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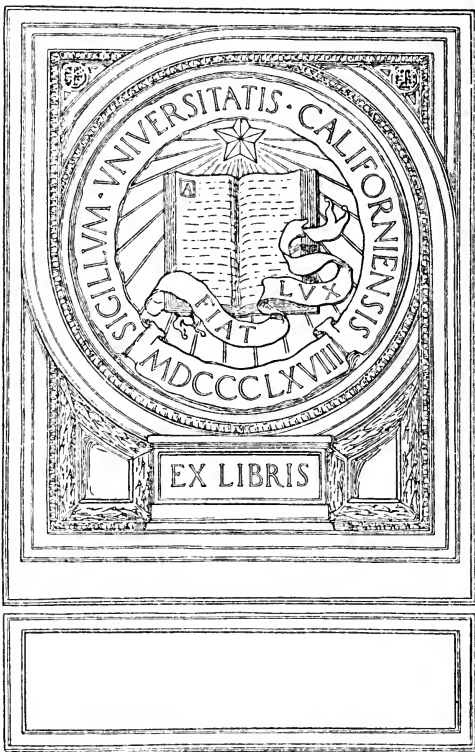
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# TRUANCY

A STUDY OF THE MENTAL, PHYSICAL AND  
SOCIAL FACTORS OF THE PROBLEM OF  
NON-ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

BY

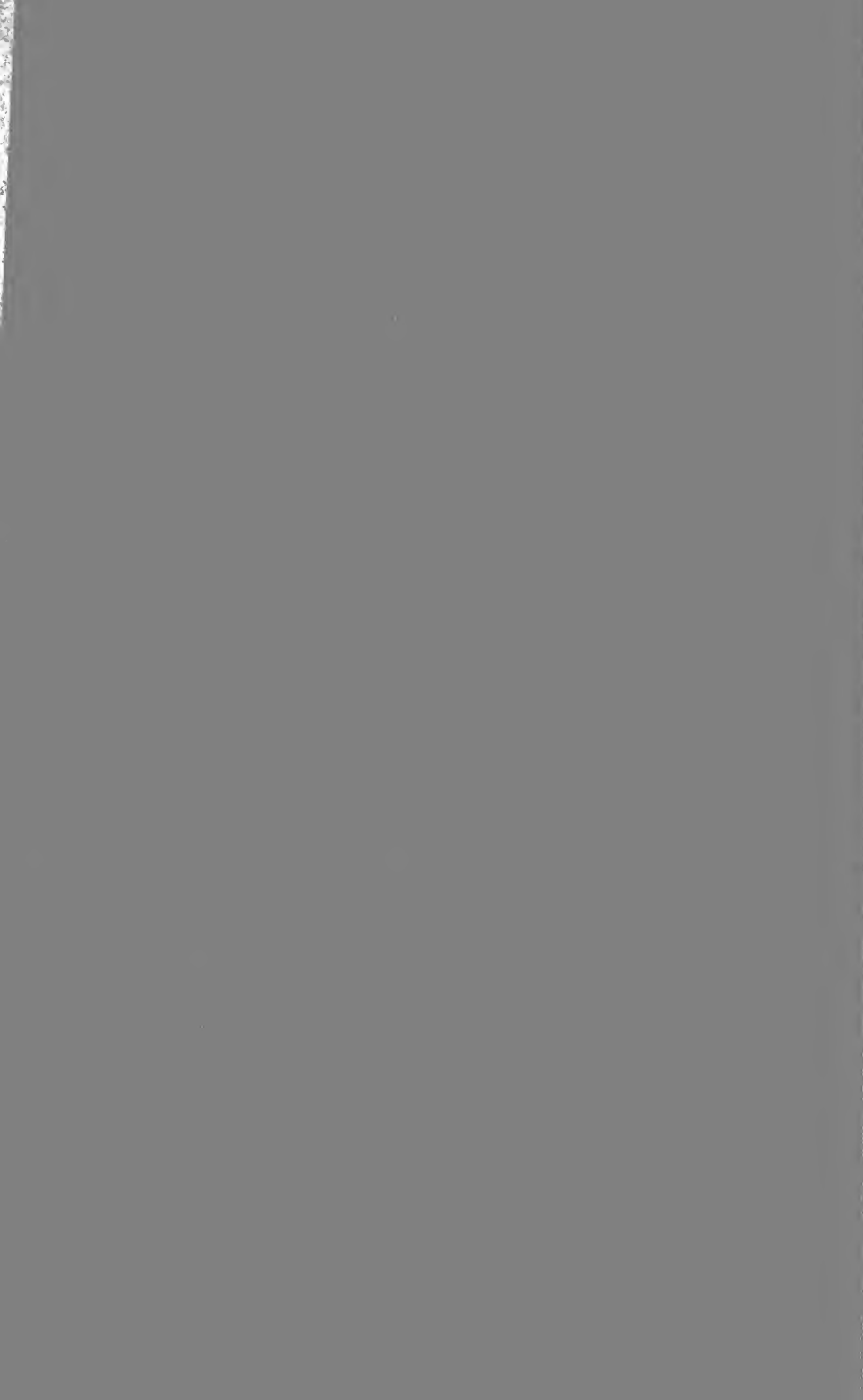
ELISABETH A. IRWIN

Field Worker of the Committee on Hygiene of School Children of the Public  
Education Association

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JUNE, 1915



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## INTRODUCTION

From its inception, the Public Education Association has regarded the enforcement of compulsory school attendance and its kindred problems of child welfare of primary importance in its program of service to the New York City schools. While it has approached this question from many angles, it has not until now presented an intensive study of the mental and physical status of the children coming to the attention of the attendance department.

Through its Committee on Compulsory Education it has taken active part in the evolution of the legislation culminating in the establishment of the present Bureau of Attendance, Census and Child Welfare in the Department of Education, and through its present director has made several studies in the administrative problems involved, three of which have been published by the Association in the last two or three years. Through its visiting teacher staff, for the last seven years, it has not only been treating cases of maladjustment to school requirements growing out of adverse home, school and neighborhood conditions, which only too frequently lead to irregularity of attendance, but it has endeavored to get back of the causes of truancy by taking up cases of irregular or intermittent attendance referred to it by the school principals. The work of the Association in this direction has been published for the period ending with the school year 1911, and a more comprehensive and exhaustive description and analysis of the work for the past two years is nearing completion and will appear shortly.

The study comprehended in this report was begun in the autumn of 1913 by Miss Elisabeth Irwin, field worker of the Committee on Hygiene of School Children of the Association, who was eminently fitted for the task because of her previous experience with problems of mental defect in connection with her work for the Association in co-operating with the Department of Ungraded Classes of the Board of Education. The scope and method of her investigation are clearly outlined in the first section of her report. The aim has been, briefly, to find what might

be called the purely human factors in the problem through studying intensively all the cases actually reported from certain schools to the Department of Attendance during an entire school year, to apply, where possible, the remedy deemed advisable and to measure its effectiveness.

Associated with Miss Irwin in this study were Miss Jessie L. Louderback, who did a large share of the home visiting and prepared the entire third section of the report, dealing with the physical fitness of the children studied, Mr. Frederick W. Ellis and Miss Helen Hannahs of the Department of Social Research of the Neurological Institute, who gave a great deal of their time to detailed and intensive psychological examination of a group of twenty-four boys of the borderline type of mentality, Miss Ruth S. True of the visiting teacher staff of the Association, Dr. William Caldwell, who gave two hours every Monday afternoon to the physical examination of children for Miss Louderback and Miss True, and Miss Margaret Vanderbilt, who acted as a volunteer for about two months.

The means of studying the physical fitness of the boys whose records are included in the study was provided by the establishment of a temporary clinic at the rooms of one of the kindergartens of the New York Kindergarten Association in West 52nd Street. A thorough stripped examination was made with the permission of the boy's parent, who was invited to be present and in some cases was.

The manuscript of the report has been in the hands of the Director of the Bureau of Attendance and Child Welfare of the Department of Education during the greater part of the present year and has been critically read by many of those directly concerned with the phases of the problem which it seeks to interpret.

It is interesting to note that the chief recommendation of the study—that a thorough and competent psychological and physical examination be made of every case reported for truancy and that those cases found to be mentally defective be not given punitive treatment as truants but be removed from the jurisdiction of the compulsory attendance department entirely and educated in the schools or in institutions as feeble-minded children—has been approved by the director of the Bureau of Attendance and Child Welfare and is being worked out in his experimental district with the assistance of Miss Irwin and others who are co-operating in giving mental and physical examinations

to those reported to the Bureau. It is also interesting to note that the Director of the Bureau is desirous of securing the appointment of psychologists to organize this work permanently as part of its service during the coming year. With this effort the Public Education Association is in hearty accord, as it believes that Miss Irwin and her collaborators have amply demonstrated the need for just this kind of service to handle wisely the problem of attendance in the public schools.

*June 15, 1915*

HOWARD W. NUDD,  
*Director, Public Education Association*



## SCOPE AND METHOD OF THE INVESTIGATION

(It has been noticeable in all the recent studies and reports on the subject of truancy that very little attention has been paid to the actual human beings who constitute the problem. The duties of the school, the court and the truant officer have been duly stressed. Home and neighborhood conditions have been taken into consideration as parts of the problem.) But of the type of boy, his psychology and his motives, one finds no description in the literature on the subject. It is to this phase of the problem that the greatest attention has been paid in this study.

The cases studied have not been selected according to any definition of truancy but have been taken from the attendance officers' lists as they came, excluding only those known to be absent because of definite illness. Also a number of cases begun have been dropped upon finding that the absence for which they had been reported was merely accidental and that the child remained in school after being returned once. All other cases of non-attendance have been included.

The study has been carried on in two different neighborhoods, in order that differences in nationalities and environment might receive due consideration. The greater part of the work has been done on the middle West Side where the population is largely Irish-American and German-American with a few Italians. Twenty-seven cases, however, were taken from an East Side school of Jews and Italians in order that the investigator might have some basis for comparison.

One hundred and fifty cases were studied in all. Twenty of these were girls on the West Side. Twenty-seven were boys on the East Side. One hundred and three were boys on the West Side. The children studied were all from seven schools, six on the West Side in two school districts and one on the East Side.

The six West Side schools were located between 59th Street and 34th Street west of Sixth Avenue. In spite of the large

geographical area from which these schools drew their pupils, the population is almost homogeneous. Toward the south of the district, second and third generation Irish and German give the character to the neighborhood throughout, except for a smattering of so-called "foreigners," Slavs and Italians. Hard driving poverty and its only antidote drink leave a very small margin of either leisure or intelligence to consider the advantages of education. In a community without ambition and without ideals, it is small wonder that the number of truants is large.

The East Side school in which twenty-seven cases of truancy were studied was a boys' school of about 2700 pupils, Jewish and Italian. The proportion of truants in this school was far smaller than in any of the West Side schools. The Jewish boys are anxious for an education and their parents are anxious for them to have it. Every form of public opinion exerts pressure in this direction. While on the West Side the lawless spirit of an easy going Irish neighborhood not only tolerates but encourages an attitude of indifference toward the schools. In the East Side school the parent comes when he is sent for and, unless a good reason exists for a boy's absence, the truant is returned to school even at the cost of some trouble on the part of the parent. Here the older brothers and sisters, even those who have arrived in this country too late to profit by public education themselves, also respect the opportunity the school offers. It is not unusual for a big brother to co-operate even to the extent of losing half a day's pay by staying home from work and hunting out the delinquent young brother in his illicit haunt and bringing him to school by the collar. Such was the case with young Solly, who was threatened in the presence of the principal with all the torments of this world and the world to come if ever again he failed to "show up and learn his lessons, too." Solly, who, armed with a rainbow-like array of dispensary tickets, had been working the old game of "sick and had to go to the doctor," took a brace and came to school after that. When your brother loses half a day's work to make you go to school he means business and you begin, yourself, to see that education is important. Thus the tonic atmosphere of East Side sentiment constantly operates in the right direction.

The ratio of the twenty West Side girls to the one hundred three West Side boys in this study fairly represents the proportion of girl to boy truants in that neighborhood. The remark of

one of the attendance officers actually expresses the situation, "If there was a truant school for girls, there would be more girl truants all right, but now there's no place to put them, what's the use?" The idea behind this seems to be that the principals feel that it is useless to report girls for truancy when pushed to its logical conclusion, for if the girl or the parent proves obdurate there is no way of forcing the issue. This all goes back however to the accepted view of the attendance officers and of many of the principals that the truant school is the cure for truancy.

The method of the investigation has been to interview every child, his parents, his school teacher, principal or head of department, and the attendance officer, and to form an estimate of each case from a synthesis of these opinions. In some cases it has been possible to discover one cause which has seemed sufficient to account for the habit of truancy. In most cases, however, a combination of circumstances has existed which has made it impossible to select and name one factor as the definite cause of the habit of truancy. The figures given throughout the report therefore state the number of cases where certain circumstances exist without definitely stating that any one thing was the absolute cause. The conclusions are therefore drawn from the fact that the same circumstance with the same apparent result existed in enough cases to justify the causal connection.

The economic status of the family, while it has not been entirely ignored, has not been studied statistically. The fact in this connection which has been most definitely taken into consideration is whether the family was a complete economic family, that is, both parents living, the father earning and the mother staying at home to feed, clothe and control the children. For, in so far as the family is complete or incomplete, the functioning of the home as a moralizing or demoralizing influence is affected.

The investigation was not begun with a fixed group of questions to be answered by parents, teachers and children, but rather by extensive interviews with each until it became evident that certain kinds of material were irrelevant, other kinds unreliable, while still other facts seemed indispensable and worth verifying even at the expense of more time than had originally been allotted. The following outline of procedure grew out of the early interviews:

I. *Is the boy mentally—Defective—Normal—Precocious?*

A. If defective—

1. Visit home and make home record.
2. Have physical examination.
3. Work to remedy physical defects.
4. Put in ungraded class.
5. Keep record of attendance.
6. Classify and put minimum of work on case.

B. If Normal or Precocious—

1. Visit home and make home record and hygiene card.
2. Have physical examination.
3. Work to remedy physical defects.
4. Make friends with family—all possible members.
5. Keep close record of attendance.
6. Follow out suggestions gained from the following interview with the boy.

II. *Interview with the boy (if normal)—*

1. Do you "go on the hook"?
2. What do you do when out of school?
3. Did you do this yesterday, the day before and so on?  
(Story of different days.)
4. How did you begin?
5. With whom do you go on hook?
6. Names of friends—
7. Where do they live?
8. Where go to school?
9. What grade?
10. How old?
11. What class are you in?
12. Teacher's name?
13. Do you like her?
14. Do you get on well in lessons?
15. Which one best?
16. Which one least?
17. Did you do badly in same one last term?
18. What was last class where you did all right in that?  
(Compare with class where truancy began.)
19. Which class did you fall behind in?
20. Who was teacher?
21. Was she cross?
22. What seemed to be the trouble with that subject?
23. Would you like help in that subject?
24. Have you any brothers and sister in this school?
25. What classes?
26. What other schools?
27. Who is your best friend in family?
28. Is your mother home in day time?
29. What does she work at?



30. What does your father do?
31. Your big brothers?
32. What are you going to do?
33. Did you ever know anyone who did that? When?  
Where?
34. How much do you think you will make?
35. What can you work up to?
36. Did you ever think of learning a trade?
37. Would you like to be a printer?
38. Plumber?
39. Electrician?
40. Mechanic?
41. Builder?
42. Did you know you could go to a special school and  
learn one of those trades?

The information has for the most part gathered itself about the four following questions concerning each child:

- I. Is this child of normal mentality?
- II. Is this child the member of a normal economic family?  
(That is, both parents living, father earning, mother  
at home.)
- III. Is this child below the average physically?
- IV. Has this child any outlook or ambition, immediate or  
future, that makes school seem logical, desirable or  
necessary?

