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EDITORIAL

President Wilson has said that the war has brought forth some very terrible things, but it has also given rise to some very beneficial and valuable things. He was speaking particularly of the conditions in Europe, but the statement applies to this country as well. One of the incidental by-products of our military activity has been the stimulation of popular interest in mental measurements. When the war broke out the psychologists immediately mobilized and offered their services to the government. Not only that but they devised and induced the government to adopt a plan for the testing of recruits that was unlike anything that the world had ever seen before. It is too soon to say just how much this psychological testing and the utilization of the results contributed to increase our military efficiency. Perhaps we shall never be able to tell. But the mere fact that recruits were given mental tests, that in such a life and death matter as waging war the laboratory psychologist had something to offer that was of practical significance, caught the popular fancy and stirred the im-

agination of the man in the street. Never before has the recondite subject of psychology been held in such high esteem. Never before has the daily press devoted so much space to the possibilities of mental measurements. Never before has there been such a favorable opportunity to extend the use of mental measurements in education.

In a circular letter to city superintendents Commissioner Claxton adverts to the fact that many cities have already established bureaus of educational research, and asserts that every city of more than 30,000 inhabitants should have such a bureau. He calls the attention of school authorities to the two or three hundred young men who have been working in the psychological division of the army, and are now about to be discharged, and stresses the "unusual opportunity for city schools to obtain the services of competent men as directors of departments of psychology and efficiency, for such purposes as measuring the results of teaching and establishing standards to be attained in the several school studies, applying mental tests and discovering mental aptitudes of pupils, discovering defective children and children of superior intelligence, and investigating various other vital questions necessary to establish an intelligent basis for promotions, class organization, and special schools."

The suggestion is an excellent one, and it is to be hoped that many school systems will heed the call, and will establish bureaus or enlarge those already established. The time is indeed opportune to press the matter of educational research in each community, and the popularization of the role of psychology in the war tends to create a favorable attitude to such work on the part of the public. But even before the war there was no dearth of trained men and women in our schools capable of directing such bureaus and carrying on such research. The trouble has been that superintendents, boards of education, and the public at large have not been sufficiently convinced of the practical value of mental measurements in education to support them financially and to assign competent teachers to conduct them. It is now incumbent upon all those who believe in the value of scientific studies in education to engage in a vigorous and aggressive campaign to arouse public opinion to demand such studies in the schools as a matter of enlightened and progressive educational policy.

J. C. B.