

Defective Children

It is estimated that one-third of the children in the United States schools are defective or abnormal in the respect that they lag far behind their schoolmates or forge far in advance of them. What the percentage of "retarded" children in Canada is we have no official means of knowing, but can calculate from the American figures, and perhaps 25 per cent. would not be too high an estimate. The reason for making this discrimination in favor of Canada is supplied by the results of investigations in the United States, which show that the average fluctuates widely in different parts of the country. In his book entitled "Laggards in Our Schools," Leonard P. Ayres gives the results of tests made in thirty-three cities where children were scientifically tested. He presents the following table:

City.	Per Cent. Retarded.
1—Medford, Mass	7.5
2—Waltham, Mass	10.6
3—Meriden, Conn	13.0
4—Quincy, Mass	17.9
5—Aurora, Ill	18.3
6—Boston, Mass	18.5
7—Maiden, Mass	18.5
8—Fort Wayne, Ind	23.3
9—Springfield, Mass	13.3
10—Decatur, Ill	29.9
11—Newark, Ohio	29.9
12—New York City	30.0
13—Portland, Ore.	30.7
14—Reading, Pa	31.6
15—Trenton, N. J.	32.0
16—Utica, N. Y.	32.6
17—Woonsocket, R. I.	35.4
18—Troy, N. Y.	35.6
19—Philadelphia, Pa.	36.8
20—Wilmington, Del. (white)	37.2
21—Columbus, Ohio	37.2
22—Los Angeles, Cal.	38.3
23—York, Pa.	38.3
24—Kingston, N. Y.	38.4
25—Baltimore, Md.	46.3
26—Camden, N. J.	47.3
27—St. Louis, Mo.	48.5
29—Memphis, Tenn.	51.3
30—Cincinnati, Ohio	58.7
31—Erie, Pa.	60.7
32—Wilmington, Del. (negro)	62.8
33—Memphis, Tenn. (negro)	75.8
Average	33.7

Effect on the Future

Canada has no schools that would make such a poor showing as those in the "black belt," but we have schools attended largely by the children of parents born in Central and Southern Europe that would fall far behind the standard set in New England. On the

whole, then, an estimate of 25 per cent. would seem to be accurately based. Whatever the percentage is, it is large enough to be alarming, for it means that the retarded children, or a great percentage of them leave school without completing their common school education. That is to say, in the United States, one-third of the men who will be the citizens in the next generation, electing the Presidents the Governors and the Congressmen and upon whom the whole democracy rests will be of inferior intelligence and unfit for the proper discharge of their duties as citizens. Retardation is defined by specialists as low grade distribution of pupils, and they have given for it a multitude of causes. A late start to school irregular attendance, poor teaching, complex and advanced curricula, innutritious diet, bad home ideals, defective eyesight, dull hearing, pharyngeal obstructions, natural stupidity and mental deficiency are among the chief causes.

Laboratory Tests for Children

Prof. Trettien, of the University of Kansas an expert on the subject of retarded children, has established a laboratory in which he will carry on the work of testing them. He is of opinion that the present system of education is wrong, and that it will be revolutionized in the near future. Prof. Trettien believes children ought to be classified in schools according to their physical, moral and mental tendencies. All cities ought to employ as superintendents specialists in child study, and these specialists will thrust aside he predicts, "the mechanically symmetrical courses of study through which all pupils, backward and brilliant alike are now herded," and inaugurate instead a system of study graduated according to the physical aptitude of each individual pupil. An expert ought not to know merely that a pupil is backward, but he should know why he is backward, and be prepared to cope with the pupil's defects.

Responsibility on Children

One admirable remark is made by Mr. Trettien: "When a pupil says to a teacher, 'I don't like that study,' the problem is presented to the new superintendent specialist of finding out scientifically why he does not like the study, and of overcoming the difficulty by changing the study or influencing the child's mind." The good teacher, whether he is a specialist or not, will take the ground that if a child does not like a certain study, or does not make satisfactory study, the blame is with the teacher, not with the child. The habit of blaming himself when things go wrong, instead of blaming someone else, is an admirable one for all to cultivate, and in school teachers it has an important effect on the generation of citizens he is helping to train.—Mail-Enterprise.

AFTER DISCONTENT IS ENDED

There is an interesting article in the new number of the Edinburgh Review on the prospects of what is generally called "The Socialist Tendency."

"It is an error to assume that Collectivism will grow in strength until the aspirations of its advocates are completely satisfied.

"Collectivism—we call it so, for want of a better name—will pass away and make room for something else more urgent as soon as the most glaring inequalities have been done away with.

"The relief is likely to be furthered in two ways:

"1. The improvement in the position of the poor will quickly take the sting out of the demand for change.

