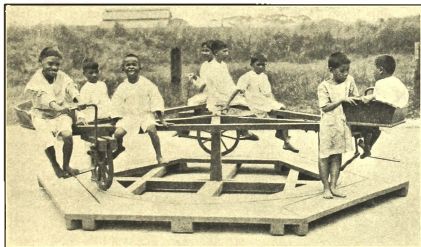

SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND.

By Miss DELIGHT RICE, Principal.

When the School for the Deaf and the Blind in Manila was first opened in 1907, it was next to impossible to get pupils. The teacher was sent to the provinces to explain the possibilities opened to the deaf. She met with doubt on every side. In the end she succeeded in securing 13 pupils but it was at the expense of much physical and nervous energy. It was no uncommon experience to spend seven hours in a home appealing to the parents



The physical welfare of the pupils is not neglected.

and relatives to allow the afflicted child a chance to become a self-respecting citizen. But conditions have changed materially. There is no longer any need of sending out to the highways and byways, for the parents bring their children in such numbers that the building is overcrowded. Today 61 pupils are enrolled, 24 of whom are under the age of 8 years. These little ones will show the results of an education more than any who have yet left the school.

The deaf children are taught all the common branches of study such as reading and arithmetic through writing, and finger spelling. There is a class, too, that receives some instruction in speech and the reading of lips but the few teachers employed are so overcrowded that no systematic effort can be made. The

aim of the school is to send out efficient workers who will be independent and happy.

The first step with the deaf is to teach them language. The layman does not realize that normal children acquire language because they are talked to from birth. They hear language and unconsciously absorb it. How different with the deaf baby! As soon as its family finds it cannot hear, direct speech is stopped and the child loses its opportunities. Deaf children have the same ideas as normal children have but not the same means of expression.

An effort is made to coordinate everything in the child's daily life. With this in view, the teacher must be with the children



The blind children make very creditable baskets and rugs.

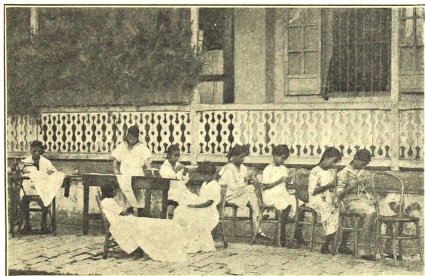
not only in the schoolroom but in the workshop, on the playground, and in the study room. She tries to understand each new experience of the child and to use it in all possible lessons.

Realizing that there is need of planning the future for each individual some means of livelihood is taught each one. The deaf boys are taught gardening, carpentry, and poultry raising, in addition to their regularly assigned household duties. The school has to its credit among it graduates self-supporting sewing women, tailors, shoemakers, printers, cooks, and bakers. The girls have practical training in the care of the home, sewing, lace making, and crocheting. Each of the older girls is responsible for the cleanliness of a younger child, and sees that his clothes

are in good order and that he is prompt. What has been said of the girls applies equally to both the deaf and the blind. No one is excused from the daily routine of work because of affliction. Each one is helped to help himself.

The classes for the blind follow the general course of instruction as issued by the Bureau of Education. Three boys graduated in March, 1916, having completed seven years' work in five years. Two of these are now studying at the Manila High School and the third is seeking employment as a telephone switchboard operator.

These blind students use the Braille system of writing, the



Among other lines of work the girls are taught to do plain sewing and fillet lace.

characters of which are formed by a combination of raised points. The writing is done with a sharp pointed stylus, from right to left; the paper being reversed and read from left to right. Classes in typewriting, basketry, and sloyd are also included in the course.

For recreation the children have a merry-go-round which is run by foot and hand power, thus affording a splendid exercise. There is also a running track made especially for the blind by stretching wires along the whole length to which are attached sliding handles. These guide the children in their races. A number of friends have volunteered their services as readers and pianists. As they come in after school hours, many hours which might otherwise be idle are spent in gaining a knowledge of current events and good books. Another means of instruction

and pleasure are the biweekly literary meetings. The deaf and the blind each having their own organization. Each organization arranges its program of debates, declamations, dramas, and songs; and one does about as well as the other.

When the pupils first enter the school they are inactive because of ignorance rather than from choice. The teachers strive to direct the energies through such channels that each may go back to his home, an asset and not a burden to the state. In comparison with the schools of the Occident, this school is not accomplishing much but a beginning has been made, and the lot of those who have left the school is vastly happier than that which any of the blind have experienced in these Islands in the past.

QUALIFICATIONS OF VOCATIONAL TEACHERS.

The chief qualifications requisite for success in the teacher of vocational subjects are: (1) Character, personality; (2) mastery of the processes—the technic of the occupation for which the student is to be prepared; and (3) teaching ability which includes some understanding of the laws of intellectual development and the learning and teaching processes, combined with skill in the actual imparting of knowledge and in the direction and guidance of the development of the individual. The serious difficulties involved in securing these three desirable qualifications in the same individual are apparent as soon as the analysis is made.

(1) Apparently the only way open to the individual to acquire the first—character, personality—is to be born with a reasonable endowment, as original equipment, and then to develop and perfect it by years of patient and strenuous self-discipline. An excellent way to demonstrate ability to lead, direct, and control others as the teacher must do, is successfully to control one's self and make the most of one's own opportunities.

(2) It seems to be generally agreed that the only practicable way to obtain the second qualification—the necessary knowledge of the vocation—is to serve for a time as an actual wage earner in it.

(3) The third of the essential elements—teaching ability—can be acquired effectively in only two ways: (a) By years of actual teaching experience under competent and sympathetic supervision, or (b) by specific training. In either case the difficulties in the way of securing this equipment in combination with practical experience in some other skilled occupation are extremely discouraging. (Selected.)