## I. MENTALITY OF TRUANTS

The mental normality of the children studied has been determined first by the use of the Binet Test which has divided them roughly into three groups,—Normal, Defective, and Borderline. The first two groups claimed all of the children about whom no possible doubts could be raised. The results of the tests were verified by school records, family histories, and opinions of teachers and principals familiar with the children. These two groups included no children about whom there was any doubt or difference of opinion.

The third group originally contained 54 disputed cases. This group was isolated and made the subject of special study. Twenty-four were examined by the doctors of the Department of Ungraded Classes of the Board of Education, twenty-four were examined by the Psychologists of the Neurological Institute, and six by hospital clinics. This group of doubtful cases was in turn divided into three groups,—normal, defective, and borderline,—according to the opinion of the specialists. After this further scrutiny, there still remained 12 cases which had to be classed as doubtful or borderline. This group contains those children who are still too young or too high-grade for even specialists to say whether or not they are normal mentally. No child has been left in this group from failure to obtain a thorough psychological examination.

The 24 cases which have been studied by the Neurological Institute are by far the most interesting psychological cases. The detailed analysis of four of these cases is given in the appendix. All of the 24 in this group have been similarly studied.

The final classification of the total 150 cases studied is given in Table I.

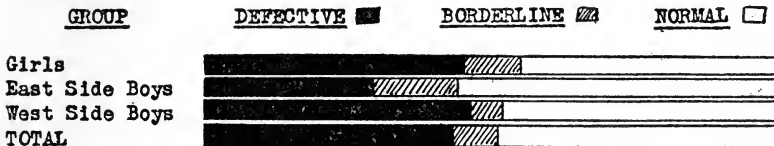
Of all the truants, 43 per cent were actually feeble-minded and 8 per cent were borderline cases. One of the salient characteristics of the mental defective is never to do anything regularly and on time except through training and habit formation or from outside compulsion. A methodical and well ordered life is

essentially the product of a normal mind. Any feeling of accomplishment or daily success in the tasks assigned in the regular school grades is out of the question for a mental defective. And yet with one exception none of these mental defectives were in ungraded classes which are provided for the education of the feeble-minded. Therefore all of them were improperly placed in their school work. This one cause alone, though contributory causes often exist, would seem to account for the habit of truancy in 43 per cent of all the cases studied. For it is unreasonable to expect any child to go willingly month after month, year after year, to a class where he constantly meets failure and reproof,

TABLE I.—ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY TRUANTS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO NORMAL, DEFECTIVE AND BORDERLINE MENTALITY

Group	Normal		Defective		Borderline		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Girls.....	9	45.00	9	45.00	2	10.00	20	100
East Side Boys.....	15	55.56	8	29.63	4	14.81	27	100
West Side Boys.....	49	47.57	48	46.60	6	5.83	103	100
Total.....	73	48.67	65	43.33	12	8.00	150	100

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF THE PER CENT OF TRUANTS IN EACH OF THE SEX GROUPS THAT ARE OF NORMAL DEFECTIVE OR BORDERLINE MENTALITY



discouragement and derision. There is a common nightmare,—almost everyone is familiar with it,—in which one is facing an impossible task, a mountain that is too steep to climb, a stone that is too heavy to lift, a door that will not unlock. Teachers have said that it comes to them in the form of a class that they cannot control. Most of us know in our waking hours also as the most unpleasant situation in life, the task that is not only too hard but impossible. And yet it is just this situation that we are asking these poor children of limited intelligence to face each day and if they do not welcome it gladly we call them truants.

Legally\* these cases do not belong to the attendance officer and it is simply because their true difficulty is undetected that 43 per cent of the 150 cases were on the truant lists at all. If 43 per cent of the actual number are mentally defective, surely a much larger proportion than 43 per cent of the attendance officer's time is spent on these cases, for they are the hardest and most hopeless and the least improvable of all the cases with which he has to deal. Every effort made by the attendance officer on these cases is an effort to push a square peg into a round hole.

The attendance officer's time is largely spent, of necessity, in dealing with parents on the subject of a boy's absence. In the case of mental defectives who cannot get on in school, there is no co-operation on the part of the child. In a number of cases where children were placed in ungraded classes, the attendance thereafter took care of itself. If this fails to happen because of the deep-seated habit of truancy, the visiting teachers of the Department of Ungraded Classes are the logical attendance officers of this department. The children cannot, in any event, be taken to court and must be dealt with by persuasion rather than by force. When this department becomes adequate to search out and care for all the mental defectives in the schools, the list of all truants will automatically grow less. In the meantime, a psychological examination should be given to every child as soon as he is listed as a truant by the compulsory attendance department and unless he is found mentally normal, he should be referred to the Department of Ungraded Classes for admission and dropped from the list of truants. The additional amount of work this would seem to involve on the part of the attendance officer would be far more than counterbalanced by the decrease

\* Article 23, Section 621 of the Education Law of 1910, as amended by Chapter 710 of the laws of 1911, reads as follows:

"Required attendance upon instruction.—1. Every child within the compulsory school ages, in proper physical and mental condition to attend school, residing in a city or school district having a population of five thousand or more and employing a superintendent of schools, shall regularly attend upon instruction as follows:

"(a) Each child between seven and fourteen years of age shall attend the entire time during which the school attended is in session, which period shall not be less than one hundred and sixty days of actual school.

"(b) Each child between fourteen and sixteen years of age not regularly and lawfully engaged in any useful employment or service, and to whom an employment certificate has not been duly issued under the provisions of the labor law, shall so attend the entire time during which the school attended is in session."

in the number of truants to be handled. The 43 per cent of mental defectives now handled illegally would then require only one examination in order to be eliminated while at present they require an unlimited number of home visits and remain on the lists from one year to the next, until the arrival of the sixteenth birthday finally removes them.

TABLE II.—DISTRIBUTION OF AGES OF TRUANTS AMONG NORMAL AND DEFECTIVE\*

Age	Boys			Girls			Total
	Normal	Defective	Total	Normal	Defective	Total	
7 yrs. ....	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
8 " .....	2	..	2	..	..	..	2
9 " .....	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
10 " .....	6	5	11	..	..	..	11
11 " .....	13	1	14	..	..	..	14
12 " .....	9	5	14	1	1	2	16
13 " .....	18	13	31	7	1	8	39
14 " .....	18	11	29	..	6	6	35
15 " .....	6	21	27	3	1	4	31
Total	74	56	130	11	9	20	150

The age table (Table II) shows that there were only six normal boys of fifteen years of age who had not managed by some means to get in the required number of days and up to the required grade to obtain working papers and therefore to make an escape from school. Twenty-one mental defectives of this same age, however, were stranded, most of them in working paper classes where they were obliged to remain, off and on, till their sixteenth birthday should release them. These are the boys that play hide and seek with the attendance officer. One of them remarked about another who had been sent to the Parental School, "I never did think the Troonty'd find Mike. He had a swell bunk on — Street. Some one must have squealed on him. Oh, well, he'll be back soon." The older boys who know all hope of getting working papers is in vain take a real pleasure in this game of hide and seek, with the heavy penalty of being sent to the truant school if they are caught. Many of them have

\* In this table the classification doubtful mentality has been included under normal. 7 years means 7 but not yet 8. 8 years means past 8 but not 9, etc.

the friendly attitude of opponents in a tennis match toward the pursuing officer when they meet on any neutral ground, such as the school. They hang around and joke as if rather enjoying the opportunity of a friendly truce. The writer was much enlightened by one of these encounters. The attendance officer was waiting for the 12 o'clock gong to sound when Pietro came lounging in. "Hello there, Hick," he addressed his officer by the common nickname of the neighborhood for him. "You got Joe, didn't you? I thought you would. I told him he'd get caught. Who was the judge? Oh, I might have known, that young judge sent me up twice. Say, didn't I strike luck that last time you had me down? I knew when I saw that old man that my skin was safe. He won't jail no one when he don't have to. When he gets to Heaven I believe he'll say to God, 'Say, let everybody out of jail.' He don't like to send fellers up. He told me so. Well, you don't catch me takin' no more chances, anyhow, Hick. You'll find me in school the rest of this week all right. Say, Finnegan's back, you seen him? I got to go. Me teacher wants a bottle of milk. So long!"

Nothing can be expected from these boys so long as they remain in the ordinary grades. Even the ungraded class often has hard work to hold them when they have passed so many years in hating and dreading school. If, however, they could be placed in these classes before the truancy habit has taken hold of them many of them would never become a problem at all.

In the 9 cases of mentally defective girls there was no economic necessity for their non-attendance. All but three of these girls came from complete economic families, and two of these three were orphans living with married sisters and could go to school if they wanted to. Their non-attendance seemed to be cases of truancy pure and simple and are to be accounted for on exactly the same grounds as the cases of the mentally defective boys. They were perhaps even more unanimous in their protest that they did not like school. They had developed irregular habits and fallen behind in their classes, couldn't learn to do arithmetic, wanted to go to work, didn't like to be the only big girl in the class, and so on through all the rest of the alleged reasons with which the feeble-minded boy or girl explains his dislike of the school room.

Of the 150 truants, 44 have records at the Children's Court. These do not include those who have been sent to truant schools

with the parents' consent. Six of these 44 children have records of two offenses and 2 of three offenses, 1 of four offenses, making 57 court entries for the 44 truants. The charges made against them were as follows:

Petty larceny . . . . .	2
Assault . . . . .	1
An ungovernable child . . . . .	1
In danger of becoming morally depraved . . . . .	1
Unlawful entry . . . . .	1
Larceny . . . . .	3
Injury to property . . . . .	4
Child labor law . . . . .	3
Burglary . . . . .	4
Disorderly conduct . . . . .	5
Compulsory education law . . . . .	12
Special proceedings . . . . .	20

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Of these 44 children with court records only 13 are of normal mentality; 5 are borderline cases and 26 are mentally defective.

The cases of borderline mentality scarcely belong to the attendance officer more than the definitely feeble-minded. These cases are few and scattered and cannot therefore be placed together in one class for the kind of education they need, but they should always be in some kind of special class for observation and should be marked off in the mind of the teacher as objects of special care and consideration. Often these boys are returned after examination for an ungraded class to the grade in which they failed, only to continue to fail in the same manner. It is only fair that any boy who is even suspected of being mentally defective should be treated as though he were, that is, with special kindness, gentleness, and patience, until he begins to do the very best he can. Not until he puts forth his best efforts is it possible to discover what his real ability is. The only answer to the frequent comment, "He isn't defective; he could do better if he wanted to" of the teacher is "make him want to." This is as true of school attendance as of school accomplishment.

So much for the 43 per cent who are mentally defective and the 8 per cent of doubtful mentality. The following tables and sections will apply to the 49 per cent who are mentally normal.

## II. HOME STATUS OF TRUANTS

### TRUANTS FROM INCOMPLETE ECONOMIC FAMILIES

Table III shows the percentage of the mentally normal children who come from homes that are economically complete or incomplete, that is, the father and mother both living, the father earning, and the mother staying at home to take care of the children.

TABLE III.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF TRUANTS OF NORMAL MENTALITY WHO COME FROM COMPLETE AND INCOMPLETE ECONOMIC FAMILIES

Group	Truants coming from complete economic families		Truants coming from incomplete economic families		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Girls.....	3	33.33	6	66.67	9	100
East Side Boys.....	7	46.77	8	53.33	15	100
West Side Boys.....	9	18.00	40	82.00	49	100
Total.....	19	25.68	54	74.32	73	100

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF THE PER CENT OF TRUANTS IN EACH OF THE SEX GROUPS THAT COME FROM ECONOMICALLY COMPLETE OR INCOMPLETE FAMILIES



There are 54 cases, or 74 per cent, of the mentally normal truants who come from incomplete economic families. It is necessary to treat the West Side and East Side quite separately under this topic as the types of broken homes are very different in both cause and effect.



The East Side boys who come from incomplete families are no such problem as the West Side boys. In the first place, the proportion of such boys is small. Besides this, most of the East Side mothers who work are simply assisting their husbands in the little family shop or are janitresses of the house where the family lives. In none of the East Side families was the mother absent from morning till night. These mothers do not often work outside their homes. Of the 8 cases of incomplete families, 5 mothers were working. Four were helping their husbands, one was a janitress, and three were economically incomplete because the father was out of work. The effect upon school attendance in these cases was almost entirely the result of the family's dependence upon the boy as an economic factor. In the small shop where the mother works there is almost always work for the boy also. It becomes a temptation to a parent to keep a boy at home to "help out" occasionally. They are then surprised and often grieved to discover that the boy has failed to attend when he has been sent. The janitress needed her boy to help her clean house, especially if she was sick or pressed by any other family emergency. In two cases where the father was out of employment the boy had been sent out to earn illegally until the father should get a job. In nearly all these cases the truancy was temporary and had shown a decided improvement before the study was completed.

The forty West Side cases, on the other hand, were of a far more serious nature, and, are therefore considered more at length under the following heads:

#### TRUANTS WHO HAVE NO MOTHERS

There are 6 boys coming from homes where the mother is dead and not replaced by a step-mother. The story of each of these boys is different, and yet in each one truancy seems not only the natural but the inevitable result of his mode of life. Perhaps there is nothing more pathetic on all the West Side than the boy without a mother.

Paul's father lives in a lodging house and can never be found when wanted. Paul sees him every year or so. In the meantime, Paul himself is passed around from one married sister to the other, each grudging him the food he eats and the clothes he wears. Every time he changes his home, which may be every few months or every few weeks as he has a circuit of four, he also

changes his school. This it can readily be seen does not make for regular school attendance. All his habits are equally irregular, as would naturally be the case under his shifting environment. The life of a commercial traveller for a boy of fourteen is not educational.

Walter's shifting about is on a still shorter meter. He lives with a lady whom, he explains, his father "was going to marry but isn't." She works away from home, starting at 6 A. M. every day. Walter is called at school time by a neighbor when he is not forgotten. He has dinner at noon with an aunt and supper at night with his father. After this he returns home at whatever hour he pleases. The necessity of keeping all these engagements every day would, it might seem, make him efficient in remembering school at 9 o'clock each morning. And indeed Walter is not one of those boys who forget to go to school after they are started from home. Walter suffers from division of authority. No one knows where he is at any time except when he chooses to turn up. He always turns up for meals but he does not turn up for school. Flying pigeons is more to his taste and in this occupation he spends his school hours.

John is thirteen years old. His mother died when he was ten and he lived with his father, sister, and little brother for a while; but his father took in another woman and John took his little brother and walked out. "I wouldn't stand for that," he said. He had a grandmother who was very old and whose rent was paid by the church. He went to her and offered to support himself and brother if she would shelter them. He has sold papers at the Times Square subway station for two years and supported himself and Tommy. While getting started in business he accidentally contracted the habit of truancy and served a few months' term in a truant school. "I never stay out now," he explained, "except on business." When this gets to be too often John's name appears on the truant list and he returns hot-foot to school. His responsibilities are too great for him to take any chances on getting "sent up" again.

The only reason that Jimmy doesn't go to school is because his home is so bad he wants to get sent away. His drunken old grandmother disgusts him and his equally drunken father beats him. He loves his school and his teacher but he has long cherished the hope of being sent where school lasts twenty-four hours a day and home does not exist. Through the perversity of human

affairs, this has not happened to Jimmy. He is now sixteen and has tuberculosis. "If I can just get well," he says, "I'll go to work now and buy myself a good home."

These are the stories of four boys who have no mothers. The other two are cases of no home control, the father forgetting his home ties when there is no one to cook for him and the boys shifting for themselves for food and education which they find outside of school.

#### TRUANTS WHOSE MOTHERS ARE WIDOWS

The second group includes 16 boys whose mothers were widows. In most of these families, unless an older brother or sister is working, a charitable society or the church is paying the rent or assisting in some other way. It would seem that a more efficient means than the present one might be devised of assisting these families where the mother and children are of normal mentality and the children could grow into normal efficiency if for a few years they were tided over economically. Possibly a widow's pension system would suffice to carry many families over this difficult period when the home does not function as a moralizing influence. It is not only the little children who need the care and training of a mother but the half-grown boy who is just beginning to be wild cannot be left to his own devices and neighborhood influences without suffering irreparable injury. Truancy is only the first step with these boys. What they do during the hours when they should be in school is more pernicious in a positive way than the failure to get an education is in a negative one.

