

retardation requires more than science; what is needed is a variety of strong antidotes for the poisons of poverty. Prenatal care, for instance, would have to be universal and sophisticated enough to assure such things as proper nutrition for the expectant mother and the new infant. Better delivery of general health care for the very young would make it easier to spot defects. Just as public and private groups dispense helpful information about cancer and heart disease, similar groups could do a great deal to educate parents about their children's intellectual needs, about the danger signs to watch for, about sources of expert help. Preschool programs such as Head Start would have to be expanded to reach more children at the earliest possible age. Day-care centers are also useful, both for detecting problem cases and stimulating young minds.

The resources—public and private, in terms of money and know-how—necessary for these and other programs are enormous. Thus the prospect is not for rapid breakthroughs in mental retardation, but for chipping away at a problem that will persist in major proportions indefinitely. Meanwhile, some parents will feel that they are on the same journey that Pearl Buck described in her book about her own retarded daughter, *The Child Who Never Grew*, that they are taking their children "over the surface of the whole earth, seeking the one who can heal."
