

SOME PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH THE ORGANIZATION OF
AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAMME FOR RETARDED CHILDREN

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requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

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PREFACE

These studies are based upon my personal observation and experience of the auxiliary classes during my tenure as a teacher in Halifax for the past five years, when I have assiduously applied myself in investigating the problems and possibilities of the retarded children in Nova Scotia.

Previously, during eight years of my teaching experience in India, I taught normal children, but I found in Canada that it was a great change and a challenging task to handle the retarded children of this country. I am therefore in a position to assess the differences in attitudes and aptitudes of the children in both the countries. As far as it has been possible I have tried to observe the efforts made by the Government and the School Authorities for improving the instruction in auxiliary classes and I believe that my suggestions will be of some value for scholars and investigators of the future.

No attempt of this kind has been made in previous studies of this type to synthesise or explore or understand the education of the retarded children in a systematic way. I have tried to piece some information on the subject

and provide suggestions for improvement. I have summed up the problems and offered criticism of the programme along with some suggestions for improvement.

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Many persons assume they can at once spot a slow learner as soon as they meet one -- because they consider the signs of retardation to be unmistakable. The teachers of Edison, Newton, and some other geniuses were among those making this type of mistake. Errors such as these serve both as a warning against off-hand judgements of other people, and as a stimulus to find out what slow learners are like and how to identify them.¹

Psychologists have pointed out many times that people cannot be sorted into groups labelled "slow learner," "average learner," "fast learner," and the like, with any precision. People differ in degree, not in kind; they are all variants of one type. "Each individual possesses more or less all the characteristics possessed by the whole human race. Beauty, honesty, intelligence, resourcefulness, and perseverance are not the exclusive property of one group, nor are ugliness,

¹ W. B. Featherstone, Teaching the Slow Learner (New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951), p. 1.

dishonesty, and stupidity any exclusive property of another. There is some goodness in the worst of them; a little badness in the best of them."²

Types of Retardation

In order to appreciate the problems relating to the education of mentally retarded children, we must first consider what is meant by the term 'mental retardation', and to consider also how this condition may arise. It is of course, a sad fact, "that each year thousands of couples are compelled to learn the answer to these problems: they become the parents of children whose minds never fully grow up, whose brains fail to develop properly."³ (A detailed description of this is given under Aetiology). Strauss and Lehtinen speak of children whose brains fail to develop properly as children with brain injury, but in general the term means all kinds of damage to the brain. They have defined the brain injured child as follows:

..."A brain-injured child is a child who before, during, or after birth has received an injury to or suffered an infection of the brain. As a result of such organic impairment, defects of the neuromotor system may be present or absent; however, such a child may show disturbances in perception, thinking,

² Ibid.

³ Cornell Capa and Maya Pines, Retarded Children Can Be Helped (New York: Channel Press, Inc.), pp. 7-8.

or emotional behaviour, either separately or in combination. These disturbances can be demonstrated by specific tests. These disturbances prevent or impede a normal learning process."⁴

In considering, below, the aetiology of mental retardation, we shall see there are numerous factors involved, in the production of this condition. The psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, doctors, educators, and other professional people have defined mental retardation according to their various fields of specialization. The following definitions, therefore, are ones which may be most meaningful for the classroom teacher. "Mentally retarded children," says Martens, "are those, who because of poor intellectual endowment, are unable to cope with the standard requirements of regular grades."⁵

The Mental Deficiency Act of 1927 (until recently operable in England) defines mental retardation as being: "... a condition of arrest or incomplete development of mind, existing before the age of eighteen years, whether arising from inherent causes or induced by disease or

⁴Ann M. Clarke and A. D. B. Clarke, Mental Deficiency: The Changing Outlook. (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1965), pp. 221-222.

⁵E. H. Martens, Curriculum Adjustment for the Mentally Retarded, U. S. Dept. of Health and Welfare, No. 2 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1950), p. 30.

injury."⁶ The recent definition proposed by the American Association on Mental Deficiency adds the concept of social incompetence: "Mental retardation refers to sub-average intellectual functioning which originates during the developmental period and is associated with impairment in one or more of the following:

- (1) maturation,
- (2) learning, and
- (3) social adjustment."⁷

The definition recognizes that mental retardation is now viewed as a reversible condition. This is a departure from the classical and historical concept of "once mentally retarded, always mentally retarded." It is a term describing the current status of the individual in regard to his intellectual functioning as well as his adaptive behaviour.

The Manual on Terminology and Classification in Mental Retardation concludes its discussion of definition by stating,

. . . an individual may meet the criteria of mental retardation at one time and not at another. A person may change status as a result of changes in social standards or conditions or as a result of changes in efficiency of intellectual functioning, with level of efficiency always being determined in relation to the behavioral standards and norms for the individual's chronological age group.⁸

⁶Jane W. Kessler, Psychopathology of Childhood (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 167.

⁷Rick Heber, A Manual on Terminology and Classification in Mental Retardation ("Monograph Supplement to the American Journal of Mental Deficiency", 64:2 September, 1959), p. 98.

⁸Ibid., p. 4.

Seymour B. Sarason refers to mental retardation as,

... individuals who, for temporary or long standing reasons, function intellectually below the average of the peer groups but whose social adequacy is not in question or, if it is in question, there is the likelihood that the individual can learn to function independently and adequately in the community.⁹

George A. Jervis defines mental deficiency from a medical point of view as,

... a condition of arrest or incomplete mental development induced by disease or injury before adolescence or arising from genetic causes.¹⁰

Edgar A. Doll refers to a mentally deficient person as,

... (1) socially incompetent, that is, socially inadequate and occupationally incompetent and unable to manage his own affairs; (2) mentally subnormal; (3) retarded intellectually from birth or early age; (4) retarded at maturity; (5) mentally deficient as a result of constitutional origin, through heredity or disease, and (6) essentially incurable.¹¹

E. Paul Benoit refers to mental retardation from a neuropsychological point of view and says that,

... mental retardation may be viewed as a deficit of intellectual function resulting from varied intrapersonal and/or extrapersonal determinants, but having as a common proximate cause a diminished efficiency of the nervous

⁹Seymour B. Sarason, Psychology of Exceptional Children (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1955), pp. 440-442.

¹⁰Jerome H. Rothstein, Mental Retardation (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 12, quoting Jervis, G. A., Medical Aspects of Mental Deficiency. (American Journal of Mental Deficiency, Oct. 1952), p. 175.

¹¹Ibid., p. 12. Quoting Edgar A. Doll. ("The Essentials of an Inclusive Concept of Mental Deficiency," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 46 (October 1941), p. 214.

system, thus entailing a lessened general capacity for growth in perceptual and conceptual integration and consequently in environment adjustment.¹²

The definition used by the Department of Justice in Canada to describe backward or mentally defective persons is,

... a group of persons, children or adults, who, because of retardation in mental development, require special education adjustments and/or social or economic adjustments in order that they may reach the maximum of adjustability in any environment.¹³

A still further classification groups children with low intelligence according to the degree of "Mental Deficit" or degree of handicap and this classification emphasizes the quantitative rather than the qualitative differences. In consequence the following subdivision have been used:

- (1) IDIOT -- a child who is an idiot is so low intellectually that he does not learn to talk and usually is incapable of taking care of his bodily needs. These children require complete custodial care and supervision. They usually possess an I.Q. of 0 to 20 or 25.
- (2) IMBECILE -- represents the next level. He can develop some language, be trained to care for his bodily needs, and have trainability as far as daily habits and routines are concerned. In term of I.Q. the imbecile rates between 25 to 39 (severe) and 40 to 54 (moderate)

¹² Ibid., quoting E. Paul Benoit ("Toward a New Definition of Mental Retardation", American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 63:4 (January 1959), 56.

¹³ J. E. Bowers, Exceptional Children in Home, School, and Community, (Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons (Canada) Ltd., 1960), p. 219.

- (3) MORON -- includes children who are capable of some degree of educability in terms of reading, writing and arithmetic. Such children are found in special classes for the mentally handicapped and in some cases are also admitted into the classes of the regular school. Their I.Q. ranges between 50 to 70. The moron is usually capable of learning to adjust socially outside of an institution and can become partially or totally self-supporting, provided adequate education has been acquired and some supervision is provided.
- (4) BORDERLINE CHILD -- this category consists of the child whom it is difficult to classify as either moronic or normal. Some are placed in special classes, while others remain in the regular classes of the public schools. Some of these children are retarded educationally to a degree which causes difficulty in school adjustment. Such children have an I.Q. between 70 and 80 or 85.
- (5) DULL-NORMAL CHILD -- these children are usually found to be at the lower end of the average range. Such children are capable of competing in most activities except the strictly academic subjects of the school.¹⁴

From these descriptions, it is evident that the prime characteristic of mental retardation is the absence of a potentiality for normal intellectual development. Clearly, too, the absence of this potentiality may occur in varying degrees, it being obvious, that the greater the degree of lack of potential, the greater the degree of defect which will be manifest. Due to this, these children mature later than normal, and never acquire the level of performance of the average child, while other factors, such as social and

¹⁴Samuel A. Kirk and G. Orville Johnson. Educating the Retarded Child (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951), pp. 4-5.

economic backwardness, and physical disabilities, are concomitants of this basic impairment. Neuro-muscular co-ordination defects, speech, eye and ear defects all are frequent accompaniments of retardation. These inabilities usually make the retarded child emotionally disturbed and maladjusted and this may increase in degree as they grow older. It is these disabilities that prevent the child from being adequately educated in the regular classroom, and therefore it becomes imperative for the child to be placed in an educational environment which will be conducive to the maximum flowering of his abilities, limited though these may be. This adjustment of their educational environment will minimize, to some extent, the effects on learning of these various, and even varying disabilities.

The signs various of retardation have been usefully summarized by J. E. Bowers as follows:

1. Often, the physical development is slow, irregular, and inferior.
2. The muscular co-ordination is usually poor.
3. The ability for abstract reasoning is limited.
4. Frequently, the children have retarded speech and a restricted vocabulary.
5. The memory span may be short.
6. The attention and interest move rapidly from one object to another.

7. Some retarded children become aggressive in behaviour; others retire from reality.
8. Often, they play with children younger than themselves.
9. They give up easily and become frustrated.
10. Usually, they are older for their grade, but their behaviour is immature.¹⁵

Social and Statistical Aspects

Research investigations reveal that approximately one half of one percent of the total population in the Western world may be classified as the Trainable Mentally Retarded. Even if we assume that in Nova Scotia one half of one per cent of the population consists of the Trainable Mentally Retarded, we still do not know how many school age children of this description are living in Nova Scotia. Very few of these children enter the public school system at the age of five or six, and since no other count of the children within the Province has been made, it is not possible to say how many children fall into that category described as the "Trainable Mentally Retarded". A lack of an adequate central registry and different methods of classification of the mentally retarded add to this difficulty.¹⁶

¹⁵ J. E. Bowers, pp. 219-220.

¹⁶ Interview with W. R. E. Butler, Executive Director, Canadian Association for Retarded Children (Nova Scotia Division), November 15, 1967.

However some evidence of the extent of mental retardation in Nova Scotia may be obtained by looking at the Auxiliary and Trainable classes. In 1966-67 there were 261 students in these classes; and according to an estimate made in 1966-67 of these 83% were classified as being of mild retardation or in an educable group with an I.Q. ranging between 50 and 75; that is, possessing a mental age of eight to twelve years. 13% fit into the moderate or trainable group with an I.Q. of 25 to 50 and a mental age of four to eight years, and 4% were classified as being severely retarded, possessing as they do an I.Q. ranging from 0 - 25, having a mental age between zero and four years. Auxiliary and Trainable classes comprise those mentally retarded children who are able to profit from training and education. The above figures cannot be considered accurate, as it is possible that a number of these children who are labelled as being mentally retarded are in reality not so. Rather they function at a retarded level because of social, cultural, and economic disadvantages.¹⁷

Many children that are classified as slow learners, usually belong to a group of children having low-normal or borderline intelligence, I.Q. 75 to 90. These children

¹⁷ Interview with H. M. Cox, Inspector of Special Services for the Province of Nova Scotia, March 3, 1967.

are frequently classified as low-normal, borderline or backward. They are usually educated in regular classes or classes for slow learners in elementary schools but may require special occupational or study-work programmes in secondary schools.¹⁸

These slow learners are distinct from the Educable Retarded Children in that they remain in regular classes whereas the latter are placed in auxiliary classes.

"Some of these slow learners having intelligence slightly below average, because of good work habits, progress through the elementary school without much failure. Other children, particularly if they enter school younger than the average because they were born in the latter part of the year, are always struggling to do something which is beyond them. Thus, they meet frequent failure and discouragement."¹⁹

At one time the mentally retarded were not recognized as needing special educational attention, with the result that they all were taught together in the same class as normal and bright children. As time went on, however,

¹⁸ Laurence J. Peter, Prescriptive Teaching (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 110.