"2. The diminished ostentation of the rich, either from actual impoverishment or much more from a dislike of ostentation itself, growing parallel with the movement against inequality, will deprive public feeling of the material for a striking comparison between rich and poor.

"Socialism will be supplanted in public interest by some younger and more vigorous rival, and it is interesting to speculate what that rival will be.

"We prefer to believe that the new movement will take the form of a national, or, perhaps, a European, campaign against disease. There are various straws to show the direction of the wind. The successful extermination of hydrophobia has been a hint to the public of what can be done. Almost every year public attention is more closely directed to such subjects. In 1911 the chief measure discussed in Parliament contained a definite attempt towards the limitation of tuberculosis. Moreover, medical knowledge is ripening rapidly in the prevention of disease.

"It is already several years since it began to be publicly proclaimed that all zymotic diseases could be stamped out by administrative action within half a century; and that nearly all diseases are zymotic. When once that fact has been learnt and appreciated by the people, a term will be placed to the collectivist era. The resources of civilization will be directed against the bacteria and other parasites which are by far the most powerful and vindictive enemies of man. Their satanic activity will be rendered harmless; their malignant cruelty, with the inconceivable misery it entails, will receive a check.

"It is incredible that this ambition for an anti-bacterial war should not be shared by all who have mastered the facts, and should not be strong enough to drive out every other question from the political mind."

It's Hard to Tell—Dolly—"She married a very old man, didn't she? I understood he had one foot in the grave."

Polly—"That's what she thought too; but he still continues to buy his shoes by the pair"—Puck.

Antiseptic Surgery

Surgery is divided into two epochs, before Lister and after Lister; and in this simple statement is found all the praise that a man can desire. It is doubtful if any great genius in any field of human endeavor more radically changed the whole course of any art or science or industry than Lister did. Before Lister men died like flies of wounds that after Lister, would result fatally in not 2 per cent. of cases. For a soldier to be wounded and taken to a hospital was equivalent in a great majority of cases to his death, unless the wound was of such a trifling nature that it could be immediately dressed and sealed up until it healed. But wounds that required frequent dressing were successfully treated about as often as people recover who drink carbolic acid. In cases of amputations the great majority of operations resulted fatally. Gangrene was a word as frequently on the lips of doctors fifty years ago as tuberculosis is now. When gangrene set in hope was abandoned. Lister abolished gangrene. In one sense he may be said to have been the father of hospitals, since hospitals were mere charnel houses before the antiseptic treatment had been discovered.

Pasteur's Discovery

It may have been in the hospitals themselves that he got his first clue to the tremendous discovery he afterwards made. It was a notorious fact that the percentage of recoveries from operations in new hospitals was much greater than in the old hospitals. Many a surgeon in a new building must have flattered himself that the remarkable recoveries were due to his prodigious skill, when, as a matter of fact, they were due to the comparative absence of deadly germs in new hospitals. Medical science in that day had no doubt many theories to account for this fact, but it did not take into account the presence of germs since the germ theory had not then been invented. It was Pasteur who discovered the germ theory, but it was a mere theory when Lister adopted it as a working hypothesis in its application in his efforts to reduce the mortality from hospital gangrene, erysipelas, tetanus and pyaemia.

The Great Experiments

He reasoned that if putrefaction was caused by micro-organisms in the air, and not from the oxygen itself it should be possible to keep the microbes from wounds, while allowing the oxygen itself to reach them. He adopted carbolic acid as his germicide, and it was while he was regius professor of surgery in Glasgow University that his revolutionizing experiments were carried on. His method was one that was simplicity itself. Wounds were bathed with a very weak solution of carbolic and afterwards packed with

gauze saturated with the same preparation. He also devised a spray of carbolic to play constantly on exposed wounds, and later on developed the sterilization of all instruments. The results were successful beyond his wildest expectations. Gangrene disappeared; surgical operations became simply surgical operations, not the starting point for a battle with one of half a dozen diseases that followed when the knife had led the way.

Early Scepticism

Looking back over his work, it is easy to make the mistake of supposing that Lister's triumph was as immediate as was that of Marconi, for example. It was some years, however, before the medical profession would listen to either Pasteur or Lister. Doctors were as sceptical as they would be today if one of their number, even so distinguished a medical man as Joseph Lister was before he made his great discovery, were to declare that he had found a certain cure for cancer by means of a massage treatment. Pasteur was as great a storm centre in his day as Koch has been in ours, and since it was admitted that if there was nothing in Pasteur's theory there could be nothing in Lister's application of it, the Scottish surgeon was asked to wait for his credit until it had been decided if there were any coming to Pasteur. Slowly the antiseptic treatment made headway largely through the younger men in the profession who tried it and got results that the older sceptics denied and doubted until they could deny and doubt no longer.

