

The Greatest System in the Country, Costing Annually Something Like \$50,000,000, It Is Unable to Accommodate All Children Seeking an Education Here..

BY the opening of the public schools to-morrow attention is called once again to New York's unequalled educational system and the remarkable work which it is accomplishing. No city in the world can boast of a system of public instruction so mammoth in size and so comprehensive in scope. This statement is made advisedly on the authority of experts.

Bigger than the biggest corporation in the United States is this gigantic school system. It owns property, represented by buildings, sites, and equipment, valued at \$100,000,000. It spends yearly \$30,000,000 running its machinery, and an additional \$15,000,000 for sites and buildings to house its wards. It employs a supervising and teaching staff of 15,000 persons. It furnishes education for more than 600,000 children, representing every race on the earth.

Strive as it will the Board of Education cannot provide adequate accommodations for the children clamoring for admission to its schools. It is estimated that to-morrow between 50,000 and 52,000 children will have to be content with part time instruction, which means three hours out of the five set aside by law for this purpose. So the realization of Mayor McClellan's idea of a "seat for every school child" is again postponed.

City Supt. Maxwell told THE TIMES's reporter that he believed the congestion this year would be greatly relieved owing to the diminution in immigration. Great relief will be afforded by 20,010 new sittings which will become available for use to-morrow. Of these 8,640 will be located in Manhattan, 950 in the Bronx, 9,800 in Brooklyn, 5,150 in Queens, and 1,500 in Richmond. During October 5,350 additional sittings will be provided in Brooklyn, and 1,200 in Queens.

New Buildings This Year.

According to an announcement made by Superintendent of Buildings Snyder, eight new buildings and ten additions will open their portals to-morrow. These buildings and additions cost to construct \$3,666,725, and for the sites upon which they stand the city paid \$713,875. These figures do not include

equipment, which is a separate item of expense. Four of the buildings cost more than \$250,000, and three of the sites more than \$150,000. The most expensive building is Public School 91, at Stanton and Forsyth Streets, the construction costing \$346,845 and the site \$280,000. During October three more buildings and one more addition will be opened. The construction of these cost \$909,493 and the sites \$58,794.

These buildings are excellent examples of the modern schoolhouse. There is nothing which the school building of to-day more closely resembles than the homes of the Y. M. C. A. Usually the equipment consists of a magnificent auditorium, well equipped gymnasium, excellent workshops, fine roof garden, attractive lunch room, well stocked library, and splendid kindergarten, besides the regular classrooms. Some have additional special features. The De Witt Clinton High School is the happy possessor of an expensive organ which cost \$7,000 and the High School of Commerce is proud of its swimming pool.

Free public education is not, strictly speaking, free. The taxpayer pays. Each child who goes through the entire course provided represents an expenditure approaching \$500. Recent reports show that for a course of fourteen years, extending from the kindergarten and including the training school, the average cost here is from \$30.34 to \$34.08 a year, or a total of from \$424 to \$447. Boston pays \$867, and Chicago \$740 for each child, for a similar course.

Small classes are considered a great goal in education. Here again New York excels. In this city there is a teacher for every twenty-two pupils in the high schools; for every forty-threes in the elementary schools, and for every twenty-eight in the kindergartens, or a general average of thirty-one. In Boston the average is one teacher for every forty-six pupils, and in Chicago one for every 46.8 pupils.

Education in New York means much more than instruction in the three R's. It means special industrial training which prepares children for some useful vocation; instruction for mental and physical defectives, who in the eyes of the law are equally as much entitled to an education as the normal child;

rescuing the truant and the incorrigible children whose lives are drifting toward criminality; playgrounds for the poor, who, forced by their poverty to live in congested sections, would otherwise be deprived of the benefits of play; nautical training for those who wish to follow the sea, and adult education through lectures—"a university for the people." And Father Knickerbocker is seen in the many rôles of teacher, parent, policeman, sailing master, physician, and nurse in this great educational and humanitarian drama.