¹⁹ J. E. Bowers, pp. 222-223.

teachers began to be concerned as to why some children could not keep up with the rest of the class being always at the 'tail end' in spite of special efforts made to help them; seeming, in fact, to be incapable of making progress. The lack of progress of these children and the special attention they required hindered the progress of the normal and brighter children in the class, creating, in this way, further problems for the teacher. Gradually it came to be recognized that these dull children required special consideration and in the year 1915 this recognition resulted in conferences of Teachers, Principals and Supervisors to discuss the problem of educating such children. Following the conferences a decision was made to test these children, and on finding that they possessed an I.Q. between 50 and 75, and intelligence considerably below that of normal children in the classroom, it was decided to form separate Auxiliary classes for the mentally retarded. As a result, in 1916, Auxiliary classes began to operate in Nova Scotia, and since then they have proven to be very helpful to the Mildly Retarded or Educable children in attendance at them. The children have been happier with this arrangement than they have been in attending Grade classes, because they no longer feel frustrated, and are no longer forced to attempt to achieve

beyond the level of their ability.²⁰

The children in the group categorized as "Trainable" presented an even more acute problem, for it was obvious to their parents that the children were incapable of attending any 'school', whether regular or auxiliary. As mentioned above, these children, when tested, were found to have an I.Q. between 25 and 50 so that they could not be admitted to the Auxiliary classes. The parents were therefore burdened with these children the whole day; they were unable to relax, and they were even ashamed to discuss this problem because they felt it was one that concerned them only. As the children grew in age and the burden increased, the parents often could not keep their feelings of frustration and bitterness "bottled up."²¹

In other parts of the country, the same thing was happening. In New York City in 1949, attention was paid to the same problem with an inconspicuous notice tucked away in a newspaper. The advertisement read as follows:

"I am the mother of a gentle and lovable child whom doctors term "hopelessly feeble-minded." My son is without playmates, without education of any kind. Surely there must be other parents like myself. Where are you? Let's band

²⁰H. M. Cox.

²¹Ibid.

together and do something for our children."²²

The first day only a dozen parents answered the appeal, and the next day two hundred parents met together. Worried, suspicious and hesitant, they formed at first a silent group. Then a few parents began to tell what they had so long repressed: the story of their outcast children, of the closed doors and the frantic search for help. The others understood only too well; many of them wept. That very night, before they left for home, these parents formed the New York State Association for the Help of Retarded Children.²³

In the meanwhile attention was further focussed on the problem when a few prominent persons like Pearl Buck, in her book 'The Child Who Never Grew,' and the late Dale Rogers in 'Angel Unaware,' wrote frank accounts of their experiences with their own retarded children. With this rising excitement, parents throughout the country began to realize that they were not alone. As a result they grew and multiplied, so that by 1951, they banded together into the National Association for Retarded Children, the N.A.R.C. The most important fact was that these groups and a few pioneering institutions had exactly the same aims: "to give all retarded children useful training, and to fit as many of them as possible into

²²Cornell Capa and Maya Pines, p. 7.

²³Ibid., p. 7.

the patterns of normal society."²⁴

In Nova Scotia the efforts of this publicity were also felt. In the early 1950's an Association for the Help of the Retarded Children was formed in Montreal. While on a business trip to the Maritimes, Mr. L. H. Hall, President of this Association approached Mr. F. R. MacKinnon, of the Prov. Welfare Department, concerning an Organization to be formed in this Province. At the initial get-together of parents in the Fall of 1954, Mr. MacKinnon acted as Chairman. The first meeting was held in the Y.M.C.A., Halifax in October, 1954, with twenty parents in attendance. Now the Association was becoming a reality, paving the way for the development of a force which could make its voice heard in public circles as a mouthpiece of the mentally retarded children.²⁵

During what might be called the incubation period, Mr. MacKinnon contacted the Halifax Rotary, who in turn contacted Dr. R. E. Marshall, Supervisor of Halifax Schools. The chain of contact was beginning to expand to those who were in such positions to do much for these children. Halifax Rotary has sponsored the Association right from the outset.²⁶

²⁴Cornell Capa and Maya Pines, p. 9.

²⁵M. D. Sullivan, The Story of the Nova Scotia Association for Help of Retarded Children (Halifax: Seaman-Cross Ltd., Organized October 22, 1954), p. 1.

²⁶M. D. Sullivan, p. 1.

At the Monthly Meeting of December, 1954, a Constitution Committee as well as a Nominating Committee was appointed. The meeting held on January 26, 1955, generated outstanding interest and support. Regular meetings were held twice a month and once during the summer season; in addition, and, more importantly, the Association gained momentum and a strong financial support from the community. \$3,500.00 was received from the Halifax Rotary Club. While two more donations of \$100.00 were received about the same time.²⁷

The Association for Help of Retarded Children in Nova Scotia now tackled the problem of Education for the Retarded Children. After much work and discussion the Halifax School Board granted the use of a classroom in St. Francis School and classes commenced in September, 1955, with an enrolment of two pupils in the morning and two in the afternoon.²⁸

The Nova Scotia Education Act makes provision for special classes for the Mentally Handicapped Children. The establishment of these classes is not mandatory but any School Board may establish them, and in such a case they are then recognized as being part of the school organization thus qualifying for grant under the Foundation Programme in the same way as does any regular class.²⁹

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, The Education Act and Related Acts of the Province of Nova Scotia (Halifax: 1961), p. 6.

Through the years much has been done and will continue to be done for the Mentally Handicapped Children. Psychologists continue to point out what can be done for these children and how they can be approached. Through their efforts parents have been helped to understand that these children are individuals like other human beings, and have potentialities like others, only more limited in nature. For example, Gardiner Murphy, one of America's distinguished psychologists, says: "Intelligence is potentiality to be achieved. The genetic capacities are released, guided, and developed by environment--- especially social --- challenge and stimulation."³⁰ This means that the flowering of whatever capacities a child has depends not only on the genetic breed of development but also on the kind and quality of the stimulation he received from his parents, from his teachers, and from the various types of cultural influences, or the informal education he received within the community.

Also, in order to reveal the tremendous importance attached to this problem of "Mental Retardation," President Kennedy, in The President's Panel on Retardation, a proposed program for National Action to combat Mental Retardation,

³⁰ Gardiner Murphy, Freeing Intelligence in Childhood Education, (Vol. 39, No. 8, April, 1963, Washington: Association For Childhood Education).

noted the following: "The Mentally Retarded are defined there as children and adults who, as a result of inadequately developed intelligence, are significantly impaired in their ability to learn and to adapt to the demands of society. These three elements in the definition are usually present in most definitions."³¹

Aetiology of Retardation

Aetiology refers to the study of the origin of a condition, that is, an attempt to describe the antecedent factor in the absence of which the condition would not occur. According to Tredgold, cases of mental deficiency can be divided, with regard to their causation, into four groups:

1. Amentia or mental deficiency due to inheritance.
2. Amentia or mental deficiency due to environment.
3. Amentia or mental deficiency due to both inheritance and environment.
4. Amentia or mental deficiency without discoverable cause.³²

In addition the causes of mental retardation can be classified according to the time at which the retardation becomes apparent in the individual:

³¹The President's Panel on Mental Retardation, A Proposed Program for National Action to Combat Mental Retardation. A Report to the President Prepared by the Chairman of the Panel (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 1.

³²Seymour B. Sarason, Psychological Problems in Mental Deficiency (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, ed., 1949), pp. 26-27, quoting Tredgold, A. F., A Text-book of Mental Deficiency.

- (1) The Prenatal
- (2) The Natal and Paranatal
- (3) The Postnatal

Mental retardation which occurs during the prenatal period may be either genetically caused or the result of prenatal infection by the mother; e.g., german measles. Except for several rare conditions definitely known to be genetically caused, for example, phenlyruvic disease and Tay-Sach's disease, there is little agreement as to the percentage of cases of retardation caused by inheritance of inferior genes. The evidence concerning the group of retardates known as "familial" and thought to be genetically caused, is very controversial. There is some evidence that even their problem may to some extent be a problem of social inadequacy.

Natal or prenatal conditions productive of mental defect are the result of cerebral injury, or factors associated with the birth process, for example, an insufficient supply of oxygen. Postnatal conditions which cause mental retardation, are inflammations of the central nervous system such as meningitis and encephalitis, as well as accidents where blow may cause cerebral trauma.

It is now widely accepted that mental retardation is not a disease but a syndrome with multiple and diverse causes. These include illness or malnutrition of the mother

during pregnancy, brain damage at birth, brain diseases such as meningitis, abnormalities of body chemistry and other causes of genetic origin. It is now realized that intelligence is not a stable quality fixed at birth but is variable in that it can be considerably influenced by the environment.³³

"Strauss and Lehtinen (1947) and Strauss and Kephart (1955) have listed the causes of brain injury in their books as follows: premature birth, caesarian birth, dry birth, precipitate delivery, eclampsia, pelvic malformation, antepartum haemorrhage, anomalies in presentation, twisting of umbilical cord, use of forceps, improper use of anaesthetic, infectious diseases during early months (e.g. whooping cough, measles, scarlet fever, pneumonia), encephalitis and meningitis, concussion, and finally the sequelae of RH blood incompatibility."³⁴

There are still further factors which may result in the child's brain failing to develop properly and those are as follows: "the embryo or the developing fetus may be affected by infections, poisons, and intoxications in the

³³ Cyril Greenland, The Proceedings of the Sixth National Conference on Mental Retardation (Toronto: Canadian Association for Retarded Children, September 25-27, 1963), pp. 79-81.

³⁴ Harvey A. Stevens and Rick Heber, Mental Retardation: A Review of Research. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 2-3.

mother's body during pregnancy. Poor nutrition of the mother during pregnancy may later affect the intellectual development of her child. It has also been demonstrated, that contraction of German measles during the first trimester of pregnancy, lead poisoning and such metabolic defects as phenylketonuria (PKU) and galactosemia may produce a relatively small number of mentally retarded individuals."³⁵

Organic pathology occasionally may be demonstrated as the result of injury or disease occurring during or shortly after birth. In those instances where observable clinical evidence is present, there may be marked neurological damage which will result in profound or severe mental retardation. Trauma received during the birth process and oxygen deprivation due to delayed breathing following birth are frequent causes of mental retardation. Severe injuries to the brain following an accident, cardiac failure during or following surgery with restoration of life, and partial drowning with restoration of breathing have also produced profound and severe mental retardation. There are also a relatively

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 223-224.

small number of cases of mental retardation caused by abnormal tumor-like growths within the brain. Several of these entities are hereditary in origin.³⁶ Whatever the causes, these children learn in slow motion, and most of them never progress beyond the mental level of seven to twelve years old. Some reach only to the level of four to six years old. A fraction of them, the severely retarded ones, are barely able to care for their simplest needs.

Whatever the causes of mental retardation, medical science admits that there is as yet no known cure for it. The teacher must accept the retarded child, and help the parents and family of the child to understand him. While some knowledge of the causes of retardation may help the teacher to understand mentally retarded children, her attention is devoted to the more positive role of developing to the fullest extent those abilities with which nature has endowed him. Equally it is necessary that his parents accept his handicap without feeling of personal guilt, and realize that it is possible for any parents, regardless of their own abilities and socio-economic status, to have a mentally retarded child.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 2-3.

The aim of education for such children, then is to give them a useful training, in order to fit as many as possible into patterns of a normal society. To try to make the child socially acceptable should be the endeavour, so that he may develop into an average human personality able to fit into the community life.³⁷

Educational Limitations

The term "mentally retarded", then, embraces a range of patients, from the totally helpless child in the crib to the child whose handicap is apparent only in school. Mentally retarded children are as different from one another as are children of normal or superior intelligence. The latter restricts them both vocationally and academically, and, as a result, they cannot compete in the open labour market without special assistance.³⁸

Consequently for educational purposes, children with low intelligence are classified not according to degree of defect, (such as idiot, imbecile, moron, dull-normal, borderline etc.,) but in a manner that makes explicit to the school administrators whether the child should be

³⁷Cornell Capa and Maya Pines, pp. 7-8.

³⁸Jane Kessler, p. 166.

excluded from school and given custodial care; whether he will profit most from a special class for the mentally handicapped or whether the regular grade should be adapted to his slow-learning ability.

The mentally handicapped child having low intelligence is unable to profit sufficiently from the normal curriculum of the public schools, but is one who, provided special educational facilities are furnished, can be educated to become reasonably socially adequate and occupationally competent.

The slow learning child is one who requires some adaptation of instruction in the regular grades because of his slow learning ability. He is the child who requires special organization within a class. As a result, the "trainable" and the "educable" children are commonly distinguished from each other. The "trainable" children are expected to learn few, if any, formal academic skills. Reading is limited to the recognition of words which will help them to get about; arithmetic, to the handling of cash. Emphasis is on self-help skills, safety, social and personal relationships, athletics and crafts, speech and language, and simple work habits and attitudes. (The curriculum is described in detail in chapter 3.)

It is of interest to note at this point that special

classes for the "educable" retarded have a much longer history than have those for the "trainable" retarded. In the case of the "educable" retarded children academic subject matter is very much a part of the curriculum, and pupils are expected to attain levels as high as fourth or fifth grade with some individuals excelling or falling short of this average expectation. (Details are given in chapter 3).

The trainable retardate is defined by Mrs. G. W. Chidley, as a person whose mental capacity is incapable of development beyond that of a child of normal mentality at eight years of age; he is not, that is, considered to be educable in the sense that he can learn academic skills to any degree of proficiency. Further, he requires custodial care and supervision during his entire life. Until recently, the responsibility for these children has been assumed by parents or by governmental departments of health and welfare. Since 1953, however, the growth of special day classes for trainable retardates has been remarkable. These day classes, for the most part, have been under the control of voluntary Association of Parents of Retarded Children, but have received increasing amounts of financial assistance and guidance from School Boards and Departments of Education. There is therefore growing

acceptance of the belief that the public school system is the agency best qualified and equipped to conduct classes for the trainable retardates, and will in time assume the entire responsibility for their training.³⁹

There is in Canada an organization for the care, education, and research regarding retarded children. This Association is known as the Canadian Association for Retarded Children (C.A.R.C.). Each Province has its own provincial division while each district in the Province has its own Locals. In Halifax the main projects of the Local is the Day Care Centre, the Pre-School Classes, the Activity Centre for Adults, as well as Camps and Religious Training.