A Benefactor to Humanity

Lister was hailed as one of the greatest benefactors to the human race by Germany and France before he was fully recognized at home, and while he lived foreign scientific and medical societies never tired of heaping honors upon him. At home recognition was tardier, but when it came it was royal in both senses of the word. He was made surgeon extraordinary to the Queen, and later on was created a baronet. King Edward raised him to the peerage. Lord Lister, besides being one of the greatest of surgeons and scientists was an embodiment of all that is best in his profession. His great discoveries were given freely to the world. The idea of making any personal profit from his investigations never occurred to him. His was a career dedicated nobly to the service of humanity.—Mail and Empire.

Sure Proof—"Pardon me, professor, but last night your daughter accepted my proposal of marriage. I have called this morning to ask you if there is any insanity in your family?"

"There must be."—Judge.

CRIMINAL LIBEL

Under the Criminal Code the publication of a libel is a crime and is punishable by fine and imprisonment. The character and varieties of the offence and its prosecution by indictment and criminal information—in fact the law generally concerning it, is admirably treated in a work recently published by the Carswell Company, of Toronto. The author, Mr. John King, K.C., has made the subject his own, so far at least as the law of Canada is concerned. His former treatise on libel as an actionable wrong, and the present one on "The Law of Criminal Libel," have been written from the Canadian standpoint. The legislation in this country, both of the provinces and the Dominion, has made this necessary for a proper understanding of the subject. There is a law of libel peculiar to Canada which is not to be found in the English text books. This is the law which is contained in these treatises, and which gives them an interest and value to practitioners and to students of our legal system.

The civil law of libel is not uniform; it varies in the provinces, because each province has independent jurisdiction in making the law. The criminal law is the same throughout Canada; the Federal Parliament is its author. There has been, however, an endeavor by Parliament to assimilate the civil and criminal law of libel in regard to certain matters. This appears in the comments of the author and the cases cited by him on the sections of the Code. The law of fair comment and discussion of matters of public interest, for instance, is the same in both branches of the subject. It confers a conditional privilege or protection on the publication of defamatory matter. The same sort of protection, in both the civil and criminal law, is given in regard to other publications. "Any differences," says the author, "between the principles of defamatory libel as a tort and as a crime, are referable to the distinction between the rights of the individual and the interests of the community, and not infrequently these are identical. In an action by a public officer for a libel contained in a newspaper, Armour, C. J., defined for the jury two of the principal defences almost in the very words of the Code. The boundary line between the two systems of jurisdiction would appear at times to be indistinguishable, if not actually one and the same. In defamatory libel the same species of privilege is sometimes a defence either in a civil action or a criminal prosecution."

The offence of libel being triable only in our superior courts, the author necessarily deals with the procedure for its prosecution by indictment and information. As to this it is said, "the chapters relating to procedure will be

Black Rod Master of Ceremony

One of the most misunderstood officers in Ottawa is the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod. This is partly because of his title which lends itself easily to flippant treatment, and partly because his duties are of necessity largely performed when an uninformed populace cannot interrupt and interfere.

Captain Chambers, who presently holds the position, is a scholar of note, and an antiquarian of diligence. The want of general understanding concerning his functions is, consequently a matter of general regret rather than special concern with him. He can make his three bows in the Commons twice a year with courtly grace of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and the bland and unconscious dignity of Judge Doherty, and then return to the seclusion of his offices on the fourth floor of the Senate and forget all about it in the press of things of real importance.

As a matter of right and custom his offices should be in the tower, for the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod is in fact the High Sheriff of Parliament. In case any member of either House should be contumacious in his contempt of the honorable body of which he is a member, and obdurate and recalcitrant after the fashion of the Parliamentary heroes of the Middle Ages, Captain Chambers would have to receive him from the hands of the Sergeant-at-Arms, and hold him in close custody. It is an open question whether he would not be in duty bound to also use the rack, the Maiden, the thumb-screw, and the torture of the cold draw to try to win him to a more reasonable frame of mind.

This is a weighty responsibility, and one which, in consideration of the flighty and im-

possible character of the Senate and the opinionated, obstinate membership of the Commons, may call for action at almost any moment. The tower room is unfortunately very draughty and inconvenient of access, and it would quite possibly be necessary for the Gentleman Usher to deal with his prisoners in the Russell House or some other near-by hostelry. In the interest of justice this matter should be looked into.

Historically and in theory Captain Chambers is an officer of the Crown quite as much as of the Senate, his office dating back to the days of King John, that merry monarch having insisted upon doing his legislative negotiating with a gentleman whom he could trust rather than with any of the noblemen of his acquaintance. It does not follow that the present Usher is strongly prejudiced against the nobility and in favor of the gentry, for such is not the case. He is as uniformly courteous to visiting marquises, earls and barons as though the original of his office had not been what it is.