Even when cared for economically, many boys would be more than a handful for a home without a father to control and discipline in the face of demoralizing neighborhood influences. Boys of this age are universally acknowledged to be so difficult to manage that in the families of the well to do, where home influences are good, boarding schools are usually considered the best solution for the boy who is a problem. Why would not a boarding school be equally good for the difficult boy with a broken home? Among the poor a good boarding school is possible only for the confirmed truant. Here he may stay only until he begins to improve. At that unpsychological moment he is removed from the favorable environment under which he has gained and returned to the unfavorable environment under which he had

already deteriorated. He must make room for the next boy who has overstepped the bounds of social endurance. The per capita cost of a boarding school education at the New York Parental School is \$2.10 a week. This is always at public expense. For a boy to be sent there is a social stigma. If the Board of Education could offer this opportunity to the boy who is not yet bad or who has just begun to be "wild," there is many a mother on the West Side who would scrub her knuckles bare rather than have her boy "go to the bad." If a boarding school ceased to be a reformatory and a boy could be sent at the parent's request instead of on a court commitment there is scarcely one of the 29 boys in these two groups who would not have been saved from the rôle of confirmed truant that he now plays. For few of these mothers who are working so hard for the physical welfare of their children were indifferent to their moral welfare but were helpless in the face of neighborhood conditions and economic necessity.

A number of them preferred the truant school with all its stigma to the deteriorating influence of continued truancy. "I didn't send him to school this morning," Mrs. Gilligan said. "Mr. B—— was here yesterday and said if he wasn't in school today, he'd send him up to Flushing, sure thing, and it's better so. I have to work out more days than not and it's no use me to promise he'll go to school, for he won't. He was up there once and we was both well satisfied. I only hope he'll find him on the street." By such means only can Mrs. Gilligan and her neighbors get a proper education for their boys.

#### TRUANTS WHOSE PARENTS BOTH WORK

There are 13 families where both parents are living and both working, leaving no one at home. Most of the boys from these homes belong to the type called "wild." Not only do they suffer from the lack of some one to get them up, dress and feed them, and send them to school but most of them have behind them a long history of years during which the street has been their home and the gang their club. No doubt necessity has pressed these mothers to leave their homes and go into industry but the fact remains that their boys are but little better off than those of the widows who are the sole support of their families.

#### TRUANTS WHO HAVE STEP-PARENTS

There are the homes where one parent is a step-parent. Five of the 40 West Side cases now under consideration are of this type. Stories of step-parents always produced the fact that discipline is lax and the boy is allowed to do as he pleases because the step-parent, either mother or father, "doesn't feel like hitting the boy" because "you know how the neighbors talk." Whatever is really behind this step-parent situation, one never fails to get this same story. One begins to suspect that to have a step-father or step-mother on the West Side is the signal for a boy to go on the loose. The own parent in such a family is equally often accused of being overlenient and so we have a situation in which no discipline is expected. An added difficulty in getting co-operation in school attendance is that the step-parent is often quite willing, if not eager, that the "wild boy" shall be sent to truant school, and therefore assumes the rôle of inadequate guardian.

#### TRUANTS FROM COMPLETE ECONOMIC FAMILIES

Of the 9 West Side boys who come from complete economic families, very different stories may be told. In the first place, five of these boys were distinctly candidates for a truant school of the existing type. Three have been there once and all but one have brothers there now. They come from families of a low mental type and still lower moral tone. Three of them are normal members of feeble-minded families and should be given a chance in a favorable environment.

In the second place four of these nine have ceased to be truants during the course of this study. Their reasons for non-attendance were specific and temporary and not difficult to overcome. One of them was persuaded by a trip to a trade school to see what was in store for him if he would show a good record of attendance on his fourteenth birthday. He had acquired irregular habits during his mother's illness and needed only a slight stimulus to make him take hold of the situation himself.

Another boy had been seized with a desire to see the world and for a short period had been going every morning to a busy subway station, sneaking in with the crowd, and then riding up and down town all day—a city manifestation of the old fever among boys to go "railroading." His attendance has been regular

for a number of months. This was a little fellow of twelve and he has apparently for the present settled down. He has a good home where the parents will probably be able to manage any further outcropping of erratic tendencies.

It was another of this group who was the only one of all the 150 to offer a definite complaint against his teacher as a reason for staying out of school. "I wouldn't come," he said, "when I had a fresh teacher. She don't hit you when you're really bad, but when you're just stubborn, she beats you. Now I'm promoted, I'll come every day," and he did.

Another of this group explained. "I used to stay out a lot until the 'Troonty' come to our house. I didn't suppose it was any harm." Since the visit of the "Troonty," this boy stays out from time to time but is not a confirmed truant and will probably survive without a trip to the truant school.

These four cases together with five similar ones on the East Side are the only cases of truancy in the whole study that seem to be capable of being finally dealt with under the present un-analytical method. The attendance officer has brought these boys back to school to stay and can always bring others like them. He was dealing with normal, rational human beings and had the co-operation of normal and adequate homes. Where the boys are feeble-minded the attendance officer cannot make them normal and where the home does not function, he cannot remake the structure of society. Ideally, all the feeble-minded would go to institutions for their permanent care, but in the meantime they must be taken care of in ungraded classes. The boys with homes which do not function as a supplement to school in their education should go to 24 hour a day schools with no stigma attached and should stay there until the home is changed or until the boy's education is completed. The present system of sending boys to the truant school after the mischief is done and sending them back to the environment that demoralized them with still unformed characters is not only futile but economically wasteful. The average term of 9 months in a truant school is manifestly insufficient for an entire education to say nothing of re-education.

The essential difference between the kinds of causes of non-attendance among the girls and the boys, considering now only the group of mentally normal of both sexes, is that the girls were almost without exception kept home to work and would rather

have been in school, while the boys as a rule were not working but were out of school by their own volition. The stories of the girls were monotonously alike: "My mother works and I must mind the baby and Eddie and Joey and clean the house. My papa is in the hospital five months now, so my mama has to work. She goes at seven and don't come back till night, so what can I do?" Or the mother's stories offer no more variety. "I can't get her off to school on time. I do office cleaning and I don't get home till half past nine, do my best, and she can't leave the children till I come and she can't go every day late, so what can I do?" Or the father's story is, "My wife is dead three months and who can look after the house and the little children while I earn their bread? I have to go to work. Nellie's almost fifteen and if she'd been promoted she'd have had her working papers by now, but I couldn't send her last term; how could I with her mother sick abed and three children, so what can I do?" The stories of all but three of the normal cases were of this type, economically incomplete families and the burden falling on the girl.

Two of the remaining cases were normal members of feeble-minded shiftless families, where truancy was a family habit, both of them having brothers and sisters included in the present study. They are good examples of the unfortunate fact that the normal members of such families are more apt to be pulled down to the habit level of the incompetent members than to help to pull up to a normal level the low general average of the family.

Under this heading also belong the two girls of doubtful mentality. Poor intellectually befogged creatures were these two, struggling against the odds of a feeble-minded, inefficient clan. In a stimulating environment, doubtless both of these girls would have pulled through on school. As it is, one of them, whose definition of "on the hook" was "going on the street," is now at Hope Farm and the other is in the process of being committed to some protecting institution. Both of them were docile girls, instinctively good but easily led. Decent homes would have saved them.

The one remaining case is that of a normal girl who seems to "go on the hook" as the boys do. She has a gang most of whom have left school but are not yet working. She goes to school "when she's chased" and the rest of the time the streets and the

“movies” and the Tenth Avenue shops are more to her liking. A toss of the head and just a touch of defiance in her tone toward school teachers indicated that she considered a distaste for school not a thing that had to be justified. Her mother’s attitude was not unsimilar. This seemed to be the only case among the girls where a truant school would have been the only solution.

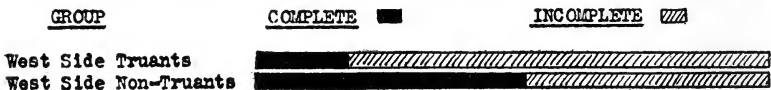
#### COMPARISON BETWEEN NUMBER OF TRUANTS AND NON-TRUANTS FROM INCOMPLETE ECONOMIC FAMILIES

In order to discover whether the proportion of incomplete to complete economic families among the families of truants was great in comparison with the proportion in the neighborhood at large, a census was taken in one school of 341 children in grades corresponding to those in which most of the truancy occurred, namely, the 5th and 6th. Table IV shows that, whereas only

TABLE IV.—NUMBER AND PER CENT OF TRUANTS AND NON-TRUANTS COMING FROM COMPLETE AND INCOMPLETE ECONOMIC FAMILIES

Group	Coming from complete economic families		Coming from incomplete economic families		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
West Side Truants.....	9	18.00	41	82.00	50	100
West Side Non-truants ..	178	52.40	163	47.60	341	100

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF THE PER CENT OF TRUANTS AND NON-TRUANTS THAT COME FROM ECONOMICALLY COMPLETE OR INCOMPLETE FAMILIES



18 per cent of the mentally normal boys who were truants come from complete economic families, 52 per cent of the non-truants of corresponding grades come from complete economic families; that 82 per cent of the truants in contrast to 48 per cent of the non-truants come from incomplete homes. Even though the proportion of incomplete families in the neighborhood is appallingly large (48%), the number of truants having incomplete families is vastly larger (82%).



The question occurs of course, why, if the incomplete family is the cause of truancy in 82 per cent of the cases of truants, are not the 48 per cent of all the boys in the corresponding grades also truants. In the first place, the fact that the family is incomplete is probably in most cases not the only cause. It is most often the negative cause, in that, if any other individual reason for truancy exists which it is the function of the home to counteract, the incomplete home fails to perform this function. Also truancy is not the only one and perhaps not the most virulent symptom of the incomplete home. Court records show an abnormally large proportion of broken families among children arrested. There is small doubt that any study of malnutrition or of scholarship in these same grades would also show the effect on large numbers of the 48 per cent who were suffering from the lack of the moralizing and normalizing of a complete home.

To repeat, nothing can bring these adolescent boys into line for normal and useful citizenship except some means of raising the standard of the home to the point where it will contribute that part of their education which it is not now the function of the school to contribute, or of supplying a 24 hour school to which boys may be sent at cost price, even if necessary at the expense of the state, before they have become an unsolvable problem and where they may be kept until they have attained that degree of training and education that can resist the vitiating influence of a neighborhood without ambition and without ideals.

### III. PHYSICAL FITNESS OF TRUANTS

The original plan in this phase of the study was to give each truant a thorough physical examination, with the hope of having every physical defect immediately corrected, leaving the balance of the school year free for observing the effect on the truant of his improved physical condition. But unexpected difficulties arose. Clinic was on Monday. A truant despises school on Monday. However 44 were taken to clinics after school hours and had a thorough examination, and 8 others were taken to specialists for their various defects.

The second revelation was in the attempt to get the physical defects corrected; a truant has no more appreciation of the benefits of medical treatment than he has of the benefits of education. Added to this was the fear that many children have of the doctor and the hospital, and *fear* is a trait over-developed in the average truant. He has the habit of running away, of mistrusting anyone proposing to take him anywhere,—having in mind the oft-threatened trip to the Truant School,—the fear that he will not be brought back; that the treatment or the doctor will hurt him. All these have to be overcome. Then he tells you that he “isn’t sick anyway,” that he “must help his mother” or “get wood,” or even that he will miss a good time with the boys if he goes. A boy who is seldom at school is less often found at home, so that careful and patient angling is required until he is landed.

The following is the result of the physical examination of 44 cases:

Boys, 36			Girls, 8	
	No. found	No. treated and remarks	No. found	No. treated and remarks
Condition:				
Poor.....	4	10. To go to country in vacation.	1	1. } 2 tonic; 2 to go to country in vacation.
Fair.....	8	....	3	3. } .....
Good.....	15	....	2	....
Undeveloped....	6	....	1	....
Undernourished .	6	....	..	....
Rachitic.....	2	....	1	Displaced hip.
Anemic.....	4	4. Tonic given.	1	1. Tonic.
Heart.....	0	....	0	....

	No. found	No. treated and remarks	No. found	No. treated and remarks
Lungs . . . . .	2	Observed: negative.	1	1. T. B. glands.
	2	Sputum tests negative.	..	....
Bronchitis . . . . .	3	3.	1	1.
Rhinitis . . . . .	3	3.	1	1.
Adenoids and tonsils . . . . .	14	8. Operated on.	3	1. To be done July 15; 2 not in condition for operation.
Enlarged glands . .	7	No operation needed.	2	No operation needed.
Digestion—fair or bad . . . . .	10	10. Medicine given.	4	4. Medicine given.
		8.	4	4. Diet ordered.
Constipation . . . . .	11	11. Medicine, diet and exercises.	..	....
Teeth defective . .	27	12. Treatment started at clinic.	6	4. Treatment started at clinic.
	2	Parents are to take to dentist.	..	....
Palate defective . .	1		..	
Eyes:				
Vision defective	4	3. Procured glasses. 1. Had glasses. 3 doubtful cases removed to Truant School.	2	2. Procured glasses.
Strabismus . . . .	4	1. Operated on.	..	....
		2. Procured glasses.		
Trachoma . . . . .	1	1. Not serious.	..	....
Conjunctivitis . .	3	3. Examined; not serious.	..	....
Keratitis . . . . .	..	....	1	1.
Ears:				
Hearing . . . . .	0		0	....
Wax . . . . .	10	1. ....	1	1.
Pediculosis . . . . .	3	3.	..	....
Curvature . . . . .	4	2. Had accident.	1	Postural (syphilitic).
		2. Were eye cases.		
Flatfoot . . . . .	6	Exercises suggested.	2	Beginning.
Circumcision:				
Urgent . . . . .	10	5. Operated on.	..	....
Advised . . . . .	5	3. Operated on.	..	....
		1. Parents to have done.	..	....
Syphilis . . . . .	1	1.	1	1.
Wassermann taken . . . . .	1	Negative.	1	Positive.
Hernia . . . . .	1	....	..	....
Urine:				
Analysis . . . . .	1	1. Elimination of albumen. Diet ordered.	..	....

After the examination the parents were seen, and were told what were the doctor's findings. As a rule parents give their consent to medical treatment and even to operations when told the need, though they may couple with their consent the remark, "Yes, take him, if you can get him to go. I can't"; or "he won't go, he's afraid of doctors." However, there are a few cases like the following where the need is greatest and the consent hardest to obtain. The boy's examination showed elimination of albumen through the urine, hernia, defective vision and teeth, flatfoot and a speech defect which was influenced by his impaired nervous condition. He received medicine and a diet was ordered, but his treatment was interrupted by a sojourn at the truant school. On his return his mother absolutely refused to have anything done, saying if he needed these things, why weren't they done at the truant school?

The figures in the above table were compared with 62 cases, not truants, which were referred to the visiting teacher in the same neighborhood, many of them on account of physical disability. These children had the same physical examination. The results of the comparison were as follows:

General condition	Per cent of truants	Per cent of visiting teachers' cases
Good.....	38+	17+
Fair.....	25	20
Undeveloped } Undernourished } Anemic }	36+	61+
Adenoids and tonsils needing operation.....	38.6	37
Intestinal trouble.....	54.5	52
Defective teeth.....	75	85.5
Curvature.....	11+	21
Flatfoot.....	18	32

Eye cases were not compared as they were rated differently.

Although the averages in tonsil and adenoid cases and intestinal disturbances are higher in the truants than in the visiting teachers' cases, the per cent of those in good condition is also higher; and of defects difficult to correct, like curvature and flatfoot, is lower. This would put truants not in the list of sick children but of those needing attention to remediable defects.

A sick stomach and a sick headache are given as excuses for absence from school. A toothache figures even higher, although all who complained did not avail themselves of the opportunity to have dental work done.