The January 1964 bulletin of the Parents' Council for Special Education, Scarborough Township, concludes with the following paragraph:

May we all keep this in mind

Each of us is made up of the same 98 cents worth of chemistry, give or take a few cents depending on inflation. The difference lies in abilities, not in feelings. Our retarded children have the same feelings of joy, sorrow, pain and fear as others, and a few more of frustrations. Comprehension is slower, but they still want to be included and treated just as their more fortunate sisters, brothers, and friends are treated.⁴⁰

³⁹G. W. Chidley, Proceedings of the Third Conference on Mental Retardation, (Montreal: September, 1960), pp. 65-66.

⁴⁰Canadian Education Association, Education of the Mentally Retarded, The Trainable Retardate (Toronto: Research and Information Division, March 1964), p. 1.

There is no doubt that the mentally retarded have equal rights with normal people and must be supplied with adequate living. The charitable aspects of earlier programmes for the mentally retarded are disappearing in Canada, as elsewhere, and are being replaced by realistic, socialized considerations.

CHAPTER II

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CARE AND TRAINING OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN IN HALIFAX CITY AND NOVA SCOTIA

As already mentioned, special education has a history which can be traced back to the early 1900's.

The interest in the severely mentally retarded in Nova Scotia dates back to the formation of an organization in 1908 called the "League for the Protection of the Feebleminded." The League had many prominent persons as members in Halifax and in several towns in the Province. They carried on enquiries about the problems and made representations to the government. This was the first public interest in mental deficiency in Nova Scotia.¹

After a few years the League ceased to function, but interest was still kept alive in the City of Halifax by the Local Council of Women and by members of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire.

In the year 1919, the members of the Mental Hygiene Committee of the Halifax Local Council of Women contacted former members of the League with the object of reviving the organization. Through the influence of various prominent men and women much interest was aroused and meetings were held which were well attended. The purpose of the meetings were threefold; to reorganize

¹A. Elizabeth Daine, History of Auxiliary Classes in Halifax City. p. 2.

the League for the Protection of the Feeble-minded, to start a psychiatric clinic and to work toward the establishment of a Provincial School for retarded children.²

It was soon decided to widen the field, and the name of the organization was changed to the Nova Scotia Society for Mental Hygiene, being still incorporated under that name, although it now generally uses the term Canadian Mental Health Association (Nova Scotia Division). Through the years, the influence of this organization has been great. Today, through the mass media of communication, most people are more fully aware of the existence of mentally retarded children, and of the problems they present to society.

According to the annual reports of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, a survey of the school population was made prior to 1915 and in the report of that year it was stated "that there were about eighty mental defectives," Mr. A. J. Findlay, the chairman of the Board said:

"Although the segregation of the subnormal is but a late expedient, the practice is now generally followed in all large cities. Experience has shown that a few defectives in a class will materially retard its progress. Besides lowering the efficiency of the class as a whole, their presence means discouragement for the teacher as well as themselves ... As a beginning here, a special teacher should be appointed and a class for the mentally defective started",³

²Ibid., p. 3.

³Ibid., p. 1.

Development of Classes for Educable Retarded

The report of 1916 showed definite action. The School Board of Halifax decided to set up a special class for retarded children. In 1917, Mr. J. P. Quin, the Chairman of the Board reported:

the success of our special classes for subnormal children is beyond question. When our estimates were prepared last year, there were included two more special classes for such children but these for obvious reasons, had to be deferred.⁴

The obvious reason was the explosion of December 6, 1917, which destroyed so much school property that no extra classrooms were available.

Before her retirement, Mrs. Sarah Houston,⁵ the first teacher of these special classes, submitted a paper to be read at a meeting of the Educational Association at Moncton, New Brunswick, on August 28, 1917. In this paper Mrs. Houston stated that her class was the first in Nova Scotia and began October 1, 1916. It consisted of eighteen boys and girls. The second class was begun September 1917, with fifteen girls and fifteen boys.

The pupils of these first classes were taught in separate sessions -- the boys in the morning and the girls in the afternoon. Their handwork consisted of basketry,

⁴Ibid., p. 2.

⁵Ibid., p. 3.

string work, ring weaving, weaving cushion covers, sewing, knitting, crocheting and embroidery. Mrs. Houston stated that "by special methods most of them learned to write and a few became good readers."

She further states:

These children can be prepared for useful and happy lives under control... Public Schools should be equipped to do anything and everything in their legitimate performance for any and every child that can receive benefit during school age by school children. When a period of benefit has passed, the child should pass out of the school system.⁶

Even during these early years the philosophy behind special education was the same as it is today, namely to give these pupils an education suited to their needs. The thoughts of the Board were for the betterment of these pupils, as well as being directed to relieving the regular classroom of a deterrent to the progress of the more able pupils.

At the same time the members of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, prior to the year 1918, had been working for some time to arouse public opinion towards the establishment of a Home for the retarded. As a result of the efforts of the Princess Louise Chapter of the I.O.D.E. a Municipal Home was established. Although the exact date of its founding is not available, it was

⁶Ibid., p. 2.

opened some time before the year 1918. Dr. Eliza P. Brison was appointed Superintendent of the Home in this year, and she acted in this capacity throughout its existence. The pupils were taught such crafts as basketry, weaving, etc. In 1922, at which time there were ten girls in the Home, only enough funds remained to sustain its operation for one more year. Probably through the receipt of donations of money made privately, however, the Home continued in operation. It is recorded that, in 1926, there were twelve girls enrolled. In 1927, this Home for the retarded was forced to dissolve since the building which it occupied on Quinpool Road was needed by its Board of Governors for the Halifax Industrial School. Dr. Brison removed four children with her to her own home at the time. The government soon took over the care of the mentally retarded, as it was in 1927 that the Act to provide for the establishment of the Nova Scotia Training School was passed.

By the year 1920, four auxiliary classes were in operation by the Halifax School Board and their report of that year stated:

too little is known of the extent of the work and value to the community generally of this department of the school services. The general school classes have been relieved by the taking out of the subnormal and backward children who were a hindrance to the progress of the school.

Equipment and upkeep of the special classes and the special training of the teacher was done at the Board's expense. The cost of the necessary equipment has not meant so much to the city as the gradual uplift and development of the minds of the unfortunate children and their training in the crafts they are able to learn.⁷

The number of classes increased each year, to the extent that by the end of 1938 there were ten classes in all. The chairman of 1939 reported that the Board carried on the work among backward pupils, many of whom after a term or two were able to resume their places in the regular classes. Others were fitted to take up useful employment where the work required was largely housework or manual labour.

Miss Harriet Lindsay in 1939, was appointed the first Director of Auxiliary Classes. A statement of the aims of that era was: the work of the classes is reconstructional in character with special emphasis laid upon reading and handwork. During this period, the emphasis was mainly on handwork, while academic work was that of the regular grades, watered down to the pupils level. Very little thought was given to the post school life of the pupil. During the early years of the Second Great War, the pattern changed. It was realized that this former programme was not sufficient to meet the needs of

⁷Ibid., p. 4.

these pupils and a new programme of "Occupational Education" was introduced in 1948. This programme is based on the specific needs of retarded children and their preparation for participation as well adjusted citizens in adult life. Pupils, instead of being kept busy and amused, are made aware of their capabilities and their values as citizens. This new programme of Occupational Education has shown its value in the number of pupils, now adults, who are self-supporting happy citizens. Beginning in Halifax in 1916, with one teacher and thirty-one pupils, the needs of two hundred and sixty-one pupils are being served by nineteen teachers today.

In the public school system of Nova Scotia, there are seventy-one auxiliary classes administered by local school boards, and recognized as part of the public school system by the Nova Scotia Education Act. (a full list of these classes will be found in appendix I). In addition there are four classes at the Nova Scotia School for the Blind.

In 1947, upon the death of Miss Lindsay, Miss Enid Johnson was appointed Director,⁸ under whose capable direction the work made great progress.

⁸Halifax Board of School Commissioners, "School Board Minutes," June 5, 1947.

In 1952, a four summer Block Programme in Auxiliary Education was established at the Nova Scotia Summer School. While teachers have been organized in study groups as well as in an Association in the city and county, (The Halifax County Auxiliary Class Association). Teachers met once a month to discuss problems relative to these children.⁹

In 1962 with the appointment of Mr. Harlan Cox to the newly created post of Supervisor of Special Education for Nova Scotia, the education of the mentally retarded received continuous and sustained supervision and guidance with the Department of Education itself.¹⁰

Through the combined efforts of Mr. Cox and Miss Johnson, Miss Harris of Dartmouth, Miss Lillian Whyte of St. Francis Xavier, Mr. Maurice Belliveau, Inspector of Schools, Mr. Bert Hatherley, Miss Annie Ritchie, a curriculum committee was set up and their representation was made at the first annual conference in September 1963.¹¹

Development of Classes for Trainable Retarded

In the early development of special education in Nova Scotia, mentally retarded children were not classified into

⁹Elizabeth Daine, p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

the educable and trainable group as they are today. However, with the opening of the Mental Hygiene Clinic in 1918, the Psychiatrist realized that many of the children brought there had I.Q.'s lower than those recommended for auxiliary classes. The realization that the work of the auxiliary classes was being hampered by the presence of children who were incapable of benefitting from the programme led to the establishment of a Home for the severely mentally retarded.

In the trying times following the 1917 disaster another project for the Welfare of these children was begun.

The Massachusetts-Halifax Health Commission was organized in Halifax after the explosion of 1917. The Paediatric clinic was started by the Health Commissioner and the paediatrician soon noticed that many of the problems brought to him were retarded mentally or had problems that interfered with normal adjustment at home, at school or in the community. On the recommendation of the paediatrician, a Mental Hygiene Clinic was formed with a psychiatrist in attendance one afternoon a week. The parents, who were glad to co-operate were given a better understanding of their children's problems and were helped in their task of special training. The children were interviewed and in most cases given psychological tests. The I.Q. of children brought to the clinic was usually found to be lower than those recommended for auxiliary classes. Until the opening of this Mental Hygiene Clinic, no public attention had been given to the child of very low mentality.¹²

¹² Ibid., p. 2.

Early in the year of 1918, The Imperial Order of The Daughters of The Empire from many towns and cities sent a large amount of money to help sufferers from the Halifax explosion. The Halifax Chapter I.O.D.E. asked if the money could be used to help mentally defective girls from families which had been gravely affected by the explosion. Permission was given and plans were made to establish a Home where the children could be given care and a training suited to their mental ability.

In the summer of 1918, the I.O.D.E. home opened to receive ten girls from Halifax North. Some girls had physical defects in addition to their mental defects, but they all needed and were given training that would help them to be happy and useful. Their intelligence was too low for them to become self-supporting outside an institution, but with much patience and kindness on the part of teachers, the girls learned to do housework well under supervision. Among the handcraft learned were knitting, weaving and basketry. The Home established by the I.O.D.E. continued to function for nine years, demonstrating to the public that seriously retarded children can be taught to work and play with others, if given guidance and special training.¹³

The Nova Scotia Training School

In 1927, the government of Nova Scotia asked the National Committee on Mental Hygiene to make a survey of the Province to ascertain if it were advisable to make

¹³ Ibid.

some provision for institutional care and training of mental defectives.

The Nova Scotia Training School (now called Nova Scotia Youth Training Centre) is the result of the years of planning and work by societies, committees and individuals. Scores of meetings were held, and many clubs were addressed by speakers who were interested in the field of mental retardation. It was established by an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature on May 11, 1927 "for the purpose of providing facilities for the custody, treatment, care and education of defective children."¹⁴

Before the Training School was opened to receive pupils, Dr. Clyde Marshall, Psychiatrist for the Province of Nova Scotia, made a comprehensive psychological survey of children in County Homes, Orphanages and other institutions, who were wards of the Children's Aid Societies and the Director of Child Welfare. In this survey, many children were found to be mentally subnormal and suitable as pupils for the Nova Scotia Training School.

The boys dormitory, with a capacity for fifty pupils, was opened to receive boys in 1930. Some time before the opening of the school, several teachers were sent to institutions in Massachusetts to study their methods of teaching retarded children.

The girls cottage, school and trades building, women's staff house, barn, laundry and bakery were completed and in use in 1931. The farm has become highly developed, the grounds beautiful and more and more buildings have been added through the years.¹⁵

Instead of individuals with no future, except dependence on relatives or continued institutional care,

¹⁴Nova Scotia Youth Centre, Truro, A Chance for the Slow Learner to Become a Useful Citizen.

¹⁵Elizabeth Daine, p. 3.

many former pupils have become self-supporting law-abiding citizens and happy homemakers. The Nova Scotia Training School at Brookside, with its thirty-seven years of successful and humane work, is operated by the Nova Scotia Department of Social Welfare, but the classroom teachers are certified by the Department of Education.¹⁶ The school has an enrolment of 225 (waiting list of applicants larger than the current enrolment) ranging in age from nine to seventeen years with I.Q.'s of 35 to 75.

