

“The Relation of Physical Inability and Mental Deficiency to the Body Social,” reports:

In 10,000 cases presented for examination chosen at random to determine their physical and mental fitness for the work required of them in the school grades, in every instance where the child had fallen behind others of the same grade and age and had continued to retrogress, she found positive physical defects, and with many the combination of physical unfitness with a serious mental defect. Many of the physical defects could be cured, the greater number very much bettered, but the mental unfitness was regarded irreparable. The main physical defects reported and the frequency of occurrences are given as follows (in percentages): Enlarged tonsils and adenoids 77, ocular trouble 75, dental defects 71, defects of hearing 50, anomalies of speech 42, sexual disturbances 41, neurotic conditions 37, nasal defects 34, cardiac defects 29. The frequency of these conditions indicate the advisability and necessity of a closer and more accurate examination of the physical status of the child earlier in life, before ever being sent to school and there discovered, for by that time much harm has already been done often irretrievably so, both physically and mentally.

If to the hereditary taint and the physical defects there be added an improper education and training, we have a triad of etiological factors responsible for practically all of the abnormal conditions under consideration. This improper education and training will be found to be active from birth, for the very individuals who procreate and produce offspring hereditarily tainted, very rarely recognize or admit the possibility of possessing qualities in their own constitutional make-up which could possibly be transmitted to their offspring and as a consequence these very individuals are the least suited or the least capable of rearing the unstable organism which they