In an immigrant neighborhood one hears constantly of the future of children, their education, their already begun success; but here what glory there is exists as a left-over recollection of the past generation, of better conditions during the childhood of the parents, of wealth and power, growing brighter in the memory as this goes on. One hears too the constant echo of that sentiment of defeat that 'Times are not what they were' and that 'things grow worse every day.'"

I feel quite certain that many old physicians from different parts of America can recall in their experience similar groups out of which have come one or several families betraying more or less markedly the stigmata of degeneracy. We have no time to analyse such, but several characteristics seem to stand out most markedly in them and of these I shall put first *mimetism*. Mimesis we define as imitating or aping the gestures or voice of another, or of his manners or actions; while anyone who has studied the phenomena of hypnotic suggestion will see in its subjects various characteristics,

which remind us of perhaps what is most marked in feeble-mindedness, namely, the ease with which a person is influenced through suggestion or mimetism. The imbecile echoes immediately your suggestion that black is white or that two and three make four, and when we come to the higher type of moron we recognize the same dominating influence of some proximate suggestion, influence or example. Translated into exact terms it means that there is absent, or more or less permanently quiescent, the determining influence of conscious mind or "the will"—viz., the cultivated mind which instantly discriminates, determines or wills, and keeps in the background the activation of the emotional or automatic—that is the subconscious mind. We say feeble-mindedness is in effect marked by lack of comprehension, judgment, discrimination—in a word of ratiocination. As expressed by Nordau: "To this is added the unfailing weakness of will of the degenerate person, which makes it impossible for him to control his obsessions, to resist his impulses, to control his fundamental moods, to keep his higher centres to the attentive pursuit of objective phenomena."

Without analyzing further the psychological phenomena of feeble-mindedness we have after three generations under modern conditions an opportunity of judging somewhat of the influences of social conditions upon mental phenomena. The grandmothers of our race in America had a dozen children, labored hard, and often lived till ninety years. In the year 1790 but 131,472 persons in the United States lived in towns, or less than 4 per cent in 3,929,214 population. Thus we see that in a century the urban population increased over a 1,000 per cent, or over ten times from 4 per cent to 46 per cent of the total population of the United States, in cities of 2,500 or over.

As a result of this urbanity alone Dr.