

COMMITTEE ON DEFECTIVE AND EPILEPTIC CHILDREN.
(EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.)

R E P O R T

OF THE

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

ON

DEFECTIVE AND EPILEPTIC CHILDREN.

VOL. II.—Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, &c.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



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REPORT

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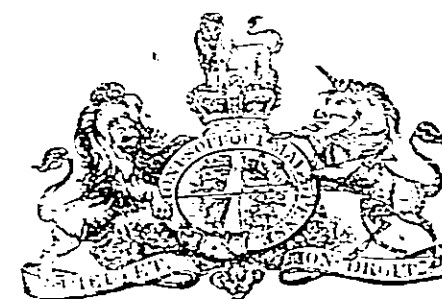
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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

ON

DEFECTIVE AND EPILEPTIC CHILDREN.

32, Abingdon Street, Westminster.

Wednesday, 10th February, 1897.

PRESENT:

The REV. T. W. SHARPE, O.B. (Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Schools), in the Chair.

Mr. H. F. POOLEY (Senior Examiner, Education Department).

Mr. A. W. NEWTON (Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools).

Dr. G. E. SHUTTLEWORTH (late Medical Superintendent, Royal Albert Asylum for Idiots and Imbeciles, Lancaster).

Dr. W. R. SMITH (Medical Officer of the London School Board).

Mrs. BUNGEWIX (Superintendent of Schools for Special Instruction under the London School Board).

Miss TOWNSEND (Member of the Council of the Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-minded).

Mr. H. W. ORANGE (Examiner, Education Department), *Secretary*

The Terms of Reference to the Committee are as follows:—

To inquire into the existing systems for the education of feeble-minded and defective children not under the charge of guardians, and not idiots or imbeciles, and to advise as to any changes, either with or without legislation, that may be desirable.

To report particularly upon the best practical means for discriminating on the one hand between the educable and non-educable classes of feeble-minded and defective children, and on the other hand between those children who may properly be taught in ordinary elementary schools by ordinary methods and those who should be taught in special schools.

To inquire and report as to the provision of suitable elementary education for epileptic children, and to advise as to any changes that may be desirable.

Dr. GEORGE EDWARD SHUTTLEWORTH (a Member of the Committee) examined.

1. (Chairman.) You were head of the Royal Albert Asylum, I believe?—I was Medical Superintendent for 23 years of the Royal Albert Asylum for Idiots and Imbeciles of the Northern Counties, and I was before that Assistant Medical Officer at the Earlswood Asylum for Idiots and Imbeciles.

2. Would that term "idiots and imbeciles" include the feeble-minded and defective children who come within our inquiry?—I think, as a matter of fact, the asylums for idiots and imbeciles include children of that class amongst their inmates, for the reason that till recent years there was no kind of provision made for the education of mentally defective children elsewhere.

3. In what proportion were the feeble-minded children to the imbeciles and idiots?—I am scarcely able to speak accurately without reference, but I should say that probably about 10 per cent. might be included under the term of "feeble-minded" in the Royal Albert Asylum.

4. Who were taken in against your rule?—No,
E 98300.

according to rule, the term imbecile being supposed to include these feeble-minded children.

5. But by the Act of Parliament (there are, of course, several Acts of Parliament) they are now separated?—I think hardly by Act of Parliament. The idiot asylums are now under a separate Act of Parliament called the Idiots Act, 1886; and the only qualification for the admission of a child to such an institution is a certificate signed by a medical man to the effect that so and so—shall I give you the actual words?

6. I think it will be best to give us the actual words?—The form of medical certificate required previous to the admission of a child into an asylum registered under the Idiots Act is as follows: "I, the undersigned, A.B., a person registered under the Medical Act, 1858, and in the actual practice of the medical profession, certify that I have carefully examined C.D., an infant [or of full age], now residing at and that I am of opinion that the said C.D. is an idiot [or has been imbecile from birth, or for years past, or from an early age], each of these phrases after the word "or" being alternative.

Dr. G. E.
Shuttleworth.
10 Feb. 1897.