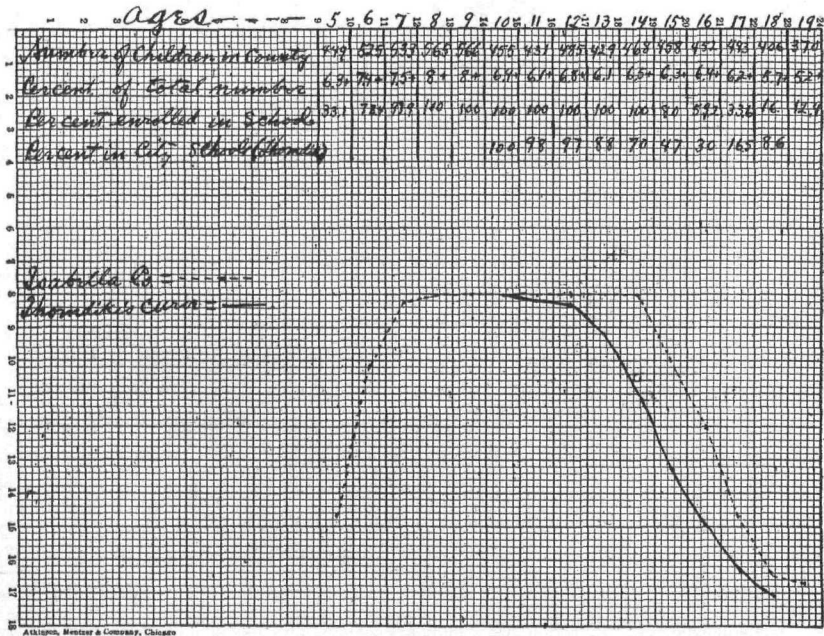


COMMUNICATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS.

THE ELIMINATION OF PUPILS FROM SCHOOL IN A RURAL COUNTY.

The publication of Thorndike's study of elimination in cities of 25,000 inhabitants or more made possible, for the first time, a comparison between school attendance in cities and rural communities. Accurate data for such a comparison have been difficult to secure from the smaller towns and rural schools. The opinion has been quite common that the elimination of pupils from school in small communities has been more rapid, at least after certain grades were reached, than in the cities. To test this assumption, the writer, with the aid of some of his students, secured the data for the construction of the elimination curve for a representative rural county.



Isabella county, located in the center of the lower peninsula of Michigan, is a prosperous rural county of about 23,000 inhabitants. The population is fairly homogeneous. The early settlers, for the most part, came from New York and other Eastern States. The "foreign" population is made up of Irish and German immigrants of a generation ago and their descendants. Practically no immigrants have come into the county during the past decade. The largest town in the county has a population of approximately 5000. The county is therefore characteristically rural.

There are 111 public schools in the county, of which 104 are one-room schools, 3 two-room schools, 2 four-room schools and 2 high schools, besides 2 parochial schools, one of which offers a high-school course.

The school census of 1912 shows that there were in the county 7035 persons of school age from 5 to 19 years of age, inclusive. The table shows the distribution of these children by ages and the per cent. of each age enrolled in school during the school year of 1912-13. The per cent. of each age retained in school in the cities, according to Thorndike, is also given. The curves based upon these per cents explain themselves, and show clearly that for the ages 10 to 18 more pupils are retained in the rural than in the city schools. Enrollment in these rural schools is maintained at 100 per cent. for the ages 8 to 14, inclusive.

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