In order to determine whether truants have more defects than the average school child, the per cents from the examination of school children in New York City in 1911 are compared with the per cents for truants:

Defects	Per cent of school children	Per cent of truants
Defective teeth . . . . .	59.0	75.0
Hypertrophied tonsils . . . . .	15.0	34.0
Defective nasal breathing . . . . .	11.9	36.0
Defective vision . . . . .	10.6	20.0
Malnutrition . . . . .	2.5	13.6
Orthopedic defects . . . . .	.5	27.0 flatfoot and curva- ture
Cardiac disease . . . . .	.7	..
Pulmonary disease . . . . .	.2	..
Defective hearing . . . . .	.6	..

The above figures for school children are taken from "Medical Inspection of Schools" by Gulick and Ayres. In both instances only those cases needing attention are considered. The high per cents of truants would indicate their special need of attention, yet several had had no medical inspection in the school or no recent inspection, their frequent absences probably making it possible for them to escape notice.

In the following cases the physical defects are a handicap to education, and may have been the original cause of the truant habit:

A boy of 14 in a 3B grade could not see to read, and had to change his seat in the classroom in order to see the blackboard. Some months previously an optician had fitted both eyes with a +1 sphere. This winter the oculist's examination under atropin revealed hyperopia with very high astigmatism. In January the boy was fitted with strong lenses, but even with these did not have normal vision. He wore them during the first few weeks of the new term. After that his attendance became rare and finally ceased altogether, the boy having apparently disappeared. It turned out later that he had gone to work; the

glasses were forgotten. Had they come into his life eight years earlier perhaps they would have helped to keep alive his interest in school work. All his family were truants. He has a normal mentality, and alcoholic parents, and the necessity of work probably forced itself upon him. That earlier corrected vision might have saved him is inferred from comparing the case of a 6-year-old boy, the youngest of a family of truants, who "hated school" and who was fitted with glasses this spring. He has improved in his lessons and attends regularly, and his strabismus is being corrected with improving vision.

A girl of 13 suffering from keratitis was unable to attend school. She was put under treatment for this and for hereditary syphilis. It is not probable that she will ever get much from schooling unless placed—when she is in condition for it—in a blind class. While she delights in reading—against the doctor's orders—and interests herself in all that is going on about her, she shows no ambition to take her place again in the classroom.

The following 8 cases all received special medical treatment for certain defects, but are not included in the above list of 44 as they did not have a complete examination:

E. S. is a mental defective, undersized and undeveloped. She has evaded school for nearly two years. She was found to have tuberculosis and has been placed under treatment.

N. R. is one of the slippery youths who was never where one could lay one's hands on him when wanted for a medical examination. However, when finally apprehended he was found to show signs of rickets and marasmus in infancy; general nervous debility, some defective teeth, and trachoma. For the latter ailment the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have brought the reluctant parents to an understanding of their duty, and the boy was placed in a hospital for operation. He is said to be word-blind. It remains to be seen what effect the treatment will have on his scholarship.

A. R. has tubercular glands on the neck. These furnished an excellent excuse for non-attendance; she "must go to the hospital." As a matter of fact she went twice, tearing off the bandages and washing away the applications as soon as she came out. She is now enjoying the hospitality of Randall's Island and is much improved in health.

S. Y. had a Wasserman test, which was negative. His eyes were examined and glasses procured, and he wears them only under compulsion. His teeth were in bad condition, 10 or more needing treatment and filling. He is now attending a dental clinic weekly.

L. R. has a psychopathic constitution and a bad heredity.

He was the first child of very youthful parents. He attends school only when his mother brings him to each session. His physical examination showed no stigmata, but a fine, rapid tremor, enhanced by excessive cigarette smoking. He suffers from enuresis day and night, and received medical treatment for this. He is mentally backward, of limited memory and associative powers, and learns little during his scanty school attendance.

E. H. has such a weak heart that after an attempt to return to school she collapsed, and was sent to a hospital.

N. Y. has had several falls. He is mentally defective, and children of his limited mentality seem to be prone to falls. He was examined for a nasal obstruction. The septum was deflected almost obstructing one nostril, but on account of his youth, operation was deferred. He has, however, been faithful in attending dental clinic, and had all but one of his defective teeth filled when clinic closed for the summer.

J. S. has spent the majority of his ten years within an institution. His home conditions are not conducive to leading him to establish regular habits of living, and his three months of "home life" this winter resulted in about nine days of school and other days and nights on the street. His mentality is normal, personality attractive, even lovable, though his temper at times is phenomenally bad. He was found to have insufficient food, constipation, enuresis, adherent foreskin, and caries. His eyes were to be examined, but his too speedy return to an institution interfered. Two and a half months after his return to an institution he was so improved in every way that his mental examination showed a year's gain. His great need is a good home to return to. His scornful retort when he learned that institutional life again threatened him was apropos. "Put me in an *institution!* Put *me* in an institution! Put *mamma* in an institution!"

During the term five of the children examined were transferred to Truant Schools and two were placed in other institutions. Three moved out of the neighborhood. Several of these had had some work done but in none was the treatment completed. Two later received treatment through the institutions. Other impediments to getting the work done are in the child himself. His equivalent for a tonsil operation is "having his throat cut," and two boys who had gone smiling to the hospital fought their way out before the nurses had them prepared for operation.

The dental situation is bad. Many have 10 or 12 teeth needing treatment, filling, or extraction and not one of those started at the dental clinic has come quite often enough to have the work

completed. One small boy's excuse for failing to keep his appointment was "Oh, I had a toothache!" When one remembers how many teeth he has needing attention, and neglected for ten or fourteen years and needing to be filled or treated one at a time at a free clinic on a Saturday afternoon—as dear to the heart of a truant as to the child who is regular—who can blame him? The dentists were especially kind, and, however busy, gave attention to each one, but this type of child needs to be educated to the advantages of dental treatment. His father and his father's father and all his truant brothers and sisters got along without a dentist. "Oh no," replied a handsome Italian boy suffering from toothache, "I don't want to go to a dentist, why sometimes they kill the nerve!"

The possessor of a newly fitted pair of spectacles walks off proudly wearing them. A few weeks later an inquiry as to their whereabouts brings the answer, "I don't wear them because the boys called me 'cock-eye' or 'four-eyes.'" A truant girl with but  $\frac{2}{10}$  vision procured glasses, and wore them faithfully for the last six weeks of school. She appeared to be, at that time, a phenomenal success in every way. Some time later, however, her mother remarked, "Sure, what good do they do her, they're on the shelf." Teachers when they have been interviewed have gladly co-operated and seen that the child wore his glasses. This seems to be one of the best ways to establish the habit in the child. Those of the cases who showed defective vision were in great need of glasses, and early attention to the eyes might save many days of wasted non-attendance.

The impaired digestion presents a more extensive problem. The large percentage of cases of intestinal disturbance were the most hopeless, partly on account of bad teeth, and largely on account of the prevailing diet. A diet of bread and tea, the latter strong and frequent, makes its appeal to the flat pocket-books of these families as well as to their tastes. Then, too, it needs no preparation. The little children of three and four pour for themselves from the tea-pot that has stood for hours. One boy even rises from bed at night to have his tea. Of course the penny candy and ice-cream sandwich play their usual part. The breakfast in the greater number of cases was bread and tea or coffee; dinner, soup or stew,—largely potato,—bread and tea; for supper, "whatever we have left." And what do you think would be left from this restricted *ménu*? Vegetables and



fruit play a small part in the diet. Eggs are used or not according to the market price. Cereals are not popular nor anything else requiring much preparation. Seldom is there fresh milk. At noon the children eat hastily, sitting one or two at a time while the mother serves standing. Then they depart ostensibly in a great hurry for school! The evening meal is a movable feast frequently enjoyed "when we come in." No one seems to take it seriously unless there is a father regularly employed to come home at a regular time. The Italians, as a rule, have better fare.

The sleeping conditions are as follows:

11 sleep one in the bed.	8 sleep one in the room.
20 sleep two in the bed.	18 sleep two in the room.
9 sleep three in the bed.	13 sleep three in the room.
4 sleep four in the bed.	5 sleep four in the room.

All report the window in the bedroom open in warm weather, 29 have it open all winter.

Fifteen have been engaged in some money-making pursuit after school or on Saturdays. This does not include those who do housework. All have freedom to play out and none has hard or steady work. They take pride in the money they earn on Saturdays with the peddler, on the butcher wagon, or delivering goods.

The effect on attendance of three complaints is vital. Without questioning the sincerity of the excuses, those most frequently offered are, toothache, stomach-ache and "no shoes." A few days' absence leads to the formation of a habit, and even large boys dread the return to school. The first cause might be eliminated if the teeth of the younger children (six years old) could be put in good condition and kept so throughout their school term, and the dreadful results of neglect seen in the mouths of the older boys and girls be done away with. The question of diet is one which needs to be agitated among both parents and children and one which lends itself to education. Their ignorance along this line is apparent, and a campaign of education would probably show as good results as the campaign for fresh air has. The teacher and the visiting teacher can do a great deal of work here by interesting and instructing the child and the parents. The "no shoes" condition was remedied in a few cases through the kindness of a member of the Local School Board and others. The result was good but temporary, for a second-hand

pair of shoes lasts but a short time, and if the getting of shoes is easy, the wearing them out is easier, and the old cry is heard again in a few days.

The benefits of the operations are not so easily undone. Most of the operating was done this term, and it is too soon to see the effect on attendance although one teacher has already reported an improvement in behavior. It would be most interesting to follow these children to the completion of their treatment and to note their attendance during the next few terms. Many of them were just becoming interested in their physical condition and their fears were being overcome when school closed for the summer.

In 44 cases the figures for attendance in the last two years were available. Twelve could be said to be attending regularly. Thirty-one in all showed an improvement; 14 showed about the same irregularity or a falling off in attendance. Of the 12 cases showing marked improvement, the majority had been before the District Superintendent or the Children's Court or a brother and sister had; 2 were backed by strong parents; one became interested in his schooling; one (girl) had home conditions changed; one (girl) was transferred to the ungraded class. All had had a medical examination and all but one some medical attention.

While each truant should in all cases have all the medical care his case requires, it is too soon to predict that such care will be a *cure* for truancy, however much it may assist to make more efficient citizens. Two boys on whom the winter's work made the least impression were apparently normal physically and were building up a splendid physique in out-door life defiant of compulsory education laws. In contrast to them are the two following cases:

A. 10 years old; 5A grade; mentally normal; underdeveloped; undernourished, heart and lungs negative, tonsils needing operation; vision R. E.  $\frac{2}{30}$ ; L. E.  $\frac{2}{30}$  strabismus, defective teeth, digestion bad, lateral curvature, circumcision needed; height 4' 1½", weight 60 lbs.

B. 10 years; 4B grade; mentality a moron; condition poor, anemic; tendency to pigeon breast, tonsils needing operation; vision R. E.  $\frac{2}{40}$ ; L. E.  $\frac{2}{30}$ ; hyperopic astigmatism; defective teeth, lateral curvature, right and left; circumcision advised; height 5' 7¾", weight 80 lbs.

A. had no medical treatment further than an examination and

a bottle of medicine. He had glasses but never wore them. He attended school about 34 days last term, and about May 1 was sent to Truant School, from which he was transferred to the hospital for trachoma, and is to have his other operations attended to while there.

B. was given tonics. He had two teeth filled, then decided that he did not like fillings. He received eye-glasses, wore them, broke them and protested against having them replaced, all within a month. His attendance last term was 100 per cent, and because of his awakened interest in school, the operations were not done till July. Then he had adenoids, tonsils, and circumcision attended to, and is to go to the country for two weeks.

The homes differ. A.'s parents drink, the family is on the downward road. One brother was arrested and sent away for stealing. He himself is said to have taken part in a hold-up. When the parents drink, the boy does not attend school, and often disappears from home altogether. The superintendent of the hospital calls him the worst boy in the ward. He knows every trick for evading law and order.

B. has a home of only moderate comfort which he shares with eight brothers and sisters of conflicting interests. He has a severe father, and no mother. His teachers obtain a strong hold on him. His ambition is not killed; he is "going to be a fire-man."

The best results would therefore seem to come from the three-fold co-operation of the home, the school, and those remedying physical defects, the hope of all being to make the child able and willing and anxious to get his education.

The only fair conclusion to be drawn from this physical study is not only the obvious one that every school child needs more physical attention than he is at present receiving but that truants especially who have fallen short in one of the prime requirements of life should have every physical handicap removed before they are regarded as cases for punitive treatment. The co-operation between the attendance officer and the nurse in many schools seems to be close, but this is accidental. The effort ordinarily required to get a child examined by the school doctor seems to be great, whereas it should be not only easy but even automatically done. Every truant is physically examined before being sent to the truant school, but this is too late to save the boy from the necessity of being "sent up" and to save the city from the expense of his commitment. It is also too late for physical defects to be remedied before the boy goes away. If a

psychological examination were given to determine a boy's mental normality before declaring him a truant, a thorough physical examination should at the same time be given to every boy who did not prove mentally defective. Then every boy who came to the attendance officer would be certified to be mentally normal and his physical defects would already be listed for the school nurse to attend to. The ordinary medical inspection is not sufficient for this purpose as many of the boys in this study had never been examined at all. Many others had not been examined for so many years that the records were completely out of date. Still others whose school examination was of recent date showed that grave physical defects had gone undetected in the hasty routine of the school inspection.

#### IV. THE FAILURE OF TRUANTS TO CONNECT SCHOOL WITH LIFE

Has the child any outlook or ambition immediate or future that makes school seem logical, desirable, or necessary is one of the important questions in the study of truancy. One falls into the habit of regarding truancy as the out-cropping of sin or vice as something abnormal and unnatural. Those who know the meaning and value of education speak as though the instinct to get up in the morning, to take hat and books and start for school, was as natural an instinct in a boy as the instinct to seek for food and warmth in a young puppy. As a matter of fact, this getting up at a regular time, starting for a regular place where he will be confined, disciplined and made to work and to do this day after day is a highly evolved activity and the result of training upon a being capable of assuming responsibility. When we have a boy who is feeble-minded and incapable of assuming responsibility and a home that is defective and incapable of training to regularity, it is the great wonder that a boy ever goes to school at all. The only substitute for these goads from behind must be something in the school itself which allures or entices the child to attend. He must be interested in what he does there, or he must see it as a means to something he wants to do further on in life. If the school can supply this, a boy will attend, even in the face of home and neighborhood deficiencies. For the majority of children, the school does this. There are cases where individual responsibility, home training and school interest all fail, and this leaves the irresponsible, untrained, uninterested product of nature, the truant. He is not a sinner, he is not vicious, he is not unnatural. He is merely an untrained, unevolved human being, whom it would seem to be the function of the school to attract, to interest and to train, in spite of himself.

The material gathered on this point of what the school does to make good the deficiencies of the home and the neighborhood is rather difficult to show in tabular form. It was gathered around the following points:

1st: Number of non-promotions and character of school marks, both indicating whether the feeling of success or failure was acting as a goad or a millstone.

2nd. What the child did when playing truant as showing what his rival activities were and where his real interest was, if not in school.

3rd. What the child looked forward to as an adult occupation: that is, whether the future appealed to his imagination as something to work toward or seemed not to figure at all in his thoughts.

#### NON-PROMOTION AS A CAUSE OF NON-ATTENDANCE

In regard to the first point, non-promotion or a series of non-promotions as shown on the blue record cards of the school had preceded the first sign of truancy in nearly every case. In the 43 per cent of feeble-minded and 8 per cent of borderline cases this was to be expected. Here records of appalling discouragement were written. Often two, sometimes three, terms in every class accompanied by C and D rating with a constant repetition of "not proficient in arithmetic and reading," or "not proficient in arithmetic and spelling" became monotonously common in the study of these records.

In the school histories of the normal children, however, one hoped to find a record of one term in a grade from 1A to 8B in a majority of cases. Among the normal truants, however, this is far too often varied with a repetition of a grade, changes from one school to another, and finally with sojourns at the protectory or one of the truant schools. The habit of taking a transfer from one school to another, especially to a Parochial School, appears on the face of these records as commonly as it does in the stories of the mothers and of the attendance officers themselves. One of these boys had attended seven different schools during five years of his school life, not counting the Catholic Protectory, where he had been sent for truancy.

