

The actual work done in collecting statistics of the number of feeble-minded in the Province of Quebec has been small, but with the statistics from other provinces and countries, there should be enough evidence to convince our legislature that some provision should be made for the care of them. However, the Government does not seem to be impressed with figures from other countries. They hide behind the statement that the Province of Quebec cannot have so many defectives as shown by such figures.

What, therefore, must be done to prove to the Government that there are thousands of feeble-minded in Quebec and what is the best way to gather statistics? Legislatures and committees are moved to action by fact, not generalities and guesses.

Provincial control of the feeble-minded involves the progressive steps of identification, registration, instruction, supervision and segregation.

Identification or diagnosis should be based on a well-considered and established normality. It is better to register only a few feeble-minded than to register many who are not feeble-minded. Our standards and methods of deciding about mental defectives should be in accord with the best thought and scientific knowledge of the time, but the details and the terminology of the process should not be described to the general public in such ultra-scientific and high-sounding terms that the public will be rendered unsympathetic, if not sceptical. Dr. C. K. Clarke, of Toronto, uses a study of family history, economic efficiency and moral reactions along with the Terman revision of the Binet-Simon tests.

The identification of the feeble-minded can best be done through the establishment of psychiatric or psychopathic clinics attached to the various general hospitals in the province and the making of surveys in the schools and different institutions.

The public school should really be the clearing house for mental defectives, but to make it absolutely satisfactory, compulsory education is necessary. Unfortunately the Province of Quebec still clings to mediæval ideas on education and while this idea lasts there will be thousands of illiterates and feeble-minded roaming our streets. Provided there was a compulsory education law which compelled every child to go to school up to the age of fourteen, there should be an efficient medical examination of every child. This examination would include not only a physical but a mental one as well.

Every juvenile court should have attached to it a thoroughly trained physician who could put every delinquent child through a mental test. In the efficiently run juvenile court today, the presiding judge finds that the aid of a well trained physician is of invaluable help to him in knowing how to dispose of the boys and girls brought before him.