Among other things the Usher of the Black Rod is the custodian of the traditions of the Senate. He schools the young members in what they should do—or rather what they should not do—and how they should not do it. This requires much tact, especially with a recruit who has entered the Upper Chamber with a reputation for energy. His bow to the Speaker is a master piece of self-respecting dignity, and he bows whenever he rises, whenever he takes his seat again, and whenever he moves more than three steps in any direction. Grasping the historic Black Rod as a Field Marshal grasps his baton, he heads the procession in which the Speaker enters the

locked and guarded Chamber. The Sergeant-at-Arms carrying his gilded and impressive bauble, takes second place, and the half dozen drowsy Senators who happen to be in their seats are merely scenery.

He handles all matters of precedence, allocates the guests at all public functions, and reconciles the jealousies and rivalries of feminine Ottawa as well as any mere man can do. His other duties call for tact; this demands genius. Without delving into the more recondite functions he is called upon to perform, the partial enumeration shows what an essential cog in the machinery of government the Usher of the Black Rod really is.

The uniform is worthy of the office. A broad-cloth coat, knickerbockers, silk stockings, and pumps with buckles, are its foundation. Superimposed upon the back of the neck is a long and elaborate rosette of black silk twice as large as that worn by the Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. A tiny silver sword and a black cocked hat with a steel chain on the side completes the picture, which is in every respect neat without being gaudy.

And then there is the famous Black Rod itself, with what was once the Great Seal of Canada at one end, and a ramping roaring lion of silver gilt at the other. As a matter of fact it is not a rod at all, in the commonly accepted meaning of the word, but rather a glorified cross between a truncheon and a heavy walking stick. How long the present implement has been in use deponent sayeth not, but it is battered and scarred with many years of peaceful service. Long may it continue to diplomatically direct the high ceremonies at Ottawa.—J. S. L., in Montreal Star.

ARMIES IN AIR MACHINES

Hudson Maxim spoke at the Hudson Theatre in New York under the auspices of the League for Political Education on aviation in peace and war. He said that the light, swift aeroplane carrying two men will play a great part in scouting, and strong, stanch machines carrying six men with arms and explosives will be wonderfully effective as raiders.

"An army of a hundred thousand men could readily be transported several hundred miles in a day by means of 20,000 aeroplanes," he said. "Easily could such a fleet fly from the Continent to London." Such transportation would not cost anything like as many lives as overseas transportation, Mr. Maxim thought.

"Did you hear Congressman Wombat's speech?"

"I did that."

"What did he say about those charges of grafting which have been brought against him?"

"He didn't touch on that subject. But he said the Constitution must and shall be preserved."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

THE RHYTHM OF EXISTENCE

Some very interesting things on rhythm and music in life were said by Dr. Arthur Somervell to the Conference on Musical Education.

Dr. Somervell said that "about the time of Elizabeth we were the most musical nation in Europe, and from that proud position we had descended with a rush, owing to the Puritan Revolution, to a state of musical imbecility. That Revolution, which did so much for the moral life of the nation, succeeded in completely suppressing all forms of self expression through art, with the sole exception of literature.

"Our legislators wept bitter tears over the slum dwellings of the poor, and yet allowed, within a stone's throw of Parliament, upon one of the most beautiful building sites in the world, the erection of a gigantic slum dwelling for the rich—Queen Anne's Mansions. Queen Anne's Mansions and the poor slums of Westminster were equally the outcome of lack of early training in what the Greek called 'mousike'—the inner sensitiveness to the great rhythms and harmonies of human life, which it was the office of the imaginative rhythmical arts to develop in the early years of childhood. The thing that had been most neglected had been the sense side of music, upon which the intelligence depends; but there was also a very profound intellectual side to music which in its elementary aspect, rightly handled, had a value second to none in the training of the mind, especially in the case of those children to whom many of the intellectual sides of the present curriculum were uncongenial.

"An officer commanding at one of our foreign stations told him how strongly he felt that all boys should learn music, because he thought there was nothing like a taste for music for keeping young men in touch with the right kind of women. A movement which he regarded as one of the greatest possible importance was that connected with the revival of traditional song and dance.

"What he hoped and longed to see or hoped that their children would see, as the outcome of their sometimes rather wearisome labors, was an England responsive again, as she once was, to the beauty of the rhythm of national existence, when we should not only do beautiful and splendid things, but do them in a beautiful way, and be aware of the beauty of them as were the great Elizabethans; when slum dwellings, whether for the rich or for the poor, would be swept away, because both rich and poor, wholly apart from economic considerations, realized they were to intolerable anachronisms. On every side there was evidence of a waking up."