The school programme endeavours to develop the child's adequacy in three major areas: (1) Personal, (2) Social, (3) And Occupational.

A child's personal adequacy is fostered by placing him in training institutions and practical experiences designed to develop self-reliance, a sense of personal worth, and a feeling of belonging. A social adequacy is developed by experience in group living, games, and social functions, community contacts and classroom instructions. Occupational adequacy is the goal of classroom instruction in handicrafts, woodworking, cooking, and sewing, and of practical work throughout the institution in the dormitories, kitchens, and boiler rooms, on grounds, general maintenance, and work placements in the vicinity for older children.

¹⁶ Canadian Education Association, Education of the Mentally Retarded, The Trainable Retardate, p. 6.

Academic instruction to the extent of the child's capacity and specifically directed to the accomplishment of the above three goals is provided in regular classroom situations. Church services are held regularly at the Training School. In addition, a group of the children attend the church of their faith in town each Sunday. The school placement service locates positions for trained pupils and supervises them as necessary.¹⁷

In September 1963, the two classes in St. Francis School, Halifax, were increased to three, with three teachers, and the hours of attendance increased from two hours to three hours each day. Classes for the trainable retarded children are organized in the following centres: Glace Bay, New Waterford, North Sydney, Sydney, Lakevale, Sydney Mines, New Glasgow, Truro, Armdale, Dartmouth, Halifax, Spryfield, Windsor, Kentville, Kingston, Waterville, Wolfville, and Yarmouth. All of the above centres are recognized under the Nova Scotia Education Act and are administered completely by the local school boards. The C.A.R.C. local divisions are assisting and in some cases providing part of the transportation facilities. There was one class in the Halifax City Hospital which has been transferred to Beaverbank; the

¹⁷ Nova Scotia Youth Centre, Truro, A Chance for the Slow Learner to Become a Useful Citizen.

Nova Scotia Training School Truro cares for 60 of these children.

Throughout the years of the history of special education, in the province one person has been most prominent, especially in its early phase. That person was Dr. Eliza Brison, M.D. who was given a fitting tribute at the annual meeting of the Canadian Association for Retarded Children (N. S. Division) at Sydney, N. S. in April 1963 when she was made First Honorary Member of the Association.¹⁸

In just short of fifty years, so much has been accomplished. What will the next half century bring? As the people who were interested in the beginning of this work had visions of what could be done, so we, who are interested now, have a broader vision. We know that these pupils can be so educated as to take a rightful place in this world. We have visions of further help, supervision for those who need it, a full time guidance officer to give guidance in job selection and follow-up, and above all an acceptance of these pupils as useful citizens by all the public in different vocational fields.

This approach has been proved effective in that the attitude of these children towards both work and community

¹⁸ Elizabeth Daine, p. 7.

has been high. Secondly, the very fact that some of these children have managed to retain their jobs for years has proved the effectiveness of the programme. Even though much has been accomplished, still it is expected that the present pace of research will bring hope and betterment.¹⁹

¹⁹Board of School Commissioners. Personal Interview with Miss Mary Wall, Placement Officer for the City of Halifax. May 1, 1968.

CHAPTER III

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT

Education for the Retarded Child

At present, education for children with all degrees of retardation is available in the City of Halifax. There are two groups, each having a distinct educational programme:

The first group consists of children whose I.Q.'s range approximately from thirty to fifty and they are placed in the trainable retarded classes.

The second group comprises the educable children with I.Q.'s ranging approximately from fifty to seventy. They are placed in auxiliary classes which are organized within the public school system, both municipal and urban and therefore within the provisions of the Education Act, thereby making them the responsibility of the Local School Boards.

Pre-School

The pre-school class is organized and financed by the Canadian Association for Retarded Children (C.A.R.C.) Halifax Local Branch. This concerns itself with a programme for children too young to start in public schools. This does

not imply that the child will automatically enter the primary course in the regular public school. Some may do so and others may move into a class for the trainable, while still others may move to other facilities such as a residence school. Though the usual starting age is four years, still there is no fixed age limit. The entrance of the child depends on the individual child's need and his ability to profit from the programme. The primary purpose of this is to provide an early start for training.

An important aspect of the programme from "mother's" stand-point, is the opportunity to meet and talk with other parents. Often, she has looked on her problem as her's and her's alone. Evening meetings are arranged with speakers, to provide practical advice on how to care for the retarded child at home, and to explain the various other services available from the local association. Here too, she is able to meet other mothers who have the same difficulties and through discussions, each helps the other to relieve some common problems. These classes are run twice a week from 9 a.m. to 12.00 a.m., and transportation is provided by the C.A.R.C.¹

¹Canadian Association for Retarded Children, Pre-School Manual, A Report prepared by the Nova Scotia Division of the C.A.R.C. Halifax: April, 1966, pp. 1-3.

Day Care Centre

Besides the Pre-School Classes, the Association finances and operates a Day Care Centre. This class is for very severely retarded children, who at this time cannot enter the pre-school class or the classes for Trainable children. These children are able to live in their homes at present, but if ever a time should come that the parents fall ill or die, then these children would be placed in an institution, because they are incapable of looking after themselves.

Religious classes for both Catholic and Protestant children are also run by this Association. The former attends classes in Religion Instruction at Canadian Martyr's Parish Centre while the latter attends classes at Bayers Road Baptist Church.²

Recreation

Recreation forms a very vital part in the lives of these children. Most of them lack recreational activities at home and are thus forced on the streets to occupy their leisure time. The C.A.R.C., as well as the school board have been very kind in arranging recreational programmes for them.

²Canadian Association for Retarded Children. Proceedings of the Fifth Conference on Mental Retardation (Toronto: September, 1962), pp. 172-174.

During the year 1958, special skating sessions were held for both the Trainable and Auxiliary classes in the Halifax Public Schools. These classes were arranged by the Physical Education Department and are held every year, one day a week for one hour at the Forum. The children enjoy their skating sessions, and whether hail, snow or storm, never fail to turn up for skating. Volunteers assist the Trainable classes in their skating. This year they are attending St. Mary's University rink through the kindness of Rev. Father S. J. Johnson.³

In September 1959, Rainbow Haven Camp was taken over for the first two weeks for the retardates. Thirty-four boys and girls from Trainable and Educable classes were in the care of a capable camp director and ten counsellors. Since the children benefitted greatly from this camp, more camps were held during the ensuing years for the happiness of these children. As a result, in 1962, the Rotary Day Camp for Handicapped children set aside one week during the summer for the children from the Trainable classes.

Normally the camp is run for twelve weeks for the physically handicapped or crippled children. The camp runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Transportation is provided by the

³Rev. Father Johnson, S. J., Head Pastor, Canadian Martyr's Parish Centre, Halifax.

Rotarians for these children. All the children take lunch with them, and milk is provided by the club.

The second camp was held at Yarmouth in the year 1963. This camp was located in Tusket, Yarmouth County at the site of camp Monte Bello. Twenty-nine children of various ages and of both sexes enjoyed three weeks of living in the heart of nature. They benefitted in personal, social and educational experiences from the programme which was so organized to offer both learning and enjoyment. Because of good weather, adequate food and happy environment, the children left the camp with rosy cheeks, gained a few pounds in weight and a wonderful recollection of their camping experience.⁴

In 1964 the third camp was held during the month of August at Sydney. These children were kindly granted permission to use the Y.M.C.A. camp facilities.⁵

In 1965, the summer camp was held at Rotary Camp in Tidnish, Cumberland County. The time set aside for the

⁴Canadian Association for Retarded Children, The Second Nova Scotia Camp for Retarded Children, A report prepared by the Nova Scotia Division of the C.A.R.C. (Nova Scotia, C.A.R.C., 1963), pp. 1-2.

⁵Canadian Association for Retarded Children, The Third Nova Scotia Camp for Retarded Children, A report prepared by the Nova Scotia Division of the C.A.R.C. (Nova Scotia, C.A.R.C., 1964), pp. 1 - 3.

Retardates extended to three weeks. Camp Tidnish is summer fun for crippled and handicapped children. It is owned and operated by the Rotary Club of Amherst, Nova Scotia. At present the C.A.R.C. are utilizing the facilities of the Rotary Club (Amherst). This is the only residential camp and was financed by Provincial and Local Associations as well as Service Clubs and parents of the campers. It operates on the basis that no child should be denied the benefits of camping experience. Almost any handicapped child can attend camp Tidnish including wheel chair cases and the blind. Camping is a way of life that these children now look forward to. For a short period, a camper lives in a relaxed atmosphere, away from the restrictions of the classroom or hospital routine. He shares with his pals all the activities provided in a camp environment. He loves to accept responsibility and feels very proud of any accomplishment that will portray his likeness to a normal child. The physically handicapped child finds himself doing things at camp, which he had not thought possible, since the emphasis is on participation. Here he finds the motivation to try a little harder, he becomes more independent -- and even learns to give a hand to those more handicapped than himself. Through his camping experience the handicapped

child discovers a new way of life.⁶

In the year 1961, weekly dancing classes were started and are still continued at Bloomfield School for the Senior Auxiliary boys and girls.

In 1966-67, a continued Physical Fitness Programme was set up for all schools including Auxiliary and Trainable classes throughout the city. This has been set up by the project of the Canadian Association for the Retarded Children in co-operation with the Department of Physical Education. The recreation that has been planned outside school hours is mostly for the Trainable children and there is a lack of recreation facilities for the educable group. Much should be done for these children.

"Play and recreation are vital elements in human growth and human adjustment."⁷ A child's success in relating to others (first in the home) has an effect on his potential for work. Leisure time activities are necessary to develop this ability. The needs of the mentally handicapped are the same as those of all children or adults,

⁶The Rotary Club of Amherst, Nova Scotia, Summer Fun for Crippled and Handicapped Children. Camp Tidnish, 1965.

⁷Hugh Noble, "The Goals of Recreation," The Proceedings of the Fifth Conference on Mental Retardation (Toronto: Canadian Association for Retarded Children, September, 1962), pp. 85-88.

and one of these is social inclusion in the community. Steps have been taken, and still there is room for much to be done. This social and educational experience in a peer group is important for retardates. With this in mind it is hoped further measures will be taken to introduce more recreational activities in the schools themselves.

The Process Followed for the Placement of Children
Both Educable and Trainable in the Auxiliary Classes
in the Public School System

The children are supposed to enter school at the age of five, but a child of this age, does not show normal progress like other children in the class, and thus one begins to investigate what may be hindering the child's progress. If there is any outstanding problem, then the teacher and Principal of the school refer the case to the Supervisor of the Auxiliary Classes for tests and observation. Unless the problem is an acute one and requires immediate attention, the child is kept under observation during the first year and the testing is deferred to a later date. The child is thus allowed to repeat his primary grade. If the previous symptoms recur again, then testing is administered. This is usually implemented if the child reveals the following characteristics: (1) if he does not adjust to the school

environment or the classroom (2) does not progress academically as other children (3) does not co-operate with the teacher and (4) if he tends to stay aloof and not join in as one of a group. After testing, a physical examination is also performed, and if nothing is revealed which could cause the above symptoms, then the Supervisor of the Auxiliary Classes gets in touch with the parents, and discusses the case with them, allowing them the final decision of placing the child in the Auxiliary Class. If they give their consent, then only, is the child placed in the Auxiliary Class, which will be when the child is about the age of seven.

Usually, no child is placed in this class unless he is given an individual test of intelligence ("S.B. or WISC."). The school record (Cumulative Record Card) of the pupil from the year he entered school is then reviewed. Each classroom teacher concerned is then asked to submit a confidential and unbiased report on the pupil. In general, the I.Q. range of children in the Auxiliary class is between 50 and 75. Borderline cases are also assessed on the above basis, as well as other factors like environment, cultural and social deprivation are taken into account; emotional factors, peer acceptance and or influence of others are also considered.

Regarding the placement of children in the Trainable

classes -- such children are recognized when they are very young and they are examined through doctors both physically and mentally either at a hospital or a child guidance clinic, and only then they are placed in the Trainable classes at the age of six or seven.

The same process follows for children who may be in regular grades for example grade V or VI and the teacher feels that the individual concerned, should be in a special class. After the parent's approval, the child is placed either in the Junior, Intermediate or Senior class, depending on his age and ability. For the next few years, the child is very carefully watched, and if retesting is necessary, it is done at the request of the teacher. If progress is revealed after testing, the child may be placed in a regular grade.

Trainable Retarded Classes

The children present in these classes are those having an I. Q. between thirty and fifty. They are classed trainable because the amount of academic skills they can learn is very limited.

Slowly but inexorably the doctrine of equal educational opportunity for all children has attained the force of law in democratic societies. This doctrine has recently been extended to include many physical and mental deviates who previously were considered too

handicapped to profit from formalized educational facilities.⁸

There are three special classes in Halifax at St. Francis School for the trainable mentally retarded with an enrolment of thirty-two (1967-68). The Department of Education has approved a special programme which is based on the book, *Understanding and Teaching the Dependent Retarded Child*, by Rosenweig and Long. The supervision of this programme and these classes is the responsibility of the Inspector of Special Education. He is also responsible in establishing special classes for the trainable, and auxiliary classes for the educable retarded, developing and supervising classroom programmes and curriculum, assisting with recruiting and training teachers, and co-operating with other government departments concerned with mental retardation.