MAKING YOUNG SAILORS.

School on the Newport a Recruiting Station for the Merchant Marine.

PERHAPS the most interesting school of the educational system is the nautical school which the Board of Education maintains aboard the U. S. S. Newport at an annual cost of \$50,000. Of such efficiency is this institution that it acts as a recruiting station for the merchant marine, and not a few of its graduates receive responsible commissions, such as midshipmen, on transatlantic and coastwise steamers.

In this institution young men are instructed in the science and practice of navigation, including steam and electrical engineering. The course extends over a period of two years. Every Summer the school goes on a practice cruise of six months, usually to the Madeira Islands, off Spain, during which the students are given an opportunity to apply the knowledge acquired during the long Winter months. The Newport returned only the other day from such a cruise. Boys over 16 years of age are eligible for admission. They are required to pass severe physical and mental examinations and then are put upon probation for two weeks, when, if no reason to the contrary appears, they are admitted permanently.

In order that the school may perform its best work a movement has been started for the building of a modern ship, equipped with the latest nautical instruments, at the cost of about \$300,000.

THE PARENTAL SCHOOL.

New Institution for Truants for Manual and Agricultural Training.

EDWARD B. SHALLOW, Administrator of the Compulsory Education Law, recently said that for the habitual truant, who has had improper

guardianship, the city must take the place of the parent and provide the parental home, that the child may see the benefits derived from the habits of order, cleanliness, industry, and respect for law and order.

And the city has taken the step by establishing the Parental School, another important adjunct of the educational system soon to be opened. This institution is located in Queens, on the road leading from Flushing to Jamaica, and including site, buildings, and equipment, cost \$705,498. It consists of about seventeen acres of rolling land and comprises a group of fifteen buildings, including an administration building, a power house, two residence cottages for Principal and assistants, and eleven cottage homes for boys. Under the law the City Superintendent of Schools can commit a child to this school for a term of two years, or until his sixteenth birthday. When once committed the truant is under the control of the Board of Education for this term, and may be paroled when he has made a good record and it is thought wise to allow him to return to his home.

According to the last report of Supt. Shallow 676 children were committed to truant schools during the last school year. Of these 520 were committed by order of the City Superintendent and 156 by the courts. In addition to these 204 truants were committed to institutions by the courts on complaint of attendance officers and others. Out of a total of 10,389 children who were truants at some time during the year it was found necessary to commit only 940. During the year 383 children were paroled from truant schools, and of these 116 were returned for breaking their parole.

Boys committed to the parental school will have advantages for obtaining an education which shall be equal to that offered in any public school, and the teachers to be engaged will be the best in their line. Industrial education will be a special feature. Agriculture and horticulture will be taught as well as manual training and the elements of some trades.

FOR MENTALLY DEFECTIVE.

Classrooms Conducted for Those Handicapped in Life's Struggle.

EDUCATING mentally defective children is one of the most important and humanitarian activities of the Board of Education. Excellent work is being done by a bureau, under the supervision of Miss Elizabeth E. Farrell, in segregating in special classes children with mental defects, either hereditary or acquired, and giving them, so far as possible, the benefits of free public education, to which they are entitled equally as much as the normal child. Last year 1,417 children were examined, of whom 731 were assigned to ungraded classes.

This work is conducted in specially equipped classrooms by teachers of peculiar natural gifts, who have also had the advantage of special training. Children are assigned to these classes only after a thorough examination as to their life history, physical, mental, moral, and emotional characteristics by the Inspector and a physician attached to the depart-

ment. When deemed advisable the children are returned to the graded classes after another special examination.

Whatever instinct may be dominant in the child's life at that particular time is encouraged, and the work of the classrooms built up accordingly. Instead of using books, examples, and copy books, those reminders of past failures, an appeal is made to the constructive, the acquisitive, the initiative instincts in the child. The making of toys, playing games, working with things are the self-appointed tasks. With those things which aid in promoting and enriching the child's circle of thought the teacher uses whatever may advance the physical comfort and well-being of the child. The whole child, his soul as well as his body, is appealed to. The child is made to feel that the classroom is a good place to be and an interesting and profitable place to stay.

