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## *Original Contributions.*

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### THE DETECTION OF MENTAL DEFECT IN SCHOOL CHILDREN.

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LAST June I took part in a Symposium on the Prognosis and Treatment of Dementia Precox at the meeting of the American Medico-Psychological Association, which was held at Boston. During this discussion I made the following remarks:

“Little is to be said about treatment, unless it may be suggested that a careful study of school children should regularly be made by those who are familiar with the disease and understand the gravity of the situation. Surely if ever the advisability of early treatment of disease is indicated, it is in dementia precox. Consultation with intelligent teachers would generally bring to surface those weaklings whose future is threatened by the development of dementia. Treatment might then be possible, and in many instances psychotherapeutics and other treatment of value suggested. It is not going beyond the truth to say that most of our public school systems are the very worst possible for the care and development of the D. P. classes. It would be better for the State, the weaklings and all concerned, if these children could be recognized early, and intelligent effort made to steer them clear of the dreadful fate that ordinarily stares them in the face. Possibly, in spite of any means taken, a large proportion of these classes would run to the terminal stages, but certainly the effort to avert this result should be made intelligently and persistently.”

These remarks must be the text from which I shall speak very briefly to-day.

When an alienist has been in harness for a few years he learns,