On the whole, promotion seemed to be a great stimulus to attendance but by the same token, non-promotion seemed in more cases than not to have been the starting point for non-attendance.

#### WHAT TRUANTS DO WHEN NOT IN SCHOOL

The question which was put to every child at some time during one of the interviews with him, "What do you do when

you go on the hook?" brought a surprisingly small variety of answers. For the most part, however, they were truthful. Those boys who had anything to conceal usually became vague instead of producing an innocent substitute for the truth. The one thing common to them all was the pervasive mood of freedom. "Oh, I go all around," is a direct quotation from over a dozen West Side boys. This was often followed up by more specific stories of going after wood, down on the docks, or "to my Aunt's in 89th Street." Another favorite resort was "to the Park to see the animals." One almost believed from the frequency of this reply that a special officer stationed at the animal cages would catch his quota of truants there every day. And as a matter of fact almost any pleasant morning whoever cares to "go on the hook" and will look in on the new bear cubs in Central Park will find plenty of little boys of school age to keep him company in that alluring occupation.

This way of passing the stolen hours, innocent in itself, prevails mostly among the smaller boys. Many of the older boys are engaged in the very characteristic West Side occupation of pigeon flying. This is done from the roofs of the tenements, where one gang is pitted against another, stealing pigeons back and forth, and the sport becomes, when over-indulged in, a very deteriorating occupation. Pigeon flying is one of the activities by which the loafers of the neighborhood, boys over school age who are chronically out of work, lure the school boys into their gangs. It was one of these gangs that on 11th Avenue dropped a brick on the head of a truant officer last winter, so the story goes, and but for the protection of his stiff derby hat would have killed him. These gangsters are the worst influence in the neighborhood, working not only against school attendance but against home control and good ideals. To the younger boys they look like heroes. They fight and swear and spit and chew and boast. They advertise themselves to the small boy as "what you will be if you do as we say," and the small boy, as they say, "falls for it" for lack of any other vision of the period of life just ahead of him. These older boys promise to protect the younger ones from the "cop," the truant officer, and the court. For every boy in such a gang who gets sent up, dozens escape. Therefore the younger boys believe in the proffered guardianship and accept it.

The school does not feel more bitterly against these gangs than do the mothers of the boys themselves, but both seem powerless

to contend against them. The West Side gang is a sort of self-perpetuating institution which is constantly fed from beneath by the ranks of truants as the older members pass on to deeper shades of vice, graduating into the thugs and saloon toughs of the neighborhood, who in turn lend protection to the next in succession.

The only way to keep a boy out of these gangs on the West Side is to keep him in a school and at home. When the mother is at work all day and the boy gets ahead of her, the gang is waiting to receive him. It is small wonder that many of the women beg to have their boys sent to the truant schools.

### THE TRUANT'S IDEA OF HIS WAGE-EARNING CAREER

The third point in regard to the child's idea of his own future is illuminated by the list of occupations that were given by boys who had formulated any plans whatsoever. Their answers were divided into two groups,—those which showed imagination and those which simply accepted what the environment had to offer as the easiest entrance into wage earning without regard to personal preference or future economic prospects:

#### SHOWING IMAGINATION (WEST SIDE)

- "A job to open doors for ladies who get out of automobiles."
- "Going out in the world to make my way."
- "An engineer and run an engine."
- "A job in a pool room, you get lots of tips."
- "Bring stuff around to boys in institutions."
- "Going to be a sailor."
- "An artist and paint scenes on the walls of saloons."
- "Chauffeur."
- "Carpenter." (After a term in the truant school.)
- "Engineer in factory."
- "Electrician."

#### (EAST SIDE)

- "College."
- "Broker."
- "Doctor."
- "Lawyer."
- "Architect."
- "Civil engineer."
- "On the railroad."

#### SHOWING NO IMAGINATION (WEST SIDE)

- "Iron foundry."
- "Piano factory."
- "Errand boy."
- "Office boy."
- "Bundle boy in hotel."
- "Fireman on engine."
- "Elevator boy."
- "Paper boy."
- "Helper to someone."
- "Work for city."
- "Some trade."
- "Messenger boy in a disorderly house." (Already has the job.)
- "Get a nice easy job."
- "What I can get."
- "Anything."
- "Don't care."
- "Don't know."

#### (EAST SIDE)

- "Fruit seller."
- "Baker."
- "Office work."
- "With father in Safe Co."
- "Pencil factory."

In very few West Side cases did the present school life seem to



connect in the boy's mind with his individual future. With the East Side boys there was ample manifestation of a strong subjective connection. The boys who wanted to go to college, to be a doctor, a lawyer, or an architect all saw school as a means of getting there and even though they had drifted into truancy temporarily, this ambition furnished a lever by which it was possible to urge them back into school. What the West Side boy lacks in impetus from within himself and stimulus from the neighborhood and home surroundings should in some objective way be made up to him by the school. Even a feeble-minded boy has more interest in coming to school when his teacher tells him he can learn to do something that will help him to get a better job, especially if she continues to hold this thought before him. Of course it is difficult in the regular grades for the teacher to find time for the consideration of individual ideals, but even in the working paper classes which are small, the boys had made no plans for wage-earning careers. "Oh, I'll get some kind of a job," was the usual attitude. One boy who had only 8 more days to attend school before getting his working papers, said, "Oh, I suppose I'll work at something." Other boys who declared they were eager to go to work, had their interest chiefly centered in making money rather than on any special kind of work which they wanted to do.

Two things were equally noticeable in the conversations on the subject of future occupations. First was the absolutely unstimulated attitude of the boys, all within a year or so of working age and many within a few months of actually seeking employment. Apparently neither ~~at~~ home nor at school had anyone presented to them any constructive plans for a "career." Second was the eagerness with which they entered into conversation on the subject and welcomed suggestions of any kind. It would seem that individual interviews with these boys concerning their economic prospects and the ~~relation~~ of education to success would be a fruitful means of interesting them in regular attendance. While vocational training in the schools and pre-vocational classes are under discussion and scientific vocational guidance is merely a phrase, doubtless a little unscientific ~~but~~ interested conversation between individual teachers and individual boys would be most remunerative in helping ~~the~~ child to bridge that wide gap between the known and the unknown, and in giving him a vision of a future career founded on his present education.

## SUMMARY

In conclusion, the original questions around which the material for the study was gathered and a brief summary of the results secured are here given.

1. Is this child of normal mentality?

In 43% of the 150 cases,—No.

In 49% of the 150 cases,—Yes.

In 8% of the 150 cases,—It is doubtful.

2. Does this child come from a complete economic family?

In 26% of the 150 cases,—Yes.

In 74% of the 150 cases,—No.

3. Is this child below the average physically?

The 44 cases studied were probably not below the average school child of the neighborhood but far below the normal.

4. Has this child any outlook or ambition, immediate or future, that makes school seem logical, desirable, or necessary?

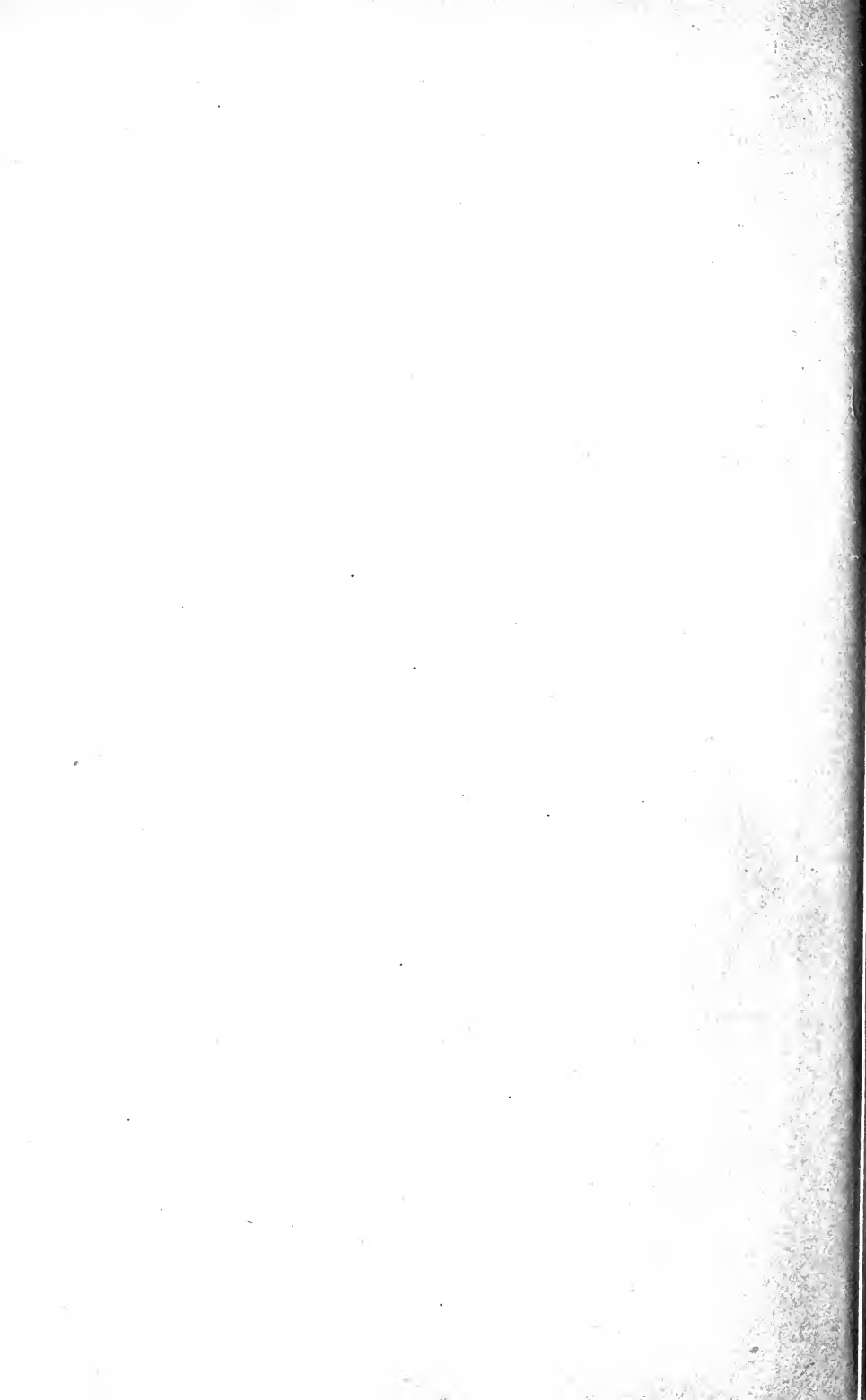
The only stimulus which the school offers, namely promotion and good marks, these children did not have. On the other hand, they did have non-promotion and poor marks to discourage them.

The home and neighborhood influences of the West Side are both defective in supplying stimulus to ambition.

Apparently neither teachers nor parents have ever attempted to give these children any vision of the relation of their present education to their future wage-earning careers.

Truancy is like sickness in that every case cannot be cured by a dose from the same bottle. More than half the value of the treatment must consist in a careful and correct diagnosis of the cause in each case. In this comparatively small number of cases of truancy (150) so many different causes have been found that there must be on the entire list of truants throughout the city a still larger number of causes as yet undetected. Only an ana-

lytical method of treating these cases can bring about an intelligent and effective handling of them. The one recommendation that can strongly be made as a result of this study is that a thorough and competent psychological and physical examination be made of every case reported for truancy, and that those cases found to be mentally defective shall not be given punitive treatment as truants but removed from the jurisdiction of the compulsory attendance department entirely and educated in the schools or in institutions as feeble-minded children. This would decrease the number of cases to be handled and immensely increase the possibilities of success in the handling of the normal cases by the attendance officers and truant schools.



## APPENDIX

### EXCERPTS FROM REPORTS PRESENTED BY FREDERICK W. ELLIS AND E. HELEN HANNAHS

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#### I. TESTS USED IN THE MENTAL EXAMINATION

##### Group I. Establishment of General Habits and Relations.

1. Name and address. Place of birth.
2. Day and date (8:4). Months of the year (9:4). Date of birth.
3. Handwriting, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary and grammar of the written work.
4. Counting forward and backward by rote and by skips (8:2).
5. Family history. Personal history. School history. Employment. Other personal data.

##### Group II. Readiness in Making New Adjustments.

1. Recall of figures (8:5).
2. Making crosses or other graphic signs.
3. Peg board.
4. Reproduction of geometrical forms (10:2).
5. Reproduction of sentences (15:3).

##### Group III. Continuous Effort in the Process of Adjustment.

1. Recall of objects (Kirkpatrick). Grouping of objects.
2. Arranging weights (Galton; 10:1). Estimating lengths (12:1).
3. Cancellation test (Bourdon).
4. Directions test (Woodworth).
5. Mixed sentences (12:5).

##### Group IV. Ability to Construct under Controlled Conditions.

1. Continuous addition (Kraepelin; Simpson).
2. Simple calculations.
3. Paper tearing (Adult:1).
4. Form board (Seguin). Construction puzzle (Healy).
5. Invention of story with given objects.

##### Group V. Purposive Control of the Thinking Processes.

1. Sentence completion (Ebbinghaus; 9:5; 10:4).
2. Incorporation of three given words in a sentence (Masselon; 10:5; 12:2).
3. Writing opposites (Thorndike).
4. Free word production (Jastrow; 12:3).
5. Description of pictures (7:2; 15:4).

## Group VI. Precision in Dealing with Likeness and Difference.

1. Omissions in pictures (8:3).
2. Comparison of remembered objects (8:1).
3. Definitions above use (9:2).
4. Detection of absurdities (10:3).
5. Use of abstract terms (12:4).

NOTE.—The figures in parenthesis refer to corresponding tests in the Binet and Simon Intelligence Test.

## II. REPRESENTATIVE CASES FROM DIFFERENT GROUPS

### FROM THE MENTALLY DEFECTIVE GROUP

Hammer, William.

Age: 14 years, 10 months, 12 days.

Binet and Simon score: 9.4.

Physical growth period: Early adolescence.

Mental growth period: Later childhood, more active type.

Retardation: Two growth periods.

School grade: 5B.

General Information.

Physical Condition: He was born in Germany. His birth and development were normal. He was breast fed one year. There were no convulsions. He has had measles. He was operated on for adenoids and enlarged tonsils but still has obstructed breathing. He fell from his bicycle when young and was thought to have injured his nose.

Family History: His father Gustav was born in Hamburg, Germany. He came to the United States about 1900, and nine months later brought over his wife and children. His people were farmers in Germany. His father died thirty-seven years ago. His mother, two brothers and two sisters came to the United States. His mother died here. One brother is a pilot. His sisters have a good business but "don't help him any." He worked until recently in a piano factory at twenty-five dollars every two weeks. He is now laid off because "they are taking on young boys at five dollars and laying off old help." The father looks able bodied and does not seem to be alcoholic. He talks with a strong accent difficult to understand.

The mother was born in Germany. Her parents are dead. Her people did not immigrate. There is no consanguinity. The children are:

1. Daughter; married; one child.
2. Daughter; married; two children.
3. Son; married; works on tinfoil for tobacco.
4. Son; died while teething.
5. Son; 20 years, formerly with Buffalo Bill Company.
6. Daughter; 18 years; lives out as servant. No work at present.
7. William.
8. George.
9. Daughter; 8 years; school 1A, was tongue tied and operated on twice with some improvement. Not strong. No appetite.
10. Son; 4 years old; at home. Left with married daughter when mother works out.

Home Life: The father does not have steady work. The mother has been

working in families to help support her own family at one dollar sixty cents a day. The children have been on the street. They pay nine dollars rent. The boys have to be home at 8 P. M. They are given three cents each to buy their noon lunch. William is anxious to go to work. He has no birth certificate and cannot get his working papers. He helps a peddler Saturdays at fifty cents a day. The family have been helped by their church in various ways. The mother has been provided with work and the boys have been taken to Sunday School.

