

REPORT OF A STUDY OF MENTAL ABILITY OF CHILDREN IN ONE
ORPHANS' HOME IN INDIANA.

ARTHUR H. ESTABROOK.

All the children in one orphans' home in Indiana have been given mental tests, with the exception of those under the age of six years. The Stanford Revision of Binet tests was used. At the same time the Pressey group tests, the primer and cross out, were given to all those attending school. A social study of each child has been made and, with this combined data, children in this orphans' home have been classified as: average, retarded, probably high grade defective, and feeble-minded. At the same time these children have been considered from the standpoint of placeability in foster homes or admission to the School for Feeble-Minded Youth at Fort Wayne. One hundred forty children, in all, have been studied. Fifty-three of these have been found to be of average mentality, 37 retarded, 12 probably mentally defective and 38 definitely feeble-minded. One hundred one of these 140 are wards of the State. Of these 101, 34 are of average mentality, 24 retarded, 10 probably high grade defectives, and 33 feeble-minded. These have been classified as to their placeability in foster homes, retention in the institution for further study and training, and those sufficiently mentally defective that they should be placed in the School for Feeble-Minded Youth because of such a degree of mental defectiveness as to be unplaceable in foster homes or retained in the Orphans' Home. Forty-eight are found placeable; 15 should be retained for further study and training, while 38 are so definitely feeble-minded as to be a detriment to the institution.

The accompanying chart shows the distribution of the mental ages showing the mental acceleration and mental retardation. It is interesting to note that 15 children are advanced in age mentally and 23 grade exactly normal for physical age; 28, or 20%, are retarded one year; 18, or 13%, are retarded two years; 56, or 40%, are retarded three or more years. This study shows the need of a mental examination and social study of all children in the orphans' homes in this state that they can be properly classified and that proper distribution of these in suitable institutions be made at the earliest possible moment, thus relieving the orphans' homes of the burden of the mental defectives who are properly not their charges, and paving the way for their proper care in a custodial institution for the feeble-minded.