In her last report Inspector Farrell declared that many of the children, who are members of the ungraded classes seldom can be self-supporting, never can be self-directory, and never should be forced into the fierce competition of a wage-earning community. She expressed the belief that some provision should be made for these unfit persons.

FOR THE INCORRIGIBLES.

Put on an Honor System and Rewards Given for Proficiency.

IPPING crime in the bud is the special function performed by Public School No. 120, at 187 Broome Street, officially known as the School for Incorrigibles. Here a tough assortment of incorrigibles and habitual truants are given a final trial before being sent to the reformatory or the truant school. They are put through a system of discipline that sounds like fiction, but which, adjudged by its results, has abundantly justified itself.

"Our method consists of an appeal to the spirit of emulation and of right in the pupil," said Miss Olive M. Jones, the Principal, to THE TIMES reporter. "Yes it seems strange to appeal to a sense of right in a child who is supposed to have only a sense of wrong. But we do it in many ways."

"Pupils are not detained in this building. Their attendance is secured by making them feel that they would miss something if absent. In the classroom we use an honor system. Each boy showing a general proficiency in attendance, lessons, and deportment each day for a week wins the privilege of wearing a little red and blue button for a week. These buttons, which cost me two cents each, are highly valued and eagerly sought. For the boy who shows the same general proficiency for two months there is a reward, usually a much-desired book, game, or excursion. In the classroom, too, we have a system of hero worship. Each class is known by the name of some hero, such as Washington or Lincoln. They are repeatedly told the achievements of these heroes, and are encouraged to emulate them."

"Team work is another important feature of our system. This begins in the classroom. The boy is made to feel that he is a member of an organized community, in which he must take a certain pride. By a simple device we encourage this idea. Every morning at the opening exercises classes having 100 per cent. in attendance are permitted to exhibit a banner stating that fact. The boys strive to get the coveted banner.

"In the gymnasium the value of team work is especially impressed upon the pupil. He sees that the team which works together usually wins, and he begins to practice co-operation. When inspired with this idea, he is in a fair way toward being reformed. He begins to take a different view of society and his fellow-man.

"In three months under this treatment the boy is usually cured. Some are helped to secure positions, while others are returned to the school from which they were taken. It rarely happens that we lose a case. When we do we send them to the Catholic Protectory or the Jewish Protectory, according to their religion, or to the truant school. These cases are hopeless."