School Problem: He has been left back a number of times and has been markedly deficient in spelling and arithmetic. He says he is going to High School and to college and at the same time says he plays truant because "school is too hard." He is three years retarded in his grade.

BINET-SIMON INTELLIGENCE TEST						
YEAR	NUMBER OF TESTS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I, 2						
3						
4						
5						
6		†				
7	†	†				
8	†	†	†	†	†	†
9	†	-	†	†	†	†
10	-	-	-	-		†
12	-	-	†	-		†
15			-	-		

#### INTERPRETATION OF BINET-SIMON TEST

Binet and Simon Intelligence Test: He is an adolescent in his physical growth, and in his mental development is in his later childhood period. He is getting his later childhood mental experience in an active way, that gives some promise of his reaching the pre-adolescent stage. To do this he needs only to give description of common objects that include characteristics peculiar to them alone. He seems likely to do this, judging by the effort he made. He is one full growth period retarded and part of another, a degree of backwardness that makes him a subject for careful scrutiny. Should he emerge into the next period there is little promise of his engaging very actively in its pre-adolescent mental experiences.

#### INTERPRETATION OF GENERAL MENTAL TEST

Efficiency Test: I. General Mental Habits: He is not very well established in the forms of thinking appropriate to his physical age. He made time statements correctly. He made statements of place indifferently in the matter of details. His handwriting is poor but legible. His spelling is faulty. Examples of this are: "ribbin" for ribbon; "waiter" for "way to"; "stared" for started; "whos" for whose; "differcultry" for difficulty; "honur" for honor; "befor" for before. He spelled correctly some equally difficult words, as neighbor, beautiful, separate, crooked, roughness, excused, fault. The unevenness suggests a possible element of carelessness. He certainly was careless in counting, as he came out 18 too many in a total of 170. As 4 separate lines count up to 18 it is probable that he counted one line twice. His vocabulary is quite objective and his words produced with fair fluency.

II. Readiness in Meeting New Situations: His sensori-motor performances are fair. His crosses were of the second grade and fair in number. He reproduced all the geometrical forms, with some inaccuracy in the fifth and seventh. His effort on the seventh was better than on a previous

trial in February. He recalled only 5 figures. He recalled neither sentence with verbal accuracy, but his imperfections were not such as to suggest a natural language defect so much as an ineffective effort to form language habits.

III. Persistence in Gaining Effects. He did well in two important tests in this group. In the cancellation test he scored correctly 18 out of the 20 lines. He succeeded in arranging two of the mixed sentences and approximated correctness in a third.

In other tests he did poorly. He failed in judging weights and in judging lengths. He recalled 9 out of 10 objects, but he was quite incoherent in his attempts to recall the order. He was at a loss to establish any relations between the objects without going outside the objects. If he is to be credited with carelessness, this absence of emotional reaction to the objects might be an adequate explanation. He is much more efficient when he is dealing with definite materials, and this is true whether the materials be sensori-motor or ideational. Where he has to contribute interest to the situation he is not effective.

IV. Ability to Elaborate Situations: The characteristics displayed in the previous group are evident here. He added 3 sums correctly, failed in the fourth, added 1 correctly, failed on the sixth, then added 3 correctly. His total of 7 out of 9 in 2 minutes was not bad, but there seemed to be no good reason for his failures except a fluctuation of interest in the task. He was slow in placing the forms in the board, but quick in working out his puzzle. No reason could be assigned for this discrepancy, unless again it be fluctuating interest. He did not do his calculations. He did not construct a pattern from tearing folded paper. His attempt at inventing a story showed some maturity of interest in the value of the objects for creating a situation, but did not go beyond this. He has not an active mind and except where the material is merely to be manipulated does little in making combinations.

V. Dealing with Alternatives in Purposive Thinking: His performances here were immature and ineffective to the point of indifference. This is true of the incomplete sentences where he fails in one of the easy and all of the more difficult ones. It is also true of the attempt at making a sentence including three words, where his sentence is correct in form, but negligent of any exact meaning. In the opposites test he gave correct alternatives for 7 of the first 8, and only a scattered 4 out of the remaining 12. He gave a voluminous description of the pictures, but only developed a simple explanation in the first one of the three.

VI. Dealing with Positive and Negative Elements in Situations: He did moderately well on the less mature tests, but failed to specify what was wrong in the absurd statements, and did not recognize any essential characteristics in the general terms.

Summary: He has some ability, of a slightly immature degree of development, but this is offset by a considerable degree of mental inertia. He sometimes recognizes the more important elements in situations, and is ready to do something if appealed to, without deep concern as to the outcome. This was illustrated by his brave attempts at the hard opposites, only 3 of which turned out correctly. He is not resourceful and only makes a good showing when situations are modified to admit of an obvious and easy completion. As a workman he does not give promise of doing work that is not presented in single operations. School has lost its interest for him, and this is not likely to be revived outside of a vocational school. It is not obvious that he would do effective work at any employment. It seems likely to be difficult to keep him stimulated to the degree of activity that will make him more than barely self-sustaining and this only for himself.



Ambrosini, John.

Age: 13 years, 1 month, 27 days.

Binet and Simon score: 9.2.

Physical growth period: Pre-adolescent.

Mental growth period: Later childhood, the more active type.

Retardation: One growth period.

School grade: 5B. Now in a special D class for conduct. One year retarded.

Physical Condition: He is undersized. His head is poorly shaped. His hands are coarse and bleeding. Every four days he has some kind of attack that keeps him in bed with nausea.

School Problem: He is a truant; he steals; he is troublesome in school. He is only one year retarded. He has had fairly good marks all the way up from 1A.

Ambrosini, Pietro.

Age: 11 years, 7 months.

Binet and Simon score: 7.6.

Physical growth period: Later childhood.

Mental growth period: Early childhood, the less active type.

Retardation: One growth period.

School grade: 2B. He is in a C class for foreigners. He is three years retarded and cannot do the 2B work.

Physical Condition: He is undersized. His head and hands are of an inferior type. He has a pinched look. He is left handed. His speech is indistinct and blurred. He sticks out his tongue as he works.

Family History: The parents are Italian born. There are eight children. The two oldest brothers are in confinement, one of them under charge of murder in Waterbury, Connecticut. The third brother is home on temporary leave from a Protectors where he spent the last year. He is to return to the Protectors for the summer. John is the fourth child and Pietro the fifth. The three smaller children look delicate, the youngest, a baby of two months, especially so. The father is apparently healthy. The mother is very large.

Home Life: The father is inclined to be demonstrative. The mother appears to be a nice woman but assumes a helpless attitude when questioned about her sons and husband. She says of them that they "are no good." She keeps the home neat and apparently gets good meals for her family. The father does little towards the support of the family.

School Problem: He can do no school work at all. He has been put in a C class for foreigners because he was so small and so troublesome. He has always been deficient in every subject. He is a truant.

#### BINET-SIMON INTELLIGENCE TEST

	JOHN					PIETRO				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
6				†		6	†	†	†	†
7	†	†	†	†	†	7	-	-	†	†
8	†	†	-	†	†	8	†	†	-	†
9	†	†	†	†	-	9	†	-	†	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
12	-	-	†	-	-	12	-	-	-	-
15	-	†	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-

#### INTERPRETATION OF PIETRO'S BINET-SIMON TEST

Binet and Simon Intelligence Test: He is in the pre-adolescent stage of his physical growth. His mental development is two growth periods in arrears, and he is getting his early childhood mental experiences in an inactive way that gives poor promise of further development. Although he is 12 years old in July he did not tell right from left, only mentioned objects in pictures, instead of giving simple descriptions, did not carry out 3 simple orders given him at one time, did not note the omissions in mutilated outline pictures, did not describe objects by their distinctive uses, did not recite the months of the year, and did not give any conclusion at all for simple unfinished sentences. He passes none of the tests of the pre-adolescent period. The impression gained from this testing is one of settled incapacity for any but the most primitive tasks. It is interesting to compare him with his brother 16 months older, as they have the same heredity, were brought up under the same conditions, and present the same social fault. The summaries of the Binet and Simon examinations of the two boys are placed here side by side for comparison.

#### INTERPRETATION OF PIETRO'S GENERAL MENTAL TEST

Efficiency Test: I. General Mental Habits: This boy's general mental performances are about on a level with his older brother's. He has the same difficulty in establishing mental co-operation; he is indifferent to exact statement of times; he is lax in statement of places; his handwriting is equal to John's in legibility but lacks some of John's regularity; he had the same difficulty in counting, although with more excuse on account of the crowded condition of his tally marks. There is not enough difference here to account for the fact that Pietro is in 2B while John is in 5B. The later tests must be relied on for an adequate explanation.

II. Readiness in Meeting New Situations: Pietro recalled figures better than his older brother. He also pegged a trifle faster. Like John he reproduced successfully only two of the geometrical forms, but the general character of this work was poorer. His work in continued cross-making was 2 grades lower, and showed poor manual co-ordination. He did poorer work in repeating sentences, in neither case being able to complete the sentence. This very low power of adjustment to simplified and definite situations goes a long way in accounting for the different rank of the two boys in school.

III. Persistence in Gaining Effects: He has the same fairly satisfactory immediate recall as his brother, with some advantage in the matter of order. Both fail to connect objects by an over-lapping of inherent interests, but this boy is much less successful in his attempts, both at recognizing and at describing relations. He put a rider and chair together with the explanation; "So the man can sit down." He put the axe and chicken together, but in describing their interest to him overlooked the chance to indulge his fancy and explained: "The axe is going to chop the wood." He seems to be lingering in the stage of getting simple recognition of often repeated situations, appearing in his mind as dimly familiar images. He cancelled better than his brother, improving noticeably toward the end of the task and scoring correctly 11 lines to his brother's 4. His mental behavior, then, is slightly more orderly, and he is quite a little more steady in application. Where order and physical application do not count he is not so good. He failed in judging weights and lengths. Most significant was his total failure to restore any order to the mixed sentences.

IV. Ability to Elaborate Situations: One who cannot recognize the possible interest in situations can hardly be expected to do much toward combining materials into new situations. He failed in all four of his attempts at addition, which puts him in an inferior relation to school work as compared with his brother. He was a few seconds slower with the form

board but considerably faster with the puzzle. His appreciation of the value of the objects for story making was livelier, and this correlates well with his better recall of order for similar objects. The interests discovered in the objects were still sparse, as shown by the fact of their general dissimilarity. This also correlates with his failure to make any good simple associations in this first set of objects shown him. Pietro's mind can be stimulated by contact with other minds, perhaps more readily than John's, but the resultant mental activities are not so abundant or so well ordered as to enable him to participate in their efforts at managing materials and dealing with situations so as to alter them to his advantage.

V. Dealing with Alternatives in Purposeful Thinking: The same thing is true of his lack of ability to keep pace mentally with those who are thinking out definite purposes and putting them into effect. In this he is distinctly inferior to his brother. Where his brother gave irrelevant conclusions to the partially elaborated situations pictured in the unfinished sentences, he merely repeated the statement in a more incoherent form.

VI. Dealing with Positive and Negative Elements in Situations: He was not only inferior to his brother here, but his inefficiency amounts to a real incapacity for entering into clear relations with the natural order about him. The comparisons offer an illustration of this so typical as to call for quotation: "A butterfly can lay honey but a fly can't. You can burn wood but you can't burn cloth. You can put cloth on the table and you can burn paper." He describes things only by their most familiar uses.

Summary: Pietro is neither so vigorous nor so efficient as his brother. The Binet and Simon scores of 7.6 and 9.2 do not express the difference as well as the school rating of 2B and 5B, and the interpretation in terms of growth of an arrears of two full growth periods. Pietro is physically in poorer condition, mentally less constructive, and less discriminating, though slightly more persistent and industrious. He is so poorly related to his surroundings and to the mental activities of boys of his age, and especially to boys of the more influential adolescent age, as to make him the plaything of others. In the conflict of social influences, some more mature and some less, some more concerned for his advantage and some less so, he is poorly equipped to distinguish and take sides. In this situation his brother, with the peculiar characteristics described in the study of his Efficiency Test, is the deciding influence. He needs to be removed from this particular influence and to be put under influences that work singly to his advantage.

#### FROM THE BORDERLINE GROUP

Grogan, Michael.

Age: 12 years, 7 months, 26 days.

Binet and Simon score: 8.8.

Physical growth period: Pre-adolescent.

Mental growth period: Later childhood, the less active type.

Retardation: One growth period.

School grade: 3A. Repeated 2A. His marks are B and C.

General Information.

Physical Condition: He is pale and delicate looking, with a pinched in mouth. His lower teeth are in bad condition. He has adenoids and enlarged tonsils. Needs circumcision. He bites his finger nails, speaks indistinctly; he is anemic and fourteen per cent. below the normal weight. He is poorly fed as the family is partly depending on charity. At an early age he fell out of a window and hurt his head. He now has a pain in his head which he attributes to this fall. He states that the pains

come on in school and at that time he cannot think; also that he feels the same pain when he raises his arms in the physical exercises. He likes to stay in bed mornings to sleep as he is often awake nights especially when he has to care for his mother. He is said to have been born "with a black veil over his body."

**Family History:** His father died of pneumonia; he may have had tuberculosis; is said not to have been a heavy drinker. His mother has a cough; has heart, nerve and stomach trouble; these are said to be due to nervous shock following a railroad accident.

He is the youngest of four living children; one child, Peter, is a mental defective; the mother states that he was normal until he was thirteen when he fell down an airshaft. The two other children are normal.

**School Problem:** The mother states that he is not a truant but she keeps him home when she needs his help. He is apparently unable to apply himself with any profit to school work.

BINET-SIMON INTELLIGENCE TEST						
YEAR	NUMBER OF TESTS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I, 2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7	†	†	†	†	†	
8	†	†	†	†	†	
9	†	-	†	-	-	
10	-	-	-	-	-	
12	†	-	-	†	-	
15	-	-	-	-	-	
Adult	-					

#### INTERPRETATION OF BINET-SIMON TEST

**Binet and Simon Intelligence Test:** He has reached the pre-adolescent stage of physical development, but his mental performances are those characteristic of the preceding stage of later childhood. Even these activities are of the less efficient type. Of the later childhood activities tested he showed certain control of but two of the simpler ones, namely the recognition of different pieces of money and making change. Of the early adolescent activities tested he showed an independent judgment of the length of lines. He also showed some comprehension of the practical aspects of some simple virtues. This suggests that his emotional temperament is developing somewhat in advance of his general intelligence and that it may become a source of appeal in gaining his co-operation for further efforts at self-development. At least it may prove effective in reducing any tendency to active opposition toward good.

#### INTERPRETATION OF GENERAL MENTAL TEST

**Efficiency Test: I. General Mental Habits:** His power to form general mental habits has been exercised to little advantage for the past four years. His handwriting is of the grade of an efficient child of 8 years. He spells correctly only simple words. He does not punctuate. His vocabulary is meagre and his speech ungrammatical. He did not count correctly either backward or forward. Though he could give the day and date orally he did not write it correctly, and he could not make a written statement of when and where he was born.

**II. Ready Adjustment to Particular Situations:** His power to adjust himself to particular situations is not great. He showed poor manual co-ordination in making crosses and in pegging. His ability to get and reproduce simple oculo-motor images is low. He showed a slightly

better capacity to catch and reproduce simple word pictures, but not enough to make him apt in exchange of ideas. He recalled 6 figures, which suggests that it is necessary to make a definite appeal to him to get anything like fair reproductions.

III. Persistence in Gaining Effects. When called on to perform other similar tasks requiring more continued effort he did slightly more satisfactory work. He recalled 9 out of 10 objects shown him, with only one mistake in order. He recognized simple and playful relations between the objects, though he did not show more than a very childlike ability to think and to talk about these relations. He did not waver in his careful comparison of the lengths of lines. His least satisfactory work was in the cancellation test where he did not manage to get himself well under control until the last four lines. Scattering successes before this brought the total number of lines correctly scored up to 10 out of a total of 20 lines. He compelled himself in the same fashion to a correct judgment of weights on the second and third trials. With the much more mature tests of rearranging mixed sentences he could do nothing. On the whole his practice ability is unexpectedly good as compared with his readiness to grasp definite tasks and indicates clearly a superiority of organic power as compared with his motor control.