The underlying basis of educating these children, is that, if they are given an opportunity, they can make some contribution to the common welfare and to his own happiness.

We must not forget that:

Education is the instrument through which a society seeks to implement and put into practice the ideal by which it lives. It is nourished by the culture in which it flourishes and in turn revitalizes and extends that culture. Thus, if

⁸ Louis E. Rosenweig and Julia Long, Understanding and Teaching the Dependent Retarded Child (Darien, Conn.: The Educational Publishing Corp., 1960), p. 9.

the goals and purposes of education are examined, one can see reflected the philosophy of that society. Such goals apply to all citizens of the state, to the bright as well as to the intellectually limited. The goals were intended as relative ones to be attained by each individual to the extent to which his ability permitted.⁹

Four major goals of education in a democracy have been identified. They are (1) Self-realization, (2) human relationship, (3) economic efficiency, and (4) civic responsibility. These goals are interrelated and each is capable of further subdivision. They should be viewed as four vantage points from which to study the more specific purposes of education. Furthermore, these goals are not the exclusive property of the schools. They are the goals that all educational institutions, the school, the home, the church, etc., are pursuing commonly and jointly.¹⁰

The question to be answered is:

Are these goals applicable to the mentally retarded and, specifically, can we use them for the group under discussion, the trainable retarded? The common factor that links all individuals together is that they will exhibit through their development and by their behaviour an impairment in intellectual functioning. As far as is known, this impairment is present from birth or an early age and continues throughout the life of the individual so affected. The trainable retarded child will grow intellectually at the rate of one quarter to one half of a year in any one calendar year. Thus at three years of age, they will be capable of solving problems of the average child of three-quarters to one and a half-year; at six, they will perform like children of one and one half to three years; at nine, like children of two and a quarter to four and a half

⁹ Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁰ Educational Policies Commission, Policies for Education in American Democracy, (Washington: National Education Association, 1946), p. 47.

years; at twelve, like children three to six years and at maturity like children four to eight years.¹¹

The assumption that must be made for all retarded children is that because of their lowered intellectual potential, they will not be able to solve life's problems without some kind of organized help. The amount of such aid will be represented by the difference between the goals that they can attain and the goals which our society recognizes as necessary for independent survival.

Curriculum Used for Trainable Retarded Classes in Nova Scotia:

In the Province of Nova Scotia, we have accepted for our use in the trainable retarded classes a curriculum outline by Louis E. Rosenweig and Julia Long. This guide presents six major skill areas; the self-help, social, motor, academic, vocational, and avocational and the attainable subskills in each area.

Self-help Skills

- a. Feeding
- b. Dressing
- c. Toiletry
- d. Washing and Grooming
- e. Brushing teeth
- f. Handkerchief -- piece of cloth and how it is used
- g. Identifying self

¹¹Louis E. Rosenweig and Julia Long, pp. 35-36.

- h. Controlling self-temper
- i. Following instructions
- j. Completing tasks
- k. Employing self

These are basically an orderly extension of the skills that every child can develop to some extent. These receive the greatest amount of attention and concern of all the skills from the moment of birth. Since they form the primary learning tasks of childhood and are the basic skills of existence, how they are taught and how they are learned may seriously affect the learning of all subsequent skills. Other self-help skills are essential for the protection of the individual from the dangers which threaten existence. Together the self-help skills represent what an individual must acquire if he is to respect himself as an individual and what he must learn before he can participate in the affairs of the surrounding world.¹²

Social Skills

- a. Considering others rights and feelings
- b. Receiving help
- c. Helping others
- d. Immitating others
- e. Playing and working with others
- f. Competing with others -- taught at senior level only
- g. Being courteous to others
- h. Obeying rules.

¹²Ibid., pp. 37-40.

It is in the area of the social skills that the mental deficient exhibits his most glaring mistakes. This is because these skills are highly dependent on the higher mental processes of judgement, reasoning and dealing with abstract symbols. His powers of retention will also be less than average, so that he will require more drill, to ensure retention of material he has been taught. Because of this he will have difficulty with sequence, chronology, and relationships, and because of this and his limited abstract intelligence, his maximum development in the academic subjects will be minimal and limited to those skills for which he will have the greatest need in adult life.¹³

Motor Skills

- a. Walking and Balancing
- b. Running
- c. Climbing
- d. Skipping
- e. Marching
- f. Dancing
- g. Throwing
- h. Jumping and Skipping
- i. Manipulating Eating
- j. Manipulating Writing Tools
- k. Using Hands and Fingers

Motor development is vital in the early years. Within a short time, the individual changes from a helpless infant

¹³Ibid., pp. 40-43.

to an active, co-ordinated child. It has been found that motor development is indicative of mental growth. Tredgold, in his classic work on mental deficiency, states, "a defect of muscular co-ordination is one of the commonest abnormalities of mental defectives."¹⁴ He points out that in such children body balance is ungainly, there is clumsiness in walking and running and motor disability is pronounced in the finer hand and finger movements. In addition, as Rosenweig and Long point out, those skills which we take for granted in normal children have to be taught to the 'trainable' retarded child for example, how to walk and run up and down the stairs with objects in arms, etc.¹⁵

Academic Skills

Due to limited potentiality it is difficult for a trainable retarded child to grasp any academic skills. Studies have shown that the retarded have greater difficulties in learning, retaining, and transferring. Language sets mankind above all other forms of life. It is the key to human communication and a major tool to human thought. Language involves reception (decoding), association (integration), and expression (encoding).

¹⁴A. F. Tredgold, A Textbook of Mental Deficiency (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Co., 1947), p. 71.

¹⁵Louise E. Rosenweig and Julia Long, pp. 43-47.

Receptive language includes listening and reading abilities, while expressive language includes speaking and writing abilities. The integration for the individual is the brain where the association and generation of ideas take place. A close relationship exists between language and intellectual development. In other words the greater the extent of mental retardation, the greater the degree of language disability. Thus, the dependent retarded seldom develops sufficient speech and language to communicate orally in even simple sentences; some never attach meaning to even one word they hear, while others understand a few simple commands and still others have a minimal speaking vocabulary usually of a few simple words. By adulthood, the trainable retarded have reasonably good skills in simple oral communication, but do not become literate. Poor visual discrimination and poor auditory discrimination also affect reading, spelling and the use of language, while poor conceptualisation affects all thought processes. However, attempts are made to teach him visual discrimination so that he is capable of associating objects of clothing with some personal function such as the policeman, fireman, nurse, or doctor. Under auditory discrimination he is taught sounds of many things which may be safety cues, and he is also taught as

far as possible to read labels and safety signs.

The educable retarded develop quite adequate skills in oral communication for ordinary conversation, and develop reading and writing skills at maturity in the grade three to five range. Language age closely parallels mental age. In the interest of clarity, in thinking about and planning for slow learners, the term "slow learner" should be interpreted consistently to mean, "slow in learning intellectual things." On the other hand it should be remembered that slow learners are not equally slow in all kinds of activities or abnormal in all their characteristics. They may be rather bright in such matters as social adaptability, mechanical ability, or artistic sense, and able to get along quite well in these respects, even though they cannot read very well or do much with arithmetic. It is great injustice to assume that because a pupil is slow in reading, he is necessarily slow in all other things. If such an attitude is taken, a pupil's best talents may go unnoticed, and his greatest possibilities unrealized. Social adjustment, artistic skill and appreciation, and competence of one's hands are quite as much the concern of the school as are reading or arithmetic.

It should be remembered that his differences and difficulties lie in those areas that are academic. In

other areas he is much like the average or so-called normal. If he is to live in the world, he must be able to cope with the people in it and so provision must be made for his adjustment to everyday living.

Vocational Skills

The skills which have already been mentioned are a prelude to some type of vocational training, because without these skills, the individual would not be sufficiently motivated to attempt vocational skills.

Recent studies of groups of retarded children have shown that twenty-seven percent of the group studied worked for pay. Most of the jobs held consisted of simple household chores, sweeping, dusting, washing dishes, or jobs as messengers.¹⁶

In the trainable retarded classes in Nova Scotia the children are taught such things as errands, caring for others, dusting and sweeping, setting a table, washing and drying dishes, washing and ironing, homemaking, and using tools.

Activity Centre

Since there is no programme for the graduates of the trainable classes, and because they leave school at the age of 16 years and cannot keep pace with the competitive

¹⁶Ibid., p. 54.

industry, the C.A.R.C. in February 1962 started classes in the old St. Mary's Parish Hall for them under the name of "Activity Centre." (Some children are also admitted from the auxiliary classes). The main aim of the "Activity Centre" is to provide a sheltered workshop for these children, as they cannot be left without supervision. The children are taught the most basic skills -- namely the girls begin with threading the needle and gradually working up to more advanced skills in sewing, while boys start out "sanding wooden articles" and then making the simplest "saleable" articles. The children in this manner make things to sell at coffee parties; Christmas, and at other times throughout the year.

During a pre-christmas sale in 1966, the activity centre children sold, for over \$2,000 articles which had been made by them. Having started from the simple basic task, they now make stuffed dolls, doll's beds, envelope stuffing and many more useful things. The Activity Centre also has a contract with the Provincial Government for typewriter ribbons. They buy in bulk, and also buy different empty spools for different models. The boys roll the ribbons on these spools and then sell them to the Government, which is their best customer (and thus indirectly help the Centre). This ribbon is marked, packed and delivered by

the boys working in the activity centre. This is part of their training, and they are capable of going to any Government building and making necessary deliveries and having the necessary papers signed. They are familiar with all the formalities relating to this work.

The boys also make articles out of drift wood. They sand the wood, polish it, and decorate it for sale. During the Christmas of 1966, they made birch log centre pieces, candles, and they decorated match boxes, jewel boxes, and cigarette boxes. They did shell work as well. The boys have improved in their ability and developed what potential they have for the manual skills involved in this work. They have developed the art of making ornaments for Christmas, such as Santa Claus, Reindeer, and nativity settings. Before coming to the workshop, these boys were sitting at home and failing to develop their potential if not actually regressing. The idea of keeping them busy with this kind of work is to keep them at their peak of ability so that they may not regress.

Each Friday is pay day at the workshop, and the young children working in the centre are paid a stipend wage at the rate of 15 cents an hour. Those working the whole day get \$3.75 and those working only in the mornings get \$2.25. According to the Canadian Survey, this is considered high

wage for this kind of centre. Some children in the States have to pay to the centre, in order to be able to attend the workshop.

The United Commerical Travellers have kindly donated most of the equipment present in the workshop and since the past year, the Canadian Progress Club has paid \$100.00 a month towards rent. For the past two years (except for the help from the U.C.T. and C.P. Club and wages for Mrs. Decoste and Mr. Roberts, the only two staff members paid by the C.A.R.C.) the shop has been maintained by the selling of the articles that these young adults make. This includes the payments for the balance of the rent, the telephone, light and power, all materials used in the shop for making articles and the stipends for the young adults. The stipends alone amount to \$78.00 a week since the enrolment has increased to twenty-seven young adults. About one half of the class is made up of boys and the remaining half is girls.¹⁷

Auxiliary Classes

The classes for educable mentally retarded children in Nova Scotia are called "Auxiliary Classes", and are

¹⁷ Interview with Lillian Decoste, Manager of Activity Centre, November 10th, 1967.

organized in public school systems, both municipal and urban. They are recognized within the Education Act, thereby making them the responsibility of the local school board.

The classes are organized as follows:

- (1) Nine Junior Auxiliary classes - Ages 8,9, 10 and 11.
- (2) Two Intermediate Auxiliary Classes - Ages 12 and 13.
- (3) Five Senior Auxiliary Classes - Ages 14, and up.

Auxiliary classes have been set up to look after those children whose I.Q.'s fall into the approximate range of from fifty to seventy-five. An attempt is made to keep as homogenous a grouping as possible according to both chronological and mental age. The curriculum for these children is constantly being reinforced and deepened to suit their intellectual ability.

Instead of regular subjects like History, Geography, Social Studies, etc., the subjects covered include such material as job opportunities and citizenship. Even such topics as their arithmetic, spelling, reading are all geared to enable these children to someday take their place in society. For example, with regard to reading, books are now being written to cater to the levels of their understanding and to meet their needs. The readers being used

by the different classes are the "Stanwix House Series," which are written at various levels to suit all groups. There is a Teachers Manual - "Getting Ready For Functional Basic Reading," and Readers are graded as follows:-

A 2	.....About King.....	along with a work-book				
B 2	.....About Mary and Bill..	"	"	"	"	"
C 2	.....About Friends.....	"	"	"	"	"
D 2	.....About Fun and Play...	"	"	"	"	"
E 2	.....About Things at Home.	"	"	"	"	"
F 2	.....About Going Away.....	"	"	"	"	"
G 2	.....Come Along.....	"	"	"	"	"
H	.....Ready to Help.....	"	"	"	"	"
I 2	.....Making Friends.....	"	"	"	"	"
J 2	.....Something To Do.....	"	"	"	"	"
K	.....World of Wonders.....	"	"	"	"	"
L	.....Enjoy the Seasons....	"	"	"	"	"
M	.....Things to Believe....	"	"	"	"	"
AAA 3	.....OFF TO WORK.....	"	"	"	"	"18

The Alphabets are used as "Code Letters" indicating the level of Reading. The child does not know this and is thus prevented from suffering from any inferiority complex.

