

and recognizes the value of what elsewhere we have termed "Baden-Powellism" as an excellent means of exercising it.

Boy scouts, camp fire girls and similar agencies he also finds to be of considerable help in the management of the different manifestations in the feeble-minded of "the instinct of self-assertion," especially during the difficult days of the great pubertal urge when, like normal boys and girls, adolescent aments desire above all things to live their own lives unhampered by the dictates of authority. "Unfortunately," as Dr. Pratt points out, "such defectives lack sufficient judgment and intelligence to permit the degree of personal freedom accorded to brighter youths, and the parent or teacher must attempt the delicate task of reconciling a powerful instinct to forge out an independent career with the practical necessity for accepting the advice and decisions of others." This task will be considerably lightened where the adolescent defective has had the benefit of a sound training in childhood, for with aments, habits once learned are not easily forsaken, which makes the inculcation of an intelligent discipline in their early years their strongest adult safeguard.

H. FREIZE STEPHENS.

Community Responsibility and Mental Deficiency. (Proc. Amer. Assoc. for the Study of the Feeble-minded, 1926.) Sandy, W. C.

As a result of modern tendencies an increasing number of recognized mental defectives are being employed in the community, and Dr. Sandy believes that a considerable amount of communal responsibility and privilege will continue to be accorded to them. Nor can this be altogether avoided. But with the earlier recognition of aments, their better training and more efficient supervision, these privileges and responsibilities tend to become more clearly determined and definitely limited.

H. FREIZE STEPHENS.

Fifty Years in Retrospect. (Presidential Address at the 50th Meeting of the American Association for the Study of the Feeble-minded, as reported in their Proceedings for 1926.) Wylie, A. R. T.

An authoritative survey by its retiring President of the first fifty years of this historic and important Association that began its useful work on June 6, 1876, "in the parlor of the Pennsylvania Training School at Media" with the great Seguin as its first President. At that time there were only eight institutions for mental defectives in America—five State and three private, with a population of about 1,500. To-day there are 56 State institutions in 43 States, with a population of about 50,000, and 90 private institutions. The property value of the State institutions is nearly \$46,000,000, of the private ones \$1,500,000, while the yearly expense of the former is \$10,390,000, and of the latter \$577,000—all of which is an index of the enthusiasm and activity of this influential group of American psychiatrists.

The advances in our knowledge of mental deficiency during the

past fifty years have been great, and this Association has contributed its distinguished share to that progress, coming through the years with an honourable record. To the concluding words of Dr. Wylie we, too, would echo: "May the next fifty years be as fruitful and important."

H. FREIZE STEPHENS.

General Organization of Aid for Psychopaths (In France) [Organisation Générale de l'Assistance aux Psychopathes]. (Hyg. Ment., May, 1927.) Toulouse, E., and Dupouy, R.

After criticizing the existing law (of 1838) governing the detention and care of mental patients, the authors recommend that a new organization is urgently needed, and that it should comprise the following: (1) Prophylactic centres; (2) open psychiatric hospitals for acute and recoverable cases and certain lucid chronic patients; (3) open psychiatric hospitals for incurables and defectives; (4) closed psychiatric hospitals for dangerous and delinquent psychopaths.

W. D. CHAMBERS.

Assistance for Epileptics by Means of Occupation [L'Assistance par le Travail aux Epileptiques]. (Hyg. Ment., April, 1927.) Cleelier, A., and Vervaeck, P.

The authors record that for a hundred years the lack of means for protecting and helping sane epileptics in France has been constantly and repeatedly voiced by alienists, and they deplore the fact that practically nothing has yet been done in that country to assist them. They state that estimates of the number of epileptics in France vary from one to four per 1,000, and that the question is now more urgent than ever. They outline the provision made for them in other countries and urge public authorities in France to take steps without delay. While in occupation-therapy for the insane the treatment value of the work is of more importance than its intrinsic value, in the case of sane epileptics they claim that properly organized work could be made nearly, if not quite, sufficiently remunerative to support a colony or institution.

W. D. CHAMBERS.

Suicide in Children [Les Suicides d'Enfants]. (Hyg. Ment., March, 1927.) Serin, S.

The author quotes previous statistics on this subject, and states that of 420 suicides last year in Paris, 5 were of children below 16 years and 13 of minors of 16 to 20 years. The inadequate motives for this step in most cases in childhood are discussed, and reference is made to the bad heredity and the unhappy environment which are almost universally present as predisposing causes. Suggestion and imitation are also commonly powerful factors. Among other preventives in addition to social hygienic measures, the suppression of all detail of such suicides as occur is strongly advised.

W. D. CHAMBERS.