IV. Ability to Elaborate Situations: His immaturity and his ineffectiveness in the use of his slight abilities was shown clearly by the poverty of the results obtained when he undertook constructive work with definite materials and under definite conditions. He added slowly, getting correct results in 2 out of 3 additions made in 2 minutes. His time for the form board was quite long. He worked unintelligently at the puzzle given him for some time and was obliged to give it up. He failed completely in constructing a pattern from torn paper, and could do nothing in constructing a story. No amount of persistence seemed likely to avail to bring him any mastery of these more elaborate tasks.

V. Forming Purposes and Holding them in the Face of Alternatives: When set at work requiring the carrying out of purposes, or the forming of new purposes, on the level of pre-adolescent interests, he was quite ineffective. He was handicapped in this by his inability to grasp simple situations, and by his small vocabulary and limited stock of ideas above the level of names for objects and actions. So far as these tests can show he is limited to recognizing the purposes of others and is not apt at forming them for himself. Purposive thinking and acting are not likely to engage him as his co-operation with others who are more purposeful can be secured only by appeals to his feeling or his self-interest.

VI. Affirming Positive and Negative Elements in Situations: In spite of his poor ability to direct his mind toward more remote accomplishments he showed some ability to recognize likenesses and difference and to designate them clearly. This moderate power of recognition in elaborate situations parallels the moderate ability for persistent practice shown in the third group of tests, and holds out a possibility that he may develop some power to perceive and relate as he grows physically more mature.

Summary: It is apparent that his school grade of 2B does not measure his advance in gaining experience of the common facts of life and it is difficult for him to be interested in the work of this simple grade. The fact that he has a fair memory for simple facts, the power to recognize associations, and a feeling for ideas of conduct, shows that he has a potential ability that is not getting physical re-enforcement or stimulation from the remoter form of activities characteristic of school life. If his physical debility and mental listlessness could be offset by a free and vigorous out-of-door life, with abundance of good and normal conditions for the exercise of right impulses, under a maximum of appeal to good feeling, it is probable that he would show some improvement in general efficiency. It seems probable that neither his physical nor mental development will be very strong. The next year will probably determine whether there

is any latent power to mature mentally. Unless some change for the better takes place the chances are that he will be baffled in his efforts at self-support and that he will feel deeply his inability to prosper.

Mackaye, Wardwell.

Age: 9 years, 3 months, 20 days.

Binet and Simon score: 8.2.

Physical growth period: Later childhood.

Mental growth period: Early childhood, the more active type.

Retardation: One growth period.

School grade: 3A.

General Information.

**Physical Condition:** He has a high narrow forehead and long face. He looks thin and delicate. He has a typical adenoid facies, he is a mouth breather and drools.

Nothing abnormal is reported about his birth. He had measles, chicken-pox and whooping cough. He has had his tonsils operated on unsuccessfully and is to come to the hospital for a complete enucleation. He is also to have a circumcision. He has had a growth removed from the genitals. He formerly had enuresis but does not suffer from this now.

**Family History:** His parents were born in the United States. His mother died of tuberculosis seven years ago and his grandmother died of the same illness recently. He has one sister seven years old. His father is again married.

**Home Life:** He lived with his father for four years. He has boarded in various places, recently with a family on Staten Island. His father does not think that his present boarding place is satisfactory as he seems to have neither enough to eat nor sufficient care. The woman in charge of the place reports him as being most unsatisfactory in his conduct. She also states that he is suffering from an eruption on the skin which is probably an itch.

**School Problem:** He is reported to have been a truant from school while living on Staten Island. After coming to New York, February, 1914, he stayed away from school for two days. He has done the same two other times since for a whole day and a half day.

His father's mother always thought that there was something wrong with him mentally and a physician, a friend of his father's, also thought that there might be something the matter with him. At school he is reported to be forgetful, inactive, nervous and sometimes irritable. He is apt to get into trouble with the other children. He does not tell the truth, he shows a great deal of self pity, tells tales on the other children, but seems kind to little children. His reports show him to be good in reading and hand work and poor in other work, especially with numbers.

BINET-SIMON INTELLIGENCE TEST						
YEAR	NUMBER OF TESTS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1, 2						
3						
4						
5						
6	†	†	†	†	†	
7	†	-	†	†	-	
8	†	†	-	†	-	
9	†	-	-	†	†	
10	-	-	†	-	-	
12	-	-	†	-	-	
15			-	-		

### INTERPRETATION OF BINET-SIMON TEST

**Binet and Simon Intelligence Test:** In his physical development he has just passed out of early childhood. In his mental development, as shown by these tests, he is still in early childhood, and still actively engaged in getting the experiences appropriate to that period. The tests for the early childhood period that he passed successfully have a simple practical value for gainful purposes. He knows the months, tells the time of day, and is mainly correct in his statement of the date. He also makes change, calculates the value of stamps of two denominations, and executes as many as three simple commissions given him at one time. His vocabulary is fairly ample. He is limited in the successful use of these abilities by his inability to name colors, his inability to give more than the simplest description of pictures, or to describe common articles apart from their simpler uses.

His retardation of one growth period cannot be considered serious, but his uneven use of the abilities of the earlier period warrant a closer study of his general efficiency.

### INTERPRETATION OF GENERAL MENTAL TEST

**Efficiency Test: I. General Mental Habits:** He shows great unsteadiness in his attempts to set up his more general mental activities. He hesitated over the day of the week. He could not tell the place of his birth. He wrote his address so that it is necessary to conjecture his meaning. His handwriting is very unsteady and poorly formed, though still legible. His spelling of simple words is usually good, with lapses, as "bild" for build, "lott" for lot, "mouny" for money, "sickness" for success, "diffikulty" for difficulty. He paid no attention to punctuation. He counted 103 crosses he had made as 99. For a boy in the 3A grade he is still laboring heavily in the first stages of his general mental development. He must have tried hard or been favored, to get his present classification.

**II. Readiness in Meeting Particular Situations:** His responses here are so unready as to emphasize the instability referred to in the first group. He is unable to command an immediate definite response, as shown by his poor grade of crosses, his poor and slow pegging, his heavy and effortful tracing of lines, and his poor representation of his oculo-motor reactions in reproducing geometrical forms. His language performances are poor, but not distinctly worse than his motor performances. He recalled the major portions of sentences that are long and difficult in the early childhood period. The most evident indication is of a general muscle insufficiency, shown especially in the unsteadiness and strain in his use of his short muscles.

**III. Persistence in Gaining Effects:** He has an amount of interest in situations superior to his ability to meet them. He gave a good recall of objects, and his recall of the order was equally good. Both were normal for his age. He did not recognize as well the possible relations between the objects, and did not comment thoughtfully on those relations he did recognize.

His failure to advance steadily in this work of recognition gives a good picture of the mental situation. That it is not altogether due to natural inability is shown by his finally judging the weights on the third trial. That it is due to a state of instability, that he cannot at present master, is indicated by his work in the cancellation test, where he scored correctly only 2 lines out of 20, and made 44 errors out of a possible 200. His work grew poorer as he progressed.

An interesting relation between his limited power to recognize and his much more limited power to apply himself is shown in his attempts to rearrange the mixed sentences. Two were failures. In the third he sought to avoid a direct issue by giving a fairly clever paraphrase of the

sentence. It seems just to give him some credit for his effort and the right direction it took.

He appears to have some native ability but to be unable to command its use in such a way as to get a cumulative effect. His best effort is at recognizing and repeating. It does not appear that in his present condition he will benefit by forced application. He is not able to do more than easy review work.

IV. Ability to Elaborate Situations: The quality of his mental performances did not improve in his attempts to work constructively under fixed conditions. He tried 4 additions in 2 minutes, but succeeded in only the first. The simple calculation given him proved too mature for his comprehension, as did the paper tearing test. He put the forms in the board with fair speed, but could do nothing with the puzzle given him. In the problem of inventing a story he showed that he could make a narrative sentence, but did not furnish supplementary material from his imagination readily, and showed a tendency to be fanciful and not really constructive. He first stood the splints on end. Failing in this attempt the idea still remained with him of building something high, and he began his story. "Once upon a time there was a man who was in a house and could not get out, so one day he made something high and climbed out." After this suggestion was exhausted no other came, and he began playing with the objects and whispering symbolic sounds, as he handled them over and imitated the activities suggested by them. He kept this play up for three minutes apparently completely oblivious of the examiner.

In general he did not show himself able to meet fixed conditions requiring sustained and delicate physical effort. It was significant that his divergence in the direction of futile play activity did not deteriorate to the level of irrelevance.

V. Mastering Alternatives in Purpose Making: His work in this group of tests was childish and revealed only a limited present capacity for mastering thought situations. He finished two of the incomplete sentences, that fit his mental age, well and the third somewhat unsatisfactorily. The sentence building given him was too mature and cannot be counted against him. Although he could not give opposites for the words submitted he offered many good synonyms or continuations of the idea inherent in the words. It is of importance that his mind continues to work, and that his superfluous work shows no irrationality. Unfortunately his abundant word product was not recorded. His purposive control of his thinking process is poorly developed but seems to be present in a latent form. No dominating aberrant purposes came into view, and he can be charged with nothing more than irrelevancy.

There is a probable suppression of the purpose making behavior and a likelihood that this has a definite somatic basis.

VI. Dealing with Positive and Negative Elements in Situations: The omissions in pictures, a simple early childhood test, failed to command his attention. He showed his power to recognize differences in value in other tests of this period that are more linguistic in character, suggesting that the failure mentioned is to be associated with his motor instability. He gave comparisons of remembered objects, he made simple descriptions of the uses of objects, and he detected absurdities. The details of the last mentioned test were not available, and this is particularly unfortunate as it is one of the most mature of his efforts and might have had considerable diagnostic significance.

Summary: This is one of the very clear instances where an interpretation of the test depends on a careful scrutiny of the contents of the response, as well as its technical value for scoring purposes. In general his responses show much mental debility, and this characteristic overshadows the question of his natural ability. The whole question of interpretation turns on the nature and degree of his motor unsteadiness, and the sort



of result that might be obtained in a systematic effort to re-establish his peripheral steadiness. There is no testimony to show that in his institutional life any such efforts have been made. Since he left the institution he has been passed around in boarding houses, and the last report from him is that he is probably suffering from scabies. He should have definite physical treatment, and should for a time, at least, be given simple review work in full quantity rather than much new work. He has not been a truant for such a time, nor in so flagrant a way, as to make him a candidate for the Disciplinary School. On the other hand he is especially in need of good home influence. If these can be provided he may well prove able to respond to school opportunity and overcome some of his present moderate retardation.

### III. SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL MENTAL TEST

On account of lack of forms for many of the tests, it is impossible to make an exact statement of the efficiency of any individual, or even to rank the whole list with any conclusiveness. Under the circumstances the best that could be done was to select out the most inefficient. As quickly as possible this was done at the point where the inefficiency of the individual becomes so great that he appears to be shut out from the intellectual activities of the group to which his age would naturally assign him. Such an inability to participate in the activity of his fellows may well be considered a natural and urgent reason for wanting to wander off into another environment, where the demands are less taxing, and where appreciation is less grudgingly bestowed. The exciting cause does not matter so much as do the length and inflexibility of attitude of the school and of the pupil. As a usual thing the school does not think it can change its attitude. When the pupil cannot and will not modify his attitude, any display of vigor on either side naturally brings about some degree of alienation. The inability of the pupil to meet the minimum demands of the school situation constitutes a latent occasion for an earlier or later breaking down of the community of interest between them. The process followed, then, was a general one of exclusion, based on the consideration of the fact that the act of truancy is merely a going into effect of an implicit renunciation of useful relations between teacher and pupil. The details of this process of exclusion are set down here, group by group, for the entire set of tests.

#### GROUP I. ESTABLISHMENT OF GENERAL HABITS OF THINKING AND EXPRESSION.

This group of tests differs from the others in the generality and simplicity of the performances tested, and in the distinction it makes between the power to set up mental symbols for the general facts of experience and the habit of accurate and complete use of these symbols. In inspecting the performances of a set of individuals like this one, it is necessary to keep in mind how little there is in their experience, outside of the formal demands of the school, to force them to deal exactly with material so general in its nature and so symbolic in its mode of expression. It is necessary to recognize the inertia of naive minds toward situations like these, and also to recall the degree to which fairly efficient minds depend on the pressure of practical necessity to keep them to the mark in such matters as legible writing, ready statement of the exact date, and full as well as accurately written statement of addresses. Allowance should be made here, if anywhere, for the influence of environment.

The actual showing in this group is as follows. Only two individuals gave the name of the city in giving their address, and not one gave the state. Only 5 out of 24 gave the complete day and date. Handwriting was for the most part legible, but was not in any case well established and free from signs of inco-ordination. No one attained a grade higher than the fifth from the top of Thorndike's Handwriting Scale. Punctuation was for the most part ignored. Correct spelling was the exception. Inaccuracy in simple counting was the rule. Nevertheless 21 out of 24 counted backward from 20 to 0

correctly. As this test is short, and as the forward counting test was long and the majority of mistakes made in the latter part of the counting, it is probable that the inaccuracy is due to a lack of power of sustained effort rather than to lack of ability.

Eleven out of the twenty-four were so generally inefficient as to seem to be shut out from participation in the general thinking characteristic of their school environment.

At the conclusion of the survey it was found that all of those who showed this marked deficiency Group I showed marked deficiency throughout, and the group of the inadequate is pretty well marked out in this first set of tests.

## GROUP II. READINESS IN MEETING NEW SITUATIONS.

The tests selected for this group are simple operations which require no special direction of the attention, no manipulation of the material, and are performed in very brief time. The test of immediate recall of figures, to be of much differential value, should have been given in more extended form. The recall of sentences would have shown better results if it had been given in more extended and more carefully graded form. The other three tests furnished good material for comparative purposes.

Twenty-two out of twenty-four repeated 5 figures. This test, which is one of the eight year old tests in the Binet and Simon scale, is evidently too easy for the pre-adolescent group.

Continuous cross-making brought out marked differences. Beginning with the highest grade and running down to Grade 5, the number of individuals in each grade was 1, 8, 9, 5, 1. The 6 individuals in the 2 lowest grades were considered inadequately fitted to do any work requiring much skill.

Pegging is a more severe test, and also brought out striking differences. Dividing the results into 5 grades beginning with a time of 55 to 65 seconds for 100 holes, and running up by ten second intervals, the distribution of individuals for the different grades was 7, 11, 4, 1, 1. The 6 individuals in the 3 lowest grades were considered as belonging to the inadequate group.

Recall of geometrical forms as given was a hard test. On account of the usual familiarity with ordinary forms the simpler ones were given in a group of 4, and then 3 more elaborate ones were given singly. The test was vitiated by the fact that the last two forms shown had become familiar to most by former experience with the Binet and Simon test. As the best use that could be made of this test under these conditions, the first two very simple ones were neglected and the 6 who recalled none of the remainder were counted in the inadequate group.

The recall of the sentences given was too hard for all but one of the 24 and must be counted too difficult a test for such a group.

In the 3 tests that gave usable results, 10 manifested one or more instances of unreadiness so great as to exclude them from effective participation in school activities.

There was a poor showing in the matter of motor co-ordination and control, as in the cross-marking, where 14 out of 24 were below the second grade. The motor responses were slow, as was shown in pegging, where 14 out of 24 required 70 seconds, a fair allowance for the test being 60 seconds. Only 2 out of the 24 drew correctly from memory all of the 7 geometrical forms. Only one out of 24 reproduced exactly two sentences of 14 and 24 syllables respectively.