At the Senior Level the introduction of the new Readers S.R.A. Series¹⁹ has proved very successful and beneficial. The Readers are three in number and are called

¹⁸A1 Tudyman, Functional Reading Series: Stanwix House Series. (Toronto: House of Grant, 1963).

¹⁹R. H. Goldberg and W. T. Brumber, The Job Ahead Scientific Research Association (Chicago: Syracuse University Press, 1963).

"THE JOB AHEAD." They contain the same stories at different levels. They are classified as I, II and III levels for the benefit of the teachers. The Workbooks too, are the same but graded, thus making the children unconscious of the fact that they are reading at different levels. This gives them some confidence of success.

These Readers are very realistic and contain material and stories suited to their level. The jobs dealt with lay emphasis on training for participation in the different occupations of our city or province. These Readers are further supported by the "OFF TO WORK" book from the Stanwix House Series.

In the past, importance was attached more to the physical development of the child than to the mental, whereas, the new curriculum considers both the physical and the mental needs and encompasses the child's own present day world.

In the past, too, the children were retained in school with the "end in sight" (placing them in unskilled jobs) whereas the emphasis now (by the help of these Readers) is on the retaining of their own thoughts by letting them realize the different jobs available and the dignity involved in the humbler vocations. In this series, attempt is made to treat the child as a "whole entity," and this change is

attributed to the new "outlook" of the community.

Literature in these books is also more humanized, and the children are encouraged to realize that they are accepted in this world on both physical and mental assets. They live like adults, even though their minds be young. The auxiliary programme has a specific spot in the overall educational picture and for this reason it is becoming more acceptable by both the pupils and the parents themselves.

Their "Occupational Education" core is also centered around the same theme namely "Study of Job Areas; Choosing, Getting and Holding a job, Spending one's income." Their Reader; Arithmetic; Occupational Education are all inter-related. The correlation is perfect and thus these children are trained and helped to the utmost by teachers to "fit into society as good citizens." The games and physical skills are such so as to help them to develop their co-ordination and muscles. The physical skills help them to develop into good, healthy, normal children.

The girls are taught "domestic science" and "sewing" so that it will be easier for them to run homes of their own; and sew their own clothes. Again the idea being to help them to become "self-supporting citizens."

House craft occupies a valuable place in Special Education for the following reasons:

1. Reading and Arithmetic are in constant use during the lesson.
2. There is some opportunity for deliberate practical teaching of these two basic subjects.
3. Teaching through topic often involves a certain amount of geography and history occasionally.
4. Some social training and character-building are integrated into a well-planned course.
5. There are opportunities for girls to discuss personal problems.²⁰

The boys are taught "wood-work" which again gives them a training in making articles which they can sell. The Industrial Arts shops offer an atmosphere in which children feel they are and can be successful. The school shop also provides the type of situation in which the retarded child is encouraged to help himself, to learn himself. This, after all, is one of the important goals of any teaching programme. Pride and satisfaction by the students is often revealed in the progress and construction of the various projects. Seeing a youngster pleased and with a sense of pride is indeed rewarding for the Instructors. In teaching this special class it is most helpful if the positive philosophy is accepted that there is something

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Hilary M. Devereux, Housecraft in the Education of Handicapped Children (London: Mills and Boon Ltd., 1963), p. 210.

worthwhile which every pupil can do reasonably well, and the aim of the teacher should therefore be to try to find just what it is that the child can do to help him to realize his skills and capacities in that direction.

Another fact that must not be forgotten is that Industrial Arts is a part of general education. Today we try to teach all the children of all the people. Industrial Arts provides:

1. An opportunity for children to make things and express themselves creatively.
2. An opportunity to engage in manipulative activity.
3. An opportunity to learn about processes. To explore and to experiment.

In teaching retarded children, it was soon discovered that group activity was much more effective than one individual working on his own. A production line of activity produced the best results. It must be remembered that these students, after leaving school, will most likely work in a group. They are going to find it necessary to live with and work with others as a group, perhaps to a greater extent than the average person who can progress on his own. We must realize that it is necessary to provide simple operations which may be learned by rote and done over and over automatically. This would also ensure that the person achieves a certain measure of success in his own eyes as well as in

contributing something for the good of the group.

This training helps them to earn money. Along with these the teacher also aids the child by developing and promoting his mental health. The idea behind this being as Dr. S. R. Laycock has pointed out:- "...Teaching which meets the emotional needs of the child is merely teaching at its best. Teaching which best promotes the highest potential of a particular pupil is likely to be that which gives him a feeling of independence, achievement, recognition, and a sense of worth."²¹

Even though some educators think that Mental Health is no concern of the school -- and that its main job is intellectual development yet we know that the school has no choice but to promote emotional stability and maturity in its pupils. "There is a great deal of evidence that emotional factors hinder learning, and they frequently lie at the root of underachievement and are prominent in school dropouts."²²

For these reasons, we know, most teachers are genuinely concerned with helping their pupils achieve maximum self-realization and become mature citizens able to make a contribution to their fellowmen.²³

²¹ S. R. Laycock, Canadian Mental Health Supplement, Vol. 40, Promoting Mental Health in the School (March-April, 1964), p. 10.

²² Ibid., p. 1.

²³ Ibid.

In Cornwall, in England there is an old tradition that the way to tell whether or not a person is mentally ill is to put him in a room where an open tap is running and tell him to mop up. If he turns off the tap before starting to mop up he is considered sane; if he lets it continue to run and still tries to mop up, he is considered unbalanced.²⁴ We could well follow this homely example. Often teachers spend more time "mopping up" various types of classroom problems, rather than "turning off the tap" through constructive efforts to promote the mental health of the pupils.

The teaching of "Occupational Education" in the Auxiliary classes is made up of "A CUMULATIVE CORE CURRICULUM." This consists of the following:

- Core 1. Our Home and Family.....C.A. 6-7-8
- Core 2. The Neighbourhood.....C.A. 9-10
- Core 3. The Larger Community.....C.A. 10-11
- Core 4. The Province.....C.A. 11-12
- Core 5. Canada and the World.....C.A. 12-13
- Core 6. Job Areas.....C.A. 13-14
- Core 7. Choosing, Getting and Holding
a Job.....C.A. 14-15
- Core 8. Spending one's Income
Wisely.....C.A. 15-16

²⁴Ibid.

Core 1, Our Home and the Family is made up of the following sub-headings:-

- (1) Family Group which comprises
 - (a) Members of the family
 - (b) People Who May Live With Us
 - (c) Pets
- (2) Religion - consists of
 - (a) Worship
 - (b) Church Attendance
 - (c) Religious Leaders in the Community
 - (d) Religious Children's Groups for Recreation
 - (e) Importance of Parents as Religious Leaders
 - (f) Values of Religious Training
- (3) Our House --
 - (a) Rooms of our House
 - (b) How We Use The Rooms of Our House
 - (c) Furniture in Our Rooms
- (4) Family Workers --
 - (a) Father's Work
 - (b) Mother's Work
 - (c) Sister's Work
 - (d) Brother's Work
- (5) Food for the Family --
 - (a) Meals of the Day
- (6) Clothing for the Family --
 - (a) Seasonal
- (7) Recreation --
 - (a) Indoors
 - (b) Outdoors²⁵

In a similar manner all the cores are divided and sub-divided to suit the intellectual ability of these

children. Some of the lesson plans to accompany these cores were prepared by the teachers concerned with these classes and holding a Nova Scotia Teacher's Licence, and being either enrolled in or completed the special training given in the Auxiliary Block Programme²⁶ at the Nova Scotia Summer School (or its equivalent). These plans reflect the diligence and competence of these teachers when dedication to their profession is without question.

It is plain that Nova Scotia has made substantial progress in its handling of the educable retarded. When we compare the facilities available today with those of a few years back we can see that a great deal of planning has been put forth in establishing a province-wide system of education. In Halifax, the Director of these classes is Miss Enid Johnson, and under her most capable direction and supervision, the work has progressed.

²⁶ Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, "Nova Scotia Summer School Calendar," Halifax, 1967, p. 36.

CHAPTER IV

SUGGESTED REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RETARDED CHILDREN

In order to provide the requisite demands of the retarded children in Canada, primarily we must forge ahead in three directions:

(1) Make adequate provision in all the provinces for a central registry, if possible under government auspices;

(2) Provide for a specially trained director or supervisor of special education at the provincial level in each province who should organize and co-ordinate the educational services for the retarded children;

(3) Co-ordinate councils, at both the provincial and local levels, composed of representatives of both government and voluntary agencies, and thus review existing services for the handicapped and also advise a balanced programme to cover different types of the retarded.¹

(4) To this list could be added the necessity for

¹S. R. Laycock, Special Education in Canada (Toronto: W. J. Gage Limited, 1963), p. 27.

the institution of programmes of research on the most suitable methods of teaching or training mentally retarded children and adults, and this could be done without entering the field of strictly medical research on mental deficiency.

There have already been important breakthroughs in the bio-medical field. Though they have overwhelming significance in the field of mental retardation, they resulted from research projects in unrelated fields. This was the case with research on the chromosomal abnormality in mongolism, the discovery that rubella (or German measles) can cause damage to the fetus and is one cause of mental retardation (two groups of scientists recently isolated the virus), the discovery that penicillin has almost eliminated congenital syphilis in children, also a cause of mental retardation, and the discovery of the RH factor in blood and replacement transfusions.²

It has also been found that the rare disease called phenylpyruvic oligophrenia is due to an inherited biochemical defect which results in progressive mental retardation, which began shortly after the child is born. If the condition is recognized within the first ten or

²Kay Kritzwiser, p. 25.

twelve weeks of life and the child is placed on a special diet (available commercially) the mental retardation may be prevented. Arrangements for such testing of all newborn children in Nova Scotia was started by Dr. William A. Cochrane, Associate Professor of Paediatrics, Dalhousie University, Halifax,³ more than seven years ago in the Children's Hospital.

At present several programmes related to mental retardation are being carried out. These include a newborn programme, immunochemical studies, studies in children suffering from neurological disorders, mental retardation, convulsive disorders and failure to thrive.

From 1964 to 1967 the Canadian Association for Retarded Children and its provincial divisions have undertaken to develop a centennial project in each province in some field of mental retardation, such as research, clinical care, rehabilitation, workshops or education.

In this area the C.A.R.C.'s centennial project is the Atlantic Research Centre for Mental Retardation. Its programme is aimed at research oriented towards the prevention of mental retardation, and will be financed jointly by the federal and provincial governments and the national association.

³Canadian Association for Retarded Children, Brief to Premier of Nova Scotia, March, 1961, p. 27.

A number of disciplines are co-ordinated in an attack on the problems of mental retardation, such as biochemistry and immunochemistry, psychology, genetics and virology. Excellent new laboratories have been completed in the south wing of the Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building, Halifax, where research in paediatrics, psychiatry and genetics are closely intergrated in the Atlantic Research Unit for Mental Retardation.⁴

It can be said with justification that there is a growing awareness of the necessity of preserving and enhancing the self-concept of a retarded child. The feeling that he is worth while and a treasured individual in the eyes of his parents, age-mates, teachers, and society lies at the root of the child's consciousness, and this aids in his successful learning.

Diagnostic and Counselling Clinics

When a child is observed to be developing at a slower rate than other children of the same age, the prime necessity is for an adequate examination to be carried out, in order that an early diagnosis may be made of the causes of his retardation, and steps taken to prevent further deterioration

⁴Dalhousie Alumni News. Halifax, N. S., October-November, 1967. p. 5.

and to ensure his development under the best possible conditions. Such an examination is of benefit not only to the child himself, but in the early stages perhaps even more so to the parents and to those responsible for the future care of the child.

Such an examination should include physical, mental, and psychological testing, and in most instances will call for the services of an efficient and devoted team, including the family physician, a pediatrician, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a speech therapist, and social workers. Their combined efforts will be necessary in order to determine the presence and relative importance of physical or mental illness or mental deficiency in each individual case.

Once the diagnosis has been established, careful professional supervision of the appropriate course of action is necessary, and throughout the life of the individual concerned the parents or guardians are in continual need of counsel and advice, which can only be provided by those trained and experienced in the field of retardation.

Such diagnostic and counselling facilities can most appropriately be provided by a clinic organized for the purpose, and such total coverage is not currently available at any centre in Nova Scotia, although some valuable services are being provided by the Child Guidance Clinic in Halifax,

and by Mental Health Clinics in various centres in the Province.

The Nova Scotia Association for Retarded Children is recommending to the Provincial Government that a Diagnostic and Counselling Clinic for the mentally retarded, following the broad principles outlined above, should be established in the Halifax-Dartmouth area.

A diagnostic and counselling clinic in Halifax could provide additional services, including professional consultations with the fields of neurology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics, cardiology, dentistry, etc., and could provide material for the medical and social research so necessary in order to overcome this major problem of mental retardation.

The appropriate place for such a clinic might be the proposed Out-Patient Department of the New Halifax Children's Hospital, (in which the professional consultants detailed above would be readily available).

Since numerous requests for help are received from parents of retarded children residing in various parts of the Province, and since such parents not infrequently require advice as to the care of their retarded children in the home, there is an apparent need for an expanded home counselling service, and it is submitted that this could appropriately

be directed by adequately trained workers attached to the Mental Health Clinics. The proposed Diagnostic and Counselling Clinic in the Halifax-Dartmouth area should provide such service in that part of the Province, and could also act as a clearing house for requests received from parents and others in rural areas.⁵

Placement Officer

Another important need is that of a placement officer. The children after the age of sixteen are lost, since they do not know what work they are capable of doing or what suitable jobs could be made available to them. The children going out and looking for jobs and then losing the same in a few days, make them even more frustrated. The idea of educating these children is to help them to fit in a society and be of use and service to the community.