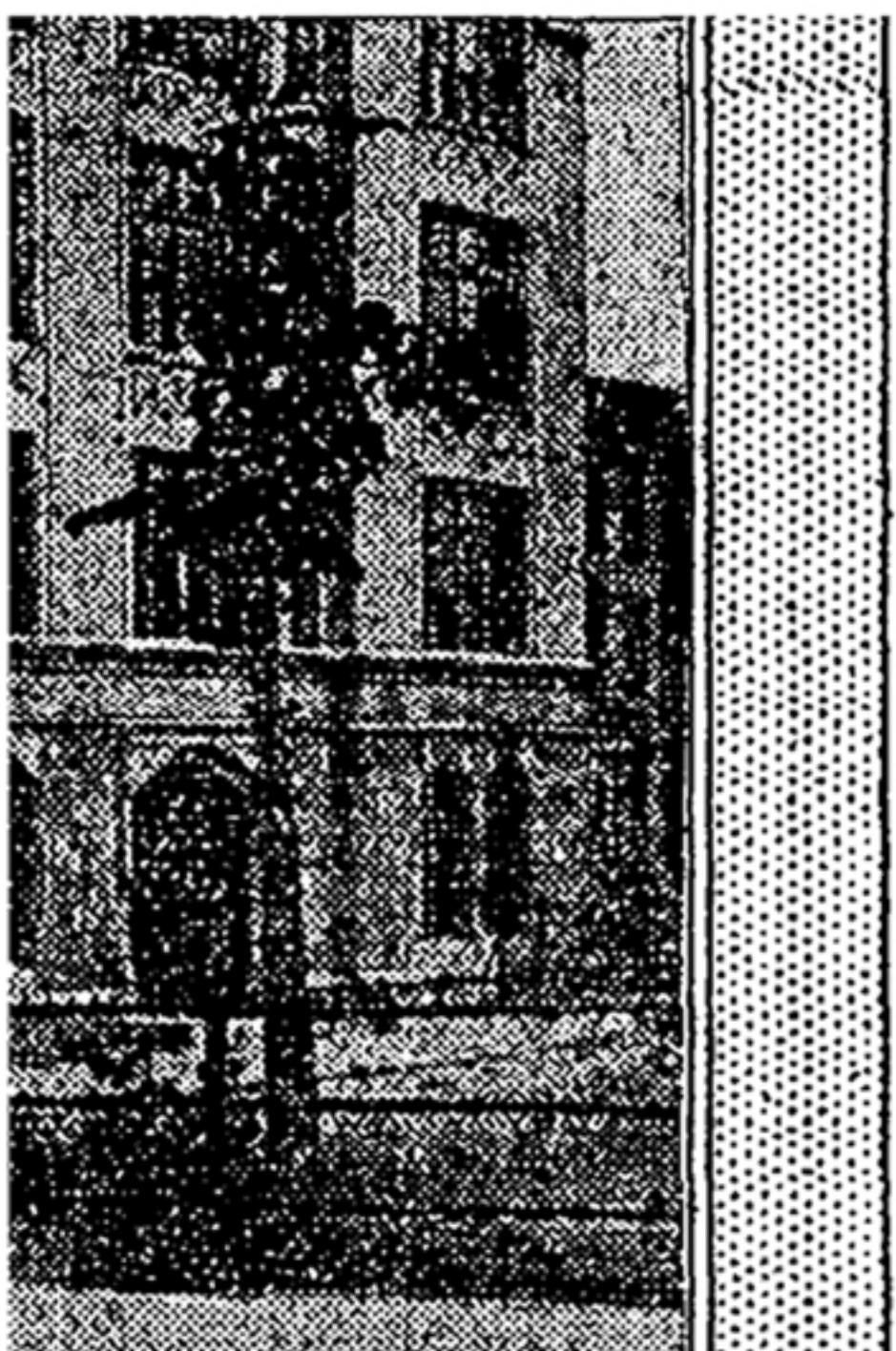
