

The child who cannot learn the lessons of school cannot begin to understand the far more important lessons of life. The mentally-defective child, neglected, drifting, tempted, weak, incapable, leaves school soon to re-appear as an object of public charity, continually degenerating, unable to keep from vice and crime.

The school must take its place as the greatest preventive agency against this great menace to society. We must go back to the school with the knowledge we have gained in social service, in public health, in medical science, and say, "This evil you must help us prevent." Teachers and all other public servants, as well as those engaged in social service or philanthropic work of any kind, should understand about mental defect. All who have to do with schools, colleges, universities, churches, hospitals, public health, legislation, the courts, the police, immigration, charities, and the care of infancy and early childhood should realize that our duty to our neighbour includes our duty to posterity. Recent researches have shown that, in about seventy-five per cent. of mental defectives, the cause of that mental defect is hereditary, descending from one or both of the parents, or from their direct ancestors. The Mendelian laws apply to this as definitely as they do to anything else. Hence, while it is our duty to be kind to the mentally-defective, to protect them from wrong, insult, injury, and injustice, to do our very best for them by training, education, and opportunity, we are wronging them if we go on allowing them to become parents, as we have done in the past in Ontario, wronging their miserable children who should never have been born, and wronging our country and the community by entailing on them that heavy burden of expense, and that heavier burden of crime, vice, misery, and degeneracy which mental defectives always cause.

If it is of sufficient importance to the community to record and control outbreaks of contagious disease, such as scarlet fever and measles, surely it is of more importance to the com-