This is where the placement officer becomes essential. He should be one who is familiar with different industries, and various other openings. He should pool all information at the vocational centres, which in turn should be training and educating the children to fit into such jobs that are

⁵Canadian Association for Retarded Children, Brief to the Premier of Nova Scotia on Current Problems in the Care, Training and Education of Retarded Children (Halifax: March, 1961), pp. 18 - 20.

available in different industries. If the children are familiarized with the jobs they will be doing, they will gain confidence.

The placement officer should also explain to the employers the type of hand they will be getting. They should be made to have a sympathetic understanding of the retarded children. These retarded ones lack the abilities and understanding of a normal person and should be viewed more in a tolerant way. They should not be "fired" for minor mistakes, but approached and corrected in a sympathetic manner. This will help to build confidence in these individuals who in turn will thus execute a much better job.

Not only should the placement officer be working with the employer, but also with the employees. The adult retardates are not aware of mistakes which may appear glaring to an employer. The placement officer should talk regularly with these employees when they first begin their jobs, and these talks can gradually taper off as the employees get adjusted to the job. He should always be available to come back to discuss problems that might arise during intervals. Miss Mary Wall, an employee of the Halifax School Board helps these persons tremendously, but this is only part of her duties, and it would be better if some person were appointed to deal solely with the problems

presented by retarded employees. Through such an arrangement an adequate service of advice could be provided for both employers and their retarded employees, a service which is, at present, markedly inadequate.⁶

Teacher Training Programme

"It has been said that a good teacher is someone who can understand those not very good at explaining and explain something to those not very good at understanding. Although this saying would describe all good teachers, it is particularly true of the teacher of handicapped children."⁷

As a result, special training is essential for teachers dealing with retarded children, because a teacher trained in this line will do everything possible to create successful situations by eliminating feelings of frustration and failure, whereas an untrained person, through his blundering, hinders the child's progress by disturbing him emotionally.⁸

Due to the above reasons, it is felt by teachers dealing with these children that special sequences of courses in teacher preparation should be considered in colleges and universities.

⁶Canadian Association for Retarded Children. Proceedings of Fifth Conference on Mental Retardation (Halifax; September, 1962). pp. 152-153.

⁷Laurence J. Peter, p. 210.

⁸Malinda Dean Garton, A. M., Teaching the Educable Mentally Retarded: Practical Method. (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thompson Publisher, 1967), p. 30.

(1) The Universities and Colleges should organize special curricula for the education of teachers of the mentally retarded.

(2) Recruitment of suitable candidates for this programme is essential.

(3) Adequate teacher-education curriculum is required.

(4) Consideration should be given to the location of teacher-education institutions.⁹

Romaine P. MacKie, Harold M. Williams, and Lloyd M. Dunn write about the competencies needed by teachers of the Mentally Retarded. They have grouped the distinctive competencies under four broad headings:

- (1) Understanding the characteristics of the mentally retarded child and his place in society.
- (2) Developing a functional curriculum through relating the broad personal and social needs of the mentally retarded.
- (3) Understanding and applying pedagogical procedures based on an understanding of the known learning characteristics of the mentally retarded.
- (4) Selecting, developing, and using appropriate instructional materials and equipment in teaching mentally retarded children.¹⁰

At the present time, most of the teachers of auxiliary classes in the public schools have general licenses. Very few teachers of retarded children have special auxiliary class licenses.

⁹Jerome H. Rothstein, pp. 518-520.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 529.

The Association (C.A.R.C.) feels that teachers of retarded children should have a general license and some experience teaching normal children followed by special training for their work with retarded children. It follows that the present method of granting a general license after a year at the Provincial Normal College, and a special license in auxiliary education after the completion of a four session "block" programme at the Nova Scotia Summer School provides very good facilities for teachers.

Since the number of classes for retarded children is increasing, it is felt by the association that a special two year course for teachers of retarded pupils should be established at the new Teachers College in Truro. It is suggested that this be done in such a way that teachers may qualify for a general license in one year and for the specialist license in two years. This would enable teachers with general license willing to take a year off from teaching to attend the Teachers College and qualify for a specialist license.¹¹

In conclusion, I would like to quote Pines with regard to the teaching of mentally retarded children: "teaching

¹¹ Canadian Association for Retarded Children, Brief to the Premier of Nova Scotia on Current Problems in the Care, Training and Education of Retarded Children, Halifax: March, 1961, pp. 14-15.

the mentally retarded is probably the most demanding of all branches of education. It takes a truly dedicated, outstanding person to work successfully with these children, someone with a great love of people, a sense of humour, unswerving personal stability and a real understanding of child development. It is tough work and generally offers no extra pay. Teachers who have tried it, who have seen the change in their pupils and in their pupil's families, will understand the former high school teachers who said, "I never want to go back to ordinary teaching -- this is far more rewarding."¹²

Employment and Vocational Training

The Youth Employment Officer whose main job it is to find employment for the retarded children should be able to build up a good list of employers who understand that with young retarded employees the early and "learning" stages may be difficult and who are therefore willing to help the young people in settling down. The value of stability and reliability is so obvious as to be unquestionable.

There should be a Junior Vocational School for students between fifteen to eighteen years of age group.

¹²Cornell Capa and Maya Pines, p. 65.

Usually the children leave school at the age of sixteen with no vocational training. Stress should be laid on "manual skills" that is, skills in a manual job, like plumbing, carpentry, etc.

Some of the suggested courses that these children are capable of learning and which should be introduced are as follows:

For Girls: they should be given practical training with regard to home-skills. They should be able to look after a home -- training as a maid; waxing; polishing floors; child care; cooking; washing dishes; serving; using electrical appliances; laundry work, etc. Some of the more capable ones should be given experience as attendants in hospital (tray-girls); work in restaurants; counter-girls; work in factories such as "Moirs Ltd. Confectionery", Brandram Henderson Co. (paint factory), and Schofield Paper Co. Limited, etc. Training in the use of machines should be imparted in the vocational schools, for example, training in the use of sewing machines, which would help them in dress-making. They can also be trained to become hair dressers (many are inclined towards this line, but unfortunately the educational requirements hinder their entrance due to lack of required grade level). The educational level for entrance to the Hairdressing school is set by the Nova Scotia

Association of Hairdressing as Grade VIII completed.¹³

Homecraft should form an important part in the lives of these children because it is very essential that they learn to exercise self-control. Individual work is stressed for developing self-reliance. Manipulative skills are better developed in dealing with utensils. They should have practical experience of coping with the "whole job", that is, they should practice in planning out and organizing their work within a budget or a time span, and of putting into practice original ideas. In the active life of the housecraft room there is good opportunity for helping children to work with others, use their own initiative and assume responsibility for sharing work in hand.

For Boys: There should be a Junior Commercial Course in Vocational Schools. Some choice of training should be included for boys in these schools. For example, training in the art of becoming chefs, barbers, etc., and also where they can be given knowledge for some choice of training -- maintenance work; where they can be trained as barbers; auto-mechanics; garage attendants and plumbers or carpenter's assistants.

There ought to be a change in the "educational

¹³B. E. Carreau, Senior Manpower Counsellor, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Halifax, May 27, 1968.

requirements" with regard to these children, because the present requirements demand too high a qualification for some of these jobs and thus the retarded are not given an opportunity to work. Requirements should be more realistic in this respect.

Until more vocational schools are established there ought to be greater emphasis laid on "job training and part-time schooling programme". This would help the retarded to fit into regular jobs as soon as they exit from school. Progressive development and acceptance of the idea of more time spent "on the job training" should be emphasized. Those children interested in manual training, and showing definite skills and aptitude towards it should be allowed to go in with the high school students in order to continue in this line. There should be an organized research into the "jobs" that the retarded have held and can undertake, so that these could be introduced into the Vocational Schools. Research into the methods used for instructing these children in manual skills should also be undertaken, because teaching could be adjusted according to the abilities of the child.

Some provision for funds (be it from the Welfare or School Board) could be made whereby these children could have a good meal in the schools during the middle of the day. "Personnel" should be provided to prepare the food.

Due to lack of nourishment and rest, these teenagers are unable to participate in strenuous games and thus collapse or get easily exhausted. They should be provided with a "balanced meal" in order to cope with their physical needs and also to sustain work at a level of achievement.¹⁴

HOSTELS, FOSTER HOMES AND HOSPITALS

Care of the Children Who Cannot Live in Their Own Homes

(a) Some provision should be made for children who are orphans. They can work in a community as long as they have someone to guide or counsel them, but it is impossible for them to live alone. There should be a dormitory or home with Foster Parents, who could look after about ten to twelve children. The children could then go into the community and work and could at the same time be well cared for physically by these Foster Parents. They could perhaps guide and counsel these children, helping them to become independent, self-supporting citizens. Otherwise, the children usually do not know to whom to turn for advice and thus readily become inmates of jails or eventually land in an asylum.

(b) Foster homes should be located in areas where

¹⁴Canadian Association for Retarded Children, Brief to Premier of Nova Scotia, (March, 1960), pp. 21-23.

instruction is available in Special or Auxiliary classes in the public schools of the community. There should be improved Home Care and parent guidance services to help foster parents meet the social and emotional needs of the children, while a new orientation in the care and training given in residential institutions should be brought about.

(c) For little ones, there should be "Satellite Homes" (between nine to sixteen years) for severely retarded who cannot attend school, and whose parents are unable to look after them in their own homes. It is believed that one has been opened at Beaverbank and one at Pictou. There is a proposal to open two more in Nova Scotia.

(d) There is also a standing need for an Institution or hospital for "adult retarded", who are too low to function in sheltered workshop or community or who are too emotionally upset or unbalanced.

Facilities should be provided for rehabilitation and training and sheltered employment. There is a great need for an activity centre or building for these children. There is one, already existing, but the demand for admission is so great that this one centre is unable to handle the growing demand. Moreover, grant-wise it is tremendous burden for a small association such as the C.A.R.C., which is always worried if there will be enough money to continue

this work. It would be better if a permanent building could be constructed for the purpose under the auspices of the Department of Welfare or Rehabilitation. Another school similar to the Nova Scotia Youth Centre should be established, since there is such a long waiting list and eventually its need will be still increasing in the future. There should be a spurring of recruitment and preparation of professional personnel by helping Universities take on more clinical, teaching and research staff concerned with this growing problem.¹⁵

Adequate special education programmes and research to improve curricula for special classes should be undertaken. Provision should be made for the "emotional" problem-children. These children need not be mentally retarded. There is a class existing for these children in Sydney, Nova Scotia, and there should also be one in Halifax.

There is a great need for the provision of special services for the pre-school retarded child. Newell Kephart¹⁶ in his book "The Slow Learner in the Classroom", has submitted evidence that slow learning children in school

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 4-9.

¹⁶Lloyd M. Dunn, Exceptional Children in the Schools: (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966) p. 95, quoting Kephart Newell C., The Slow Learner in the Classroom. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1960.

frequently fail to learn to read because they lack the basic sensory and motor skills that normal children possess in their pre-school period. These slow learning and retarded children need special assistance on a planned and systematic basis during the pre-school period. Just because they learn slowly they need more practice under some systematic and patient guidance than the other normal children. A consultant service for the mothers of pre-school retarded children may also be useful for which a small beginning as already noted, has been made under the C.A.R.C.

Planned recreational activity for retarded children is an essential part of their educational, social and physical progress. They should be allowed to participate in normal games along with the regular class children, because these children may not be retarded in all respects (especially physical skills) "Love them, Limit them, Help them to succeed", should be the motto of all in the community. They need physical exercises and games under trained personnel, so that they may develop skills and have a more normal physical development.

Last but not least, the teachers of the auxiliary classes feel that the word "Auxiliary"¹⁷ should be done away

¹⁷Halifax Board of School Commissioners. Personal discussions with Teachers of Special Classes at various meetings held by the Director of Auxiliary Classes.

with, because the children sense that being in this class means that they are retarded. They feel there is a "stigma" attached to this word, and they know this is true because they are not willingly accepted in jobs or society when they say they are products of an Auxiliary class. This instils in them an inferiority complex. These classes should be graded like a normal class, with a special instruction on part of the teachers who are aware that they are dealing with slow learners, or educationally handicapped children.