## GROUP III. PERSISTENCE IN GAINING EFFECTS.

The tests in this group differ from those in the preceding group in dealing with more abundant material, in more highly organized form, and for a longer time. The material in some of the tests, as in the recall of objects, arrangement of weights, and cancellation, requires no mental interpretation to judge correctly of its use. In other tests, as grouping the objects, estimating lengths, following directions, and arranging sentences, considerable mental work has

to be done, in which little resource can be had to motor aids. One ability is required in all of them, namely, that of continuous effort.

The results obtained bring out conspicuous differences in efficiency. In the recall of objects, in which 8 out of 10 in order, with a score of 80, is considered a good performance, only 3 reached 80 or above. Counting 70 and below as a poor score, 13 were conspicuously inefficient.

In grouping the objects with some more fundamental reason than recognition of familiar association, 14 out of 24 showed conspicuous inability to describe the reasons for the combinations they made. This list of 14 is a long one, but the test is searching, as the possession of the ability to recognize and discuss relations is one that is indispensable to participation in the common activities of school or society. The tests of recall and association show some degree of correlation. Of the 15 who failed to make good associations 9 made a poor recall of the objects.

The judgment of weights and lengths did not bring out so many differences, but the comparison of the two types of judgment brought to light a considerable group of inadequates. Of the 13 who failed to get the weights all three times, 9 failed in the judgment of lengths. Details of the weights test were not preserved, so that no closer comparison can be made.

The cancellation test showed marked differences in efficiency. Only two cancelled the whole field of numbers without error. Fifteen averaged one error in cancellation in every two lines. Below this the tendency to error increased rapidly. The total of errors for 15 individuals above the limit of 10 errors in 20 lines was 52. The total of errors for the remaining 9 was 243.

Had it been possible to give a good directions test the total result for this group would have been more satisfactory, but this test was omitted for accidental reasons.

The mixed sentence test given was hard for this group. Only one rearranged all three sentences correctly. Only 8 got any correct results. Twelve others tried all three and failed in all. Four failed to make an effort in one or more of the sentences.

Those who failed in 3 or more of the 5 tests given were counted as so lacking in persistence in meeting situations that required special outlay of time and effort as to make it difficult for them to participate in school life. These numbered 11 in all.

#### GROUP IV. ABILITY TO ELABORATE SITUATIONS UNDER GIVEN CONDITIONS.

This group of tests requires not only readiness and persistence but also sustained and comprehensive interest and lively manipulation of materials. The materials of the group are varied. In one test are numbers that are to be summed up into one comprehensive number. In another test there are puzzles where dissected pieces have to be fitted together in a way that is completely determined. In another a folded paper is torn and the shape and location of the missing parts have to be constructed with the aid of a pencil sketch while the paper is still folded. In these three tests the conditions are quite definitely fixed. A fourth test requires the working out of simple time problems by the aid of numbers, with the use of more than one fundamental process of arithmetic. The fifth test requires the utilization in one comprehensive description of 10 objects suggestive of rustic life just being invaded by present day methods of travel. The last two tests are clearly the more difficult.

In the adding test 5 of the 24 subjects failed to get any correct results. Counting 3 a minute of these short additions a moderate accomplishment, 8 only showed average ability, in what is one of the simplest and most familiar of school tasks, and only one of the 8 was absolutely accurate in his work.

Of the two calculations given both are practical for the sixth grade and one is practical for the fifth grade. These calculations were plainly too hard for these subjects, 11 of whom do not reach the fifth grade, and 17 of whom do not reach the sixth grade. Only one solution was found for the simpler problem and none for the harder problem.

In the paper tearing problem 1 out of the 24 was successful.

The form board test was a satisfactory one, as it was finally accomplished by all, and brought out a striking difference in time of performance. Counting 20 seconds as a liberal time in which to place all the forms, 9 of the 24 exceeded this time by 50 per cent.

In the construction puzzle, which presented the same sort of problem in more elaborate form, this sort of inefficiency came out more strikingly. Counting 100 seconds as a liberal time in which to place all the pieces, 11 took more than double the necessary time and 4 sextupled it.

The same sort of constructive imagination is called for in the test where use of language is involved in inventing a story. There were 7 successes out of the 24 attempts. Even this credit must be doubtfully given, as the stories, with one exception, were of poor quality.

#### GROUP V. DEALING WITH ALTERNATIVES IN PURPOSIVE THINKING.

In the previous group a considerable amount of free mental work was called for. At the same time the outcome was pretty definitely fixed by the limitations of the materials offered. In this group much more freedom is allowed. The starting point is definitely established in several of the tests, as where sentences are started but not finished; words are given for which a definite alternative is prescribed; other words are given which must be combined in some common use; and pictures are submitted for interpretation. The test which allows for the freest mental movement is that in which a subject is called upon to write as many separate words as possible in a given time. This test is by no means as free from conditions as it would seem to be at first sight. The exigency of writing the largest possible number in a given time sets up a condition that throws the mind back on a characteristic form of movement in the use of language and flow of ideas that displays its limitations in a decisive manner, even revealing at times definite pathological states. This test was used in the very limited manner prescribed in the Binet and Simon scale, where the sole judgment passed is on the number of words produced in a given time. For some of these subjects the word list was preserved, but not in a sufficient number to make possible the definite judgment that is desirable in the case of a group with such peculiar characteristics. The results of this test are not very valuable for the purpose of ranking the individual members of the list, but have some slight value for the purposes of exclusion to which resort is made in this summary. The unfinished sentences depict situations which allow different solutions, some in practical action, others in practical judgments. There are two groups, the first three sentences being simpler and more practical. The second group of five calls for some reflection and experience. In the first group, 5 of the 24 found satisfactory solutions for all three, and 10 more found satisfactory solutions for 2 out of 3. This test is evidently well within the range of this group and its suitability as a type of test was well demonstrated. This makes it the more interesting to notice that in the second group, in which there are 5 chances, 20 failed to find a single satisfactory solution. Combining the two groups and counting failure to make any good solution, or only 1 good one out of 8, as demonstrative of inadequacy, 7 individuals fell into the extremely inefficient group.

In the test where three given words must be included in one comprehensive statement only 6 succeeded. The test as it stands was of little value for the purpose, but 2 individuals made a more obvious failure than the others.

The opposites test presents a list of words for which the subject is supposed to find in his vocabulary alternatives that present an exactly opposite idea. Two groups of words were given, one decidedly harder than the other. The hard list was beyond the efficiency of this group of subjects. Eight attempted to give the entire 20 hard opposites but only 1 gave as many as 4 correctly, and 16 gave none correctly. In the easier list more success was obtained, and the list is one of differential value. No one gave more than 13 exactly correct opposites. Only 8 gave more than 10 correctly. Twelve gave 2 or less than 2 correctly. Counting as inadequate those who gave none or only one there were 7 in the least promising group.

In the free word list there were only 5 who succeeded in giving orally 60 or more words in 180 seconds, that is more than one word in 3 seconds. The number of words dictated was not recorded in 3 cases, which makes it impossible to make any fair estimate of the result.

A bare description was easy for a group of this maturity of experience. Nineteen out of the 24 gave satisfactory descriptions of all 3 pictures. In the interpretation of the situations shown in the pictures a widely different result was obtained. Eleven of the 24 failed to give any satisfactory interpretation. None interpreted all 3. One interpreted 2 pictures and 10 interpreted one.

On account of the fact that all the tests in this group deal with language materials, an additional test was given with more objective materials. The one chosen was a variation of the distribution test usually given with mixed cards. In this test the material to be sorted is 60 sticks of 6 colors, 4 inches long and  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch square. The time was recorded and brought out striking differences in efficiency. Those who took as much as 90 seconds, that is,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  seconds for each stick, were counted as extremely inefficient. They numbered 7 in all.

#### GROUP VI. DEALING WITH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ELEMENTS IN THE SAME SITUATION.

The tests in this group cover a wide range of thinking activity. Only one test is given where objective materials are presented. From the point of view of objectivity it is a poorly constructed group. From the point of view of language activity it calls for the production of a satisfactory variety and range of materials, from the comparison and definition of familiar objects to the paraphrase of simple general terms. It includes one good test for suggestibility in which contradictory statements are made as if they were within the range of possibility, and the subject is asked to detect the inconsistency.

The test which calls for the detection of omissions in mutilated outline pictures, which is included in the 8 year Binet and Simon tests, was passed by 18 of the 24. It is evidently a simple test for these subjects. The 6 who failed showed a major degree of inefficiency on this occasion, whatever they might show under stress of a more practical necessity.

Comparison of familiar objects in simple language was easy for these subjects. Like the preceding test it is a little difficult to present in such a way that any urgency is felt about carrying on the thinking process with particularity. Only one failed to make any comparison. Two failed to give more than one comparison. Eleven gave all three comparisons. Much more satisfactory use of this test could have been made if the full statements had been recorded instead of only success or failure, as examination of the statements frequently brings out very definite degrees of inefficiency.

The definitions test is another which is hard to put exactly in true problematic form. What is called for first is a description of the terms presented. What is ultimately desired is such a description of each term as will differentiate it from other objects belonging to the same class. To give the use of the object satisfies the first condition. To give the descriptive use of the object, or such a description of it as to indicate the appropriate use, is the only thing that will satisfy the second condition. Practice, either in the higher primary grades, or in more mature forms of experience should give a decided advantage. The full answers were not recorded, so that a discriminating judgment of the results could not be made. Success or failure in 3 out of 5 of the terms presented was the only result recorded. Of the 24 subjects 11 failed entirely. The list is long but the test is searching and a low degree of thinking power is evidenced.

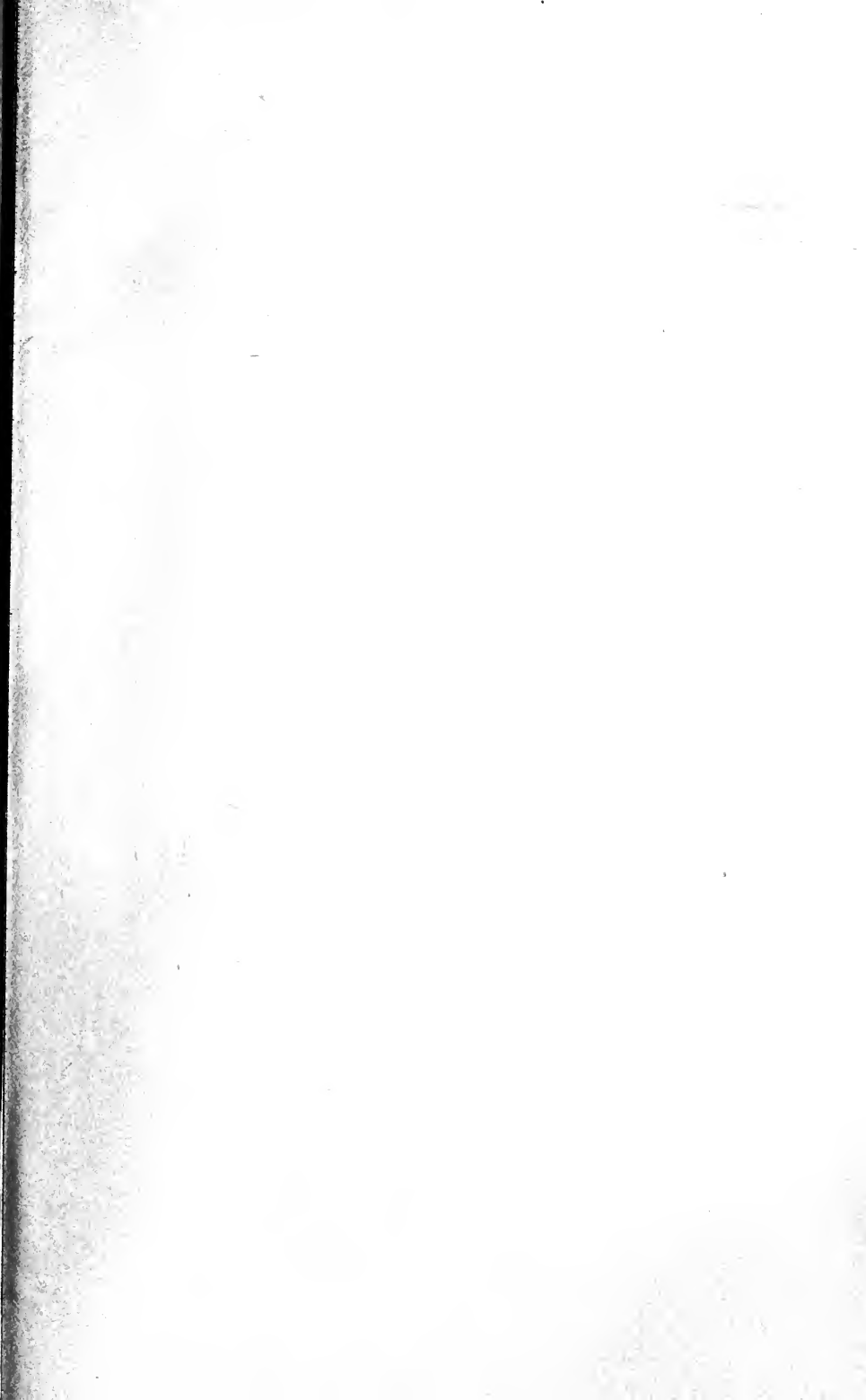
The test calling for the detection of absurdities is one that it is possible to put very directly. Its general character has been described already in this section. Success and failure in 3 out of 5 was the only score recorded. As it is not fair to assume that the 18 who failed were all inefficient to the point of inadequacy no benefit was secured from the test. The intrinsic value of the

test has not been found to be very great aside from the fact that its results are easily computed.

A description of the 3 simple general terms presented was difficult for the subjects. Only one gave all three. Six gave two and six gave one. The test is given by Binet and Simon among the 12 year tests and is plainly hard for them, and it would not be fair to rank the 11 who failed as totally inadequate without considering the details of the responses, which unfortunately were not recorded.

The number of tests which were applied with any sort of satisfaction amounted to 22. As has been noted, they vary greatly in their usefulness for the purpose in hand, and when summed up can only be used as evidence of a roughly drawn line between inefficiency and extreme inefficiency. If the number of scores indicating extreme inefficiency is added together for each individual, it is evident that those who approach a total of 22 scores in 22 tests must differ appreciably from those who approach a total of none. The sum of the scores for inefficiency for the whole group of 24 truants ran as follows: 16, 13, 12, 12, 12, 12, 12, 12, 10, 9, 8, 7, 7, 6, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 3, 2, 1. Counting somewhat arbitrarily as a symptom of extreme inefficiency a total of 10 scores, the number of extreme inefficient is 9. According to this rough method of separation of the more inefficient from the less inefficient, there is, therefore, some ground for stating that 9 out of the 24 border line cases of truancy are so unfitted to participate in the social and intellectual life of the school that they are practically cut off from its directing influence and may well be considered cases of social alienation. They are truants because they have no fitness for conformity. They cannot conform because under simple and natural test conditions they show that they are not capable of acquiring a general stock of knowledge in communicable forms; nor of meeting new situations readily; nor of persisting in the face of steady demands; nor of altering situations in which they find themselves to their advantage, nor of forming and carrying out simple purposes; nor of breaking up situations so that at least some simple features may be dealt with in the light of experience. Whether this proportion of 9 out of 24 hopeless cases is typical of all groups of what are called in this study of truancy "border line cases," lying between hopeless and explainable cases, remains to be seen. This test accomplishes its purpose if it raises definitely the question of a considerable degree of truancy due to a type of a mind which is unfitted to conform to the social and intellectual demands of school life, while yet possessing considerable insight and power of self-direction.

The general validity of this plan of exclusion appeared to be well supported by the outcome of the whole investigation. The limitations of the method are obvious, but the practical results seem to be more convincing and significant than could be obtained by a simple Binet and Simon test or by any test which seeks to measure the efficiency of separate mental processes and sum them up into a numerical equivalent of individual efficiency.







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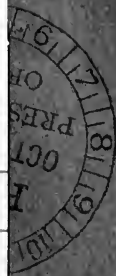
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