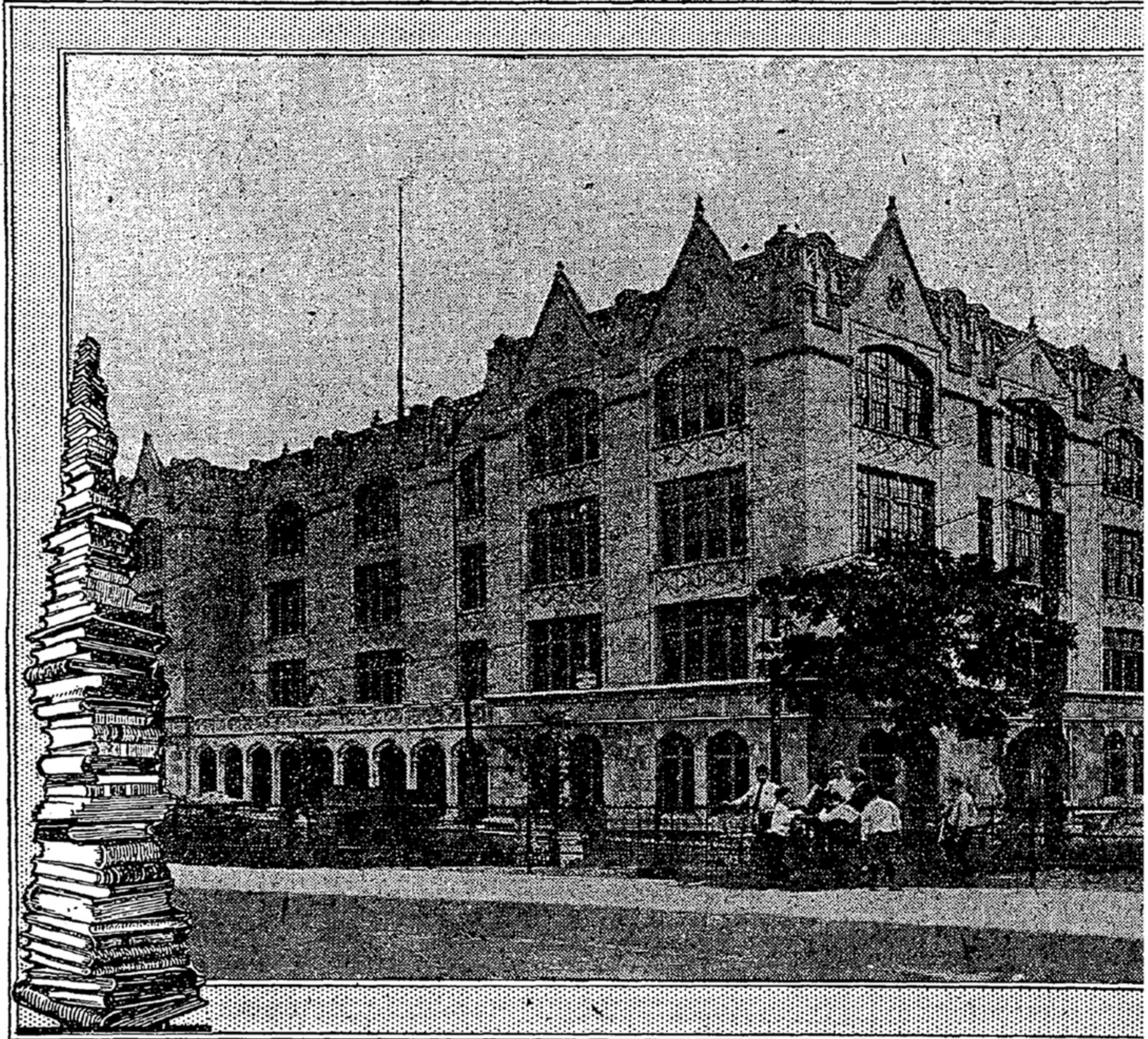
DEAF-MUTES' SCHOOL.

