

### INFLUENCE OF THE VIRGINIA FIVE POINT PROGRAM ON THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE COLLEGE FRESHMAN

IN 1926, the Virginia State Departments of Health and Education inaugurated a new health plan in the school systems of the state with the hope of increasing the interest taken in physical fitness and in the correction of physical defects. This plan was known as the Five-Point program, the five points stressed being eyes, ears, throat, teeth, and weight. A "Five-Point Child" was a child who was able to read line 20 of the eye-testing chart at a distance of 20 feet or had properly fitting glasses; who could hear the conversational voice at a distance of 20 feet; who had healthy tonsils; whose teeth were in good condition; and who was not ten percent or more underweight or twenty percent or more overweight.

Although this plan was stressed most in the elementary grades there was much interest shown by high school students. A study of the record of the entrance physical examination of freshmen in the Harrisonburg State Teachers College for the past four years, therefore, indicates the results that are possible and that may be expected from the adoption of this program. Since our records give results for only the first two years of the Five-Point program and represent those who were in the last two years of high school when this program went into effect, the figures and graphs indicate but meagerly the benefits that are being derived. It is generally stated that interest in health is much harder to arouse in high school pupils; if we find these effects of the new program among those who have felt its influence least, we may expect better results among the pupils in the grades.

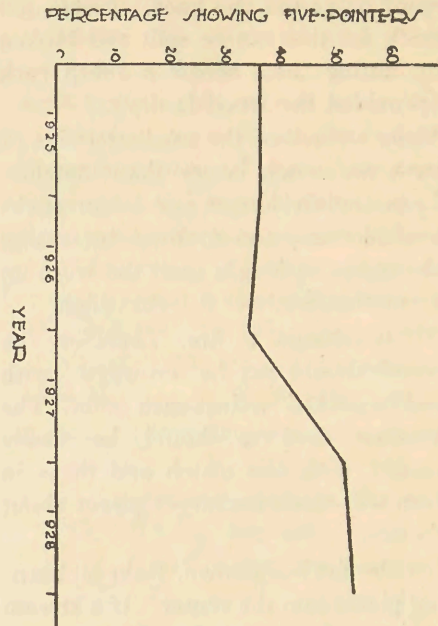


FIG 1 SHOWING INCREASE IN FIVE-POINTERS

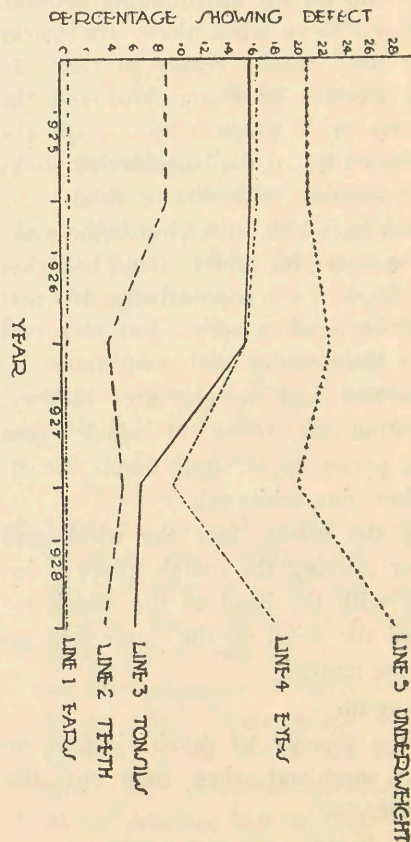


FIG 2 SHOWING INCREASE OR DECREASE IN PHYSICAL DEFECTS



In 1925, we examined 228 freshmen; in 1926, 378; in 1927, 316; and in 1928, 337. We found that after 1926 there was a steady increase in the number of "Five-Pointers," as shown in Figure 1. In 1925, there were only 85, or 37 percent who were able to satisfy this minimum standard. In 1926, we found 131, or 35 percent; in 1927, 166, or 52 percent; in 1928, 181, or 54 percent.

In Figure 2 is shown the decrease or increase in physical defects. The increase in eye defects and in underweight in 1928 could not be explained in any satisfactory manner. Line 1 does not show any special change in ear defects. In 1925, we had .8 percent with defective hearing; in 1926, .5 percent; in 1927, .3 percent; and in 1928, we had 1 percent. These defects do not seem to be serious enough to handicap the student to any extent.

Line 2 of Figure 2 shows a steady increase in the attention paid to dental defects. In 1925, 9 percent of the freshmen had bad teeth; in 1926, 4 percent; in 1927, 5 percent; and in 1928, 3.5 percent. Many of those who did come with bad teeth were aware of the existing condition. The majority came from rural sections and had waited until coming to Harrisonburg for the needed dental attention. In quite a few cases the student had already made an appointment with a dentist.

The most marked result was found in the examination of tonsils, as shown in line 3, Figure 2. 16 percent of our students in 1925 and 15.6 in 1926 had diseased or questionable tonsils. The next year, 1927, showed 6.9 percent and 1928, 6 percent. We have felt a decided improvement in our health record of colds; may that not be due to the improvement in tonsils?

Line 4, Figure 2, is interesting in that in 1928 the percentage of eye defects was 18 percent, almost doubling that of the year before, which was 9.4 percent. In 1925, we had 16.6 percent with defective vision and in 1926, 15.6 percent. However, the defects in 1928 were not as pronounced as in other years; quite a few students were found to have worn glasses at one time or

another and to have discarded them without permission from their oculist.

Line 5, Figure 2, shows our percentage of underweight students for each year. In September we always have a large number of freshmen who are underweight. In 1925, we had 21 percent; in 1926, 22.5 percent; in 1927, 20 percent; and in 1928, 28 percent, which was an increase over other years. It is interesting to note that this defect is overcome in a majority of cases as a result of regular hours, meals and exercise. It is not unusual for a student to gain from fifteen to twenty-five pounds by the Christmas holidays.

That the Five-Point program will have a marked influence in overcoming physical defects in the coming generation is evident by Graphs 1 and 2 for the first two years of this program. But we feel that the interest in health it has aroused is not yet subject to statistics and cannot be adequately shown for some time to come. Our experience leads us to feel that four years from now the health records of entering students will show nearly all of them to be "Five-Pointers," which is what it should be in a teacher-training institution.

RACHEL F. WEEMS

#### UNDERGRADUATE WORK

Rumors that the undergraduate college of the University of Chicago is to be abolished or seriously curtailed are utterly without foundation, it is announced. "Any statement," the Acting President announces, "to the effect that we are not interested in undergraduates is equally false. The truth is that we are making a strong effort to increase both the effectiveness and the attractiveness of the College.

"We have set up sixteen new Junior College scholarships; we are trying to provide better teaching and better guidance for undergraduates. We have given them a splendid health service; we are stimulating intramural sports; and we are planning to erect two large groups of dormitories, primarily for undergraduates, with clubrooms, dining halls, and adjacent play-fields."