This idea was arrived at by teachers of auxiliary classes after having personal experience of dealing with these children for over a minimum period of five years. This same idea has been discussed by the teachers at different meetings with the Director and Inspector of Special Education and they both agree with the same. On the other hand it should be noted that the change in England from describing such children as "mentally deficient" to describing them as "Educationally Subnormal" has transferred the stigma from one term to another-- exactly the negation of the purpose of the change. It would appear therefore that nothing would be gained by such a change of name and that what is really required is a change of public attitude to retarded children and adults.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Mental Retardation is a problem with which all countries are faced, and much research is being done in this area, especially in America and Britain. As we know in 1961, President John F. Kennedy appointed a panel of professionals to make a comprehensive study of the same. "The panel found extremely heavy concentration of retarded children of parents with poor education and low income in slum areas of metropolitan communities. Mental retardation tended to be heavily associated with lack of pre-natal care, pre-maturity, high infant death rate, poor nutrition and inadequate post-natal care. The unusually heavy incidence of mental retardation among "culturally deprived" population groups suggested that adverse social, economic and cultural conditions played an important part. While no similar study of culturally deprived groups has been attempted on a large scale in Canada, there is general agreement that the findings would be comparable to the United States survey."¹

Similarly much research is being done in Britain. The

¹ Kay Kritzweiser, *The Ones Who Never Grow Up*, (Toronto: Reprinted from *The Globe and Mail* Canada's National Newspaper, 1963), p. 27.

term 'mentally defective' or 'mentally deficient' is used in Great Britain to describe the mentally subnormal as a whole, irrespective of the degree of their subnormality. Until the passing of the Mental Health Act in 1959 the term 'mentally deficient' had a legal as well as a medical and descriptive connotation; but it is no longer used in Law, having been replaced by the term 'mental subnormality' and 'severe subnormality'. Synonyms for the term mental deficiency are: *idiotia*, which is widely used on the continent of Europe.²

Further A. D. B. Clarke, Professor of Psychology, The University, Hull, Yorkshire, England in his book said-- A small number of psychologists are working productively in England on problems of retardation. Tizard, for example has recently examined alternatives to traditional institutions, O'Connor and Hermelin has investigated problems of thinking and cognition in the trainable, Woodward has applied Piagetian principles to the mental development of the severely subnormal, Gunsburg has had great success in the training and habilitation of the retarded, Mein has worked on the borderline educable and their reading difficulties. Tong has investigated stress reactivity and future conduct

²Ann M. Clarke and A. D. B. Clarke, pp. 47-48.

in the psychopathic subnormal, and so on.

He then spoke of some of the recent experiments done in his own Department at the Manor Hospital. These experiments concerned trainable children and adults. In England between 1950 and 1955 it became increasingly clear that adults with I.Q.'s between 25 and 50 could be trained to do useful productive work of a simple industrial nature, that they could earn money in sheltered conditions, and that in general they appeared to benefit considerably. Experiments were done on "transfer of training" or "transfer of learning".

He drew the following conclusion from his experiments:

- (1) That trainable children and adults do not learn very much spontaneously from ordinary life experience.
- (2) The younger the child the greater the transfer effect of a new experience, and the greater the responsiveness to training.
- (3) He emphasizes the need for learning graduated from, at the start, the very simple to, at the end, the very complex.¹⁸

We thus see that there is continuous research and

¹⁸Canadian Association for Retarded Children, The Proceedings of the Fifth Conference on Mental Retardation (Toronto, 1962), pp. 4-10.

experimentation being done in this field in England.

Research in this field is mainly concerned with three objectives: prevention, treatment (the biological or bio-medical sciences) and more effective aid for the present population of retardates which comes under the behavioral sciences such as psychology, education and sociology.

The Province of Nova Scotia has taken many important steps in its handling of the mentally handicapped since the first auxiliary class was started in Halifax in 1916. In the almost fifty-five intervening years to the present time we have seen the establishment of classes for the trainable retarded, educable retarded and other exceptional groups like the brain palsied, deaf and dumb, etc. As noted in 1916, there was only one auxiliary class whereas now there are seventy-one auxiliary classes and twenty-one "Trainable" classes in Nova Scotia.

The establishment of a special clinic for the mentally retarded in Halifax has been greatly appreciated and used by the citizens of Halifax. The diagnostic and counselling facilities provided by the Department of Health have also been greatly used, but the diagnostic and counselling services for mentally retarded persons in Nova Scotia should be definitely extended to ensure that these persons,

as a result of such services, and particularly upon their graduation from school, are able to find jobs suited to their capacities.

It is true that the Department of Public Welfare, which operates the Nova Scotia Youth Training Centre, for over two hundred mentally retarded children, helps the children in getting acquainted with jobs that they will be capable of handling, and also helps the parents in developing an objective approach to everyday problems. Nevertheless knowing that mental retardation is an acute personal and social problem, it is apparent that these children will have difficulty in fitting into the community, unless they have available to them an extended counselling service, possibly in conjunction with Canada Manpower or other employment agencies.

Minute attention should be paid to those mentally retarded children living in custodial care and institutions. Medical examination should be administered from time to time to exclude the possibility of infectious and contagious diseases. In case of children in institutions adequate staff should be provided in order to maintain a high standard of general care. A periodic assessment of all persons in custody should be made so that retardates who might benefit from transfer to a training institution, to his own home,

or to a foster home in the community can be carried out as soon as possible. Retardates who require special study, care, or further investigations should be transferred as soon as they show signs of being able to benefit from such special care in an institution or specially equipped and staffed training centre.

Quite apart from these special training programmes, the revision of the Education Act has brought the mentally retarded classes into the regular Education System, and thus they have become the responsibility of the provincial government. The advantages of systematic development have been brought about by the appointment of Miss Enid Johnson, Director of Auxiliary Classes who has the complete responsibility for the mentally retarded classes in Halifax, and by the appointment of Mr. H. Cox, Inspector of Special Services for the Province of Nova Scotia.

An important part of the development programme carried on by Miss E. Johnson and Mr. H. Cox, finds its focus in assisting the teacher. In my opinion, the most important factor in any special education classroom is the teacher, therefore I suggest that in the planning and execution of a programme for mentally handicapped children it is essential to have teachers trained in this line. Needless to say, this type of teacher is hard to find. At the

present time with the establishment of a Block Programme for Auxiliary Teachers at the Nova Scotia Summer School a very minor portion of this problem has been solved. A two year programme leading to a specialist's license for teachers of retarded children should be established at the Nova Scotia Teacher's College and also "Special Education" classes should be introduced into the Faculties of Education at the Nova Scotia Universities which give teacher training programmes.

The educable mentally retarded should, at as early an age as possible, be provided with a programme designed to provide the maximum academic accomplishment of which the individual is capable, integrated with a series of experiences related to an adequate range of occupations. Stress in these classes should be more on practical work such as wood-work, craft, etc., rather than bookish knowledge. I feel, that since these children have trouble in learning to read for this reason almost all the instruction should be by "doing" -- the oral, the visual -- that is the emphasis, in teaching, should be laid on material from television, radio, charts or practical work, rather than on books. Since most of the children in these classes are further retarded because of cultural deprivation great emphasis should be placed on tours to supermarkets, hand

concerts, fairs, fish markets, thus improving their knowledge of the life of the community attractions (for example the Centennial Train) are made available to the regular grade children, while the mentally retarded are left behind in the classrooms and so being even further culturally deprived through being denied this novel experience.

It is also a well established fact, that children can learn from each other. This method does not lend itself in the method of instruction set out in our curriculum, or as dictated by the school authorities. Sometimes it becomes difficult to use the older students as "aids," or permit students to talk together about their problems, or move around to see each other due to the importance placed upon the old fashioned notion of maintaining "strict discipline" in the classroom.

So far as education goes with regard to retarded children, it is not so much that the aims differ from those respecting normal children, as that the methods of achieving these aims are different. It is clear that equality of educational opportunity is not a matter of providing the same curricula, methods of teaching, school facilities, and equipment for all children. Rather, it is a matter of providing sufficiently varied curricula,

teaching methods, and school plant and equipment so that all children will have an equal (not the same) chance to develop their potentialities to the maximum. Because of the validity of this point of view, special education should no longer be conceived as a "hole-and-corner" affair but should be regarded as an integral part of general education. For example, in providing school facilities for the mentally retarded it is questionable whether the best results are obtained in the classroom furnished with the oldest and most cast off furniture in the whole school system. It is questionable too whether the old fashioned desks arranged in old fashioned orderly lines provide the most helpful kind of learning atmosphere for the retarded child. Would it not, instead, be more desirable to have an open classroom with informal grouping of chairs and tables properly equipped with working areas including sinks and wash up facilities?

The educable retarded should be given an opportunity for full time training which will provide an opportunity to acquire the skills, knowledge and related theory necessary to enter jobs within their ability. This emphasizes the need to introduce a special vocational and trades training programme developed specifically to meet the needs and abilities of these pupils. As previously

mentioned (on page 77), retarded children are unable to reach the level of academic achievement required for attendance at vocational training classes.

For these reasons a complete survey should be made in Nova Scotia to determine what occupations exist which the mentally retarded are capable of handling successfully. Once these occupations are known, training courses for the same should be set up in schools to equip the retardate to secure and handle this employment. Also "on the spot" training should be available to these children. The school authorities should allow these children to attend special training centres suitable to their ability two or three times a week (either morning or afternoon) and spend the rest of the time in school. This has been introduced in the Dartmouth City Schools and is proving very useful to the children. This is very essential, because it is practical training that they most require.

At the same time the Labour Legislation should be revised with the object of permitting these children to obtain full or part-time employment, under adequate legislative safe-guards. In addition to amending the statute to permit on the job training it is highly desirable that the legislation governing the apprenticeships should be amended to permit these children to enter

occupations such as hair dressing without the pre-requisite Grade IX or X standing.

The Activity Centre is the only sheltered employment facility for the trainable retardate who can be productive but who cannot compete for normal employment opportunities. Since we are aware of the fact that these children are capable of producing articles for sale which are really exquisite, surely the gap between the expectation of performance in the schools and the actual performance in the activity centre under stimulus of economic advancement should be bridged. These same facilities should be introduced in the schools themselves. This same activity programme should be implemented in the educable classes too, because we are conscious of the fact that modern society is entering a "craft age" and as people are being displaced by automation more and more people are returning to handcrafts for hobbies and to meet the demands for the tourist trade. Also pottery and weaving should be introduced into these classes thus giving them more opportunity for production.

In conclusion all I can say is that in the past people had a fear and dislike for the mentally retarded children. They were unwanted, and often regarded as a burden and thus completely ignored, but today it is the concern of all

namely the public, the family circle, the classroom and the teacher to see to the fact that these children are provided with the greatest of all things namely "love and caring" in order to enable their dauntless spirit to overcome all kinds of frustration and discouragement. We are no longer faced with the idea that spending money and developing programmes for the retarded is a waste of both time and money. This is due to the changes conceived in the last few years in the attitude of the public, toward the retarded children. Now we approach them with an attitude of understanding, respect and acceptance, combined with recognition of the child's right to participate fully in the promise of the future.

APPENDIX

Number of Auxiliary Classes in Regular School Systems¹

Annapolis County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Lawrencetown Consol'd	Lawrencetown	1
Middleton Reg. High	P. O. Box 280	1
Middleton MacDonald	Middleton	2

Antigonish County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Braemore School	Antigonish	1

Cape Breton County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Whitney	Victoria Rd., Sydney	1
Ashby	Whitney Ave., Sydney	1
St. Martins Convent	New Victoria	1

Colchester County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Victoria	175 Victoria St., Truro	3
College Road	Bible Hill	2
Chiganois Elementary	R.R. # 1, Debert	1

¹

H. M. Cox, Inspector of Special Education, Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, Directory of Special Educational Classes in Nova Scotia, 1967-68.

Cumberland County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Springhill High	Springhill	1
River Herbert Elementary	River Herbert	1
West Highland	Amherst	2

Digby County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Digby Primary	P. O. Box 760, Digby	1
St. Patrick's	P. O. Box 760, Digby	2

Halifax County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Dartmouth City:		
Shannon	Shannon Park	1
Harbourview	Alfred Street	2
Northbrook	Chapman Street	1
Greenvale	Ochterloney Street	1
Findlay	Elliott Street	1
Southdale	Hastings Drive	1
North Woodside	Pleasant Street	1
Admiral Westphal	Major Street	1

Halifax City:

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Alexander McKay	5450 Russell Street	2

Halifax City (cont'd)

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Alexandra (Cunard)	2156 Brunswick Street	2
Bloomfield Bungalow	Robie & Almon Streets	3
Bloomfield Fielding	Robie & Almon Streets	1
Mulgrave Park	3479 Robie Street	2
Saint Francis School	5985 Inglis Street	1
Saint Joseph	Kay & Russell Streets	1
Saint Mary's Boys'	1531 Grafton Street	1
Saint Patrick's Boys'	2268 Brunswick Street	1
Sir John Thompson	6936 Mumford Road	1
Westmount	6700 Edward Arab Ave.	1
<hr/>		
South Armdale School	28 Herring Cove Road	4
Fairview School	Main Avenue	1
Holly Drive School	676 Herring Cove Road, Spryfield	1
Terence Bay School	Terence Bay	1
Central School	Tremont Dr., Rockingham	1
Waverly Road School	Bedford	2
Acadia School	R.R. # 1, Lr. Sackville	1
Upper Musquodoboit	Upper Musquodoboit	1

Kings County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
St. Mary's Elem.	Aylesford	1
Central Kings Jr. High	Cambridge Station	1

Hants County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Hants West Rural High	Newport	1

Pictou County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Sir Wm. Dawson	Lyons Brook, R.R.#2, Pictou Co.	1
Carmichael School	New Glasgow	1

Queens County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Mt. Pleasant Consol'd	Box 1205, Liverpool	1
Gorham School	Liverpool	1

Richmond County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Petit de Grat Consol'd	Petit de Grat	1
L'Ardoise Consol'd	West L'Ardoise	1

Shelburne County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Cape Sable Island Consol'd	Centerville	1

Yarmouth County

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Address of School</u>	<u>Number of Classes</u>
Yarmouth Consol'd	Yarmouth	1
Central	Yarmouth	1
Arcadia Consol'd	Arcadia	1

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