To be Opened To-morrow with 25 Teachers, All Specialists.

WHAT it has done for the mentally defective the board will do for the physically defective. To-morrow it will open a school for the instruction of deaf-mutes at 225 East Twenty-third Street.

This institution, which will comprise twenty-five classes, will be under the Principalship of Miss Margaret A. Reagan, assisted by a corps of twenty-five teachers, all specialists in this branch of instruction. Here children from the five boroughs will be instructed, the board paying their carfares and furnishing them with luncheons. The object of the school is to prepare children with a three-year course so that at the end of that time they may be able to enter the regular classes of the schools and, in spite of their physical handicap, benefit by the general instruction.

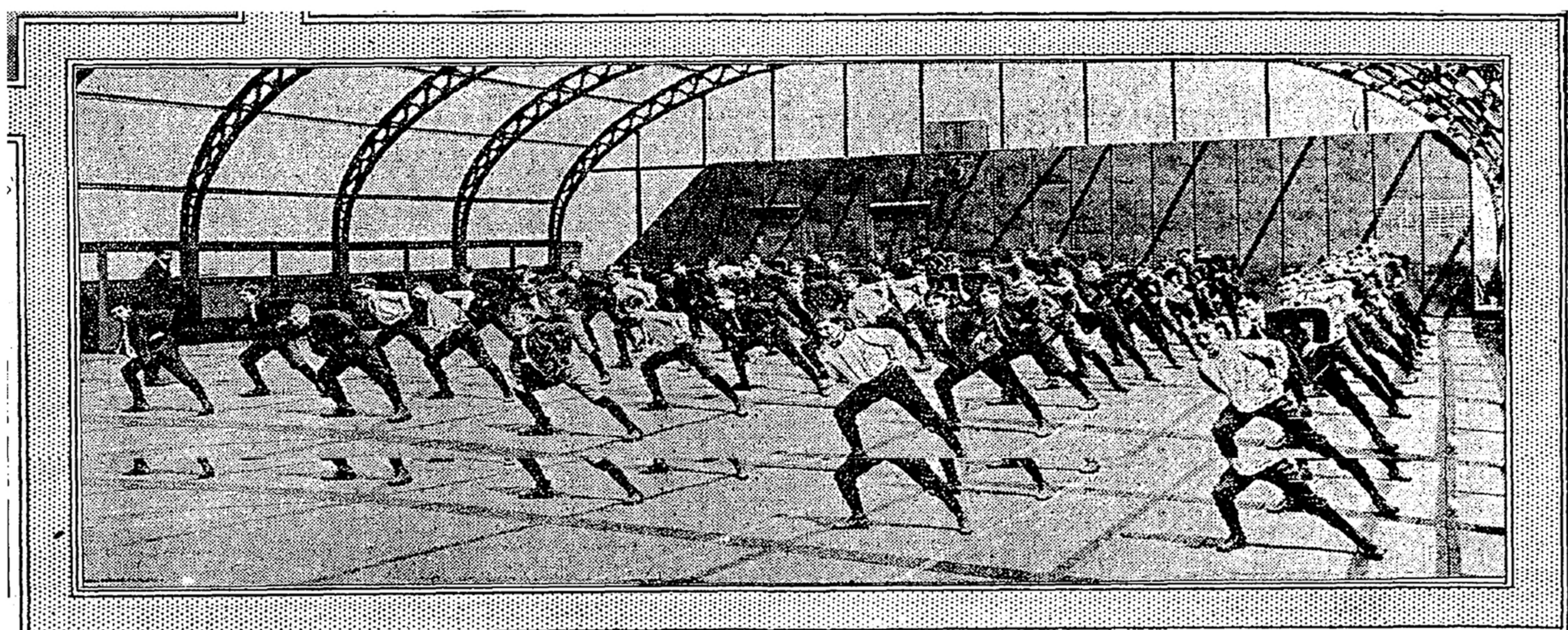
This institution is but the pioneer in a great beneficent movement. Others must necessarily follow. It can accommodate only 250 children, while in the greater city it is estimated that there are more than 1,600 mutes in need of instruction. Should this school justify its existence—and its organizers are not doubtful as to the record it will establish—the Board of Education will undoubtedly provide accommodations for all these unfortunates, or it considers that New York has long been neglectful of its defective wards. More than three years ago City Superintendent Maxwell raised his voice in an earnest appeal for the mutes, and since then has been an ardent advocate of a special school for them.



Like A Y.M.C.A. Home Is The Typical School House.



Learning The Rudiments of a Trade.



Play on Roof Gardens is an Important Feature of Education.

TO INSTRUCT THE BLIND.

They Will Be Taught Side by Side with Those Who Can See.

IN line with the great philanthropic policy of the system will come another important innovation this year—the education of the blind. At present plans are being formulated for the organization of special classes in which these sadly afflicted children may receive the instruction they need.

By January four classes probably will be organized. Not more than ten children will be assigned to one school, for experience teaches that better work can be accomplished with a smaller number of pupils. The classes will be in charge of a teacher specially selected for the work and over the entire system there will be a supervising director.

When the children first come to the school the teacher will strive to develop in them habits of attention and concentration and to give them a feeling of self-reliance and independence. They will be taught the Braille system of reading and writing. Co-education of the blind and the seeing is favored by educators as the most economical system.

This step has been taken as the result of a special investigation of a commission, consisting of Associate Supts. Straubemuller, Walsh, and Edson. In the report of its findings the committee said:

"In the co-education of the blind and the seeing, the natural development of the blind can be effected more quickly and carried on more extensively than by separation. The blind child has an opportunity to measure its fortunate brother, its future business and social competitor, and to bring itself to a better realization of its own powers. The seeing child will also be benefited by its own recognition of the wonderful capabilities of the blind. The association with the blind will lead it to see that blindness is a mere physical defect, and it will also develop in a normal child a helpful sympathy instead of a morbid sentimentality toward the blind."

THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Opening of the New York Evening Trade School in the Stuyvesant.

UNDoubtedly the most important feature of this school year will be the extension of instruction in industrial training. Ambitious plans involving the expenditure of thousands of dollars have been formulated with a view to remedying the alarming situation which has arisen of children from the public schools entering upon their life's work with no better equipment than theoretical knowledge.

These plans include the rapid installation of workshops in schools without them, where there are boys in the seventh and eighth grades, adding a turning lathe, combination saw and grinder to the tools now in use; the opening of special

schools for boys in the secondary ninth and tenth school years, which shall give two years' training for particular vocations and industries; the establishment of additional evening trade schools, primarily intended for young men already engaged as apprentices in trades; the introduction of sewing as a required subject in all girls' schools where there are seventh and eighth year classes, and finally the opening in Brooklyn of a separate vocational school for girls between 14 and 16 years.

Of especial interest in Manhattan will be the opening of the New York Evening Trade School in the Stuyvesant High School, on East Fifteenth Street, near Second Avenue. No better home for the new school could be found than the Stuyvesant High School, a million-and-a-half-dollar institution, constructed as a composite type of the leading technical institutions east of the Mississippi. The building is an imposing structure of white limestone, five stories in height, including a basement. It is a modification of the letter H type of building, and contains an actual floor area of about five acres. Just the shell of the building, without any fixtures, cost \$600,000. The site on which it stands is an acre of ground, and cost \$350,000. The remainder of the \$1,500,000 was spent for equipment.

Located within this building is a miniature industrial city. There are fifty-three classrooms, three physical laboratories, three lecture rooms, a library, an auditorium with a seating capacity of 1,600, a gymnasium with elevated running track and gallery, bath and locker room, a lunch room, eight joinery shops, four wood turning and pattern making shops, one foundry, two forge rooms, one mechanical testing shop, and nine draughting rooms. In addition there are the engine and boiler rooms, both of which are ingeniously utilized in the work. All these shops are equipped with the most modern machinery, which cost \$79,000. Small hand tools, which include every implement outside of machinery used in the shops, cost \$30,000.

TEACHING THE ADULTS.

A University of the People Based Upon the Lecture System.

CHILDREN are not the only pupils of the Board of Education. For twenty years it has been teaching adults also. Its particular form of instruction for the older folks consists of interesting lectures on innumerable subjects. And New York enjoys the distinction of being the first city in the world to incorporate adult education as an integral part of its educational system.

Great interest is taken in these lectures. During the period commencing Oct. 1, 1907, and closing May 2, 1908, there were delivered in 178 centres throughout the greater city lectures on 1,641 different

subjects, before 5,572 audiences, by a staff of 663 lecturers, at which the total attendance was 1,208,336, an average of 217 for each lecture given. The cost of maintaining this system is \$125,000 yearly.

In the opinion of Dr. Henry M. Leipziger, Supervisor of Lectures, this system represents a "university for the people." Discussing the work in this light in his last report, Dr. Leipziger, said:

"We see this system of adult education extended all over our broad land. We have exchanges of professors with European universities, we have regulated inter-State commerce, why may we not have an inter-State circulating university? Why not have a body of National educators, who shall spread their intellectual treasures all over the land? It is perfectly practicable. A staff of the best teachers, trained to public speaking, could wield a great influence on the formation of even a better and loftier *Motto*—*a "Life of the spirit."*"

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