

## Medical Matters.

### THE MEDICAL TREATMENT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

The special sub-committee appointed last July by the Education Committee of the London County Council to inquire into the whole question of the medical treatment of children attending the public elementary schools have now issued their report on the points submitted to their consideration.

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE.

The terms of reference were:—(1) What is the existing provision for the medical treatment of school children? (2) To what extent can this provision be rendered more valuable by the action (a) of the hospitals, (b) of the Council? (3) What additional provision, if any, is desirable? (4) How should this provision be supplied?

#### PROPOSITIONS CONSIDERED.

Two distinct propositions have been considered by the Sub-Committee—one that the Council should make arrangements with the existing hospitals and dispensaries for the treatment of children; and the other that the Council should establish school surgeries or clinics at which treatment should be provided by its own medical officers. Both propositions involve a charge upon the education rate. The sub-committee, discussing the two proposals, state that the hospitals and provident dispensaries of the metropolis cannot adequately provide the treatment required, and even if such service were attempted, the efficiency would be less than that provided in a school surgery or clinic designed and equipped for the special needs of the school children. Such surgery or clinic could be established in a house selected as being in the centre of a group of schools, and to which the children could be brought with the *maximum* convenience and saving of time. The treatment in such a school clinic would be furnished by school medical officers under the immediate direction of the Council.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Sub-Committee recommend:—(a) That, as the existing provision of private and hospital practice sufficiently meets the requirements in the case of children requiring operative and in-patient treatment (who are thus removed from the direct purview of the educational authority), no further steps be taken in respect of this class; (b) that the Council should establish school clinics at suitable centres in the metropolis for the medical treatment of the defects included in class 3—namely, children suffering from teeth defects and simple diseases, eye defects and simple diseases, skin diseases (chiefly parasitic, such as ringworm,

scabies, pediculosis, etc.), ear defects and simple diseases.

#### MINORITY REPORT.

A minority report recommends that the Council should utilise existing type of institutions, giving financial help, if necessary, and receiving special facilities in return for any grant of public money.

### THE CARE AND TREATMENT OF EPILEPTICS.

At the opening of the new Hospital for Epileptics and Lunatics, Budapest, Dr. Donath, as reported in the *Lancet*, gave a short address on the care and treatment of epileptics. He remarked that society was wholly responsible for the conditions which gave rise to epilepsy and it was the duty of society at large to contribute to the care of the unfortunate victims of those conditions of its own creation. More than 85 per cent. of epileptics were hereditary sufferers, and alcoholism in the parents was responsible for the great majority of cases. It had been said that not less than one in every three children of alcoholic parents suffered from epilepsy. Colonisation of the sufferers was the only way in which epileptics could be cared for properly. He said that up to now they had been shut up with the insane in most of the lunatic asylums in Hungary, a state of affairs which was unfair to both classes of patients. The majority of physicians were willing to admit that purely medical or surgical treatment was of little or no value except in very exceptional cases. More had been done by insisting on a truly hygienic mode of living, strict regulations of the habits of life, and particularly by suitable and interesting employment and surroundings.

#### THE HOT-AIR DOUCHE.

The same journal reports that M. Dausset and M. Laquerrière communicated a paper at a recent meeting of the Society of Medicine in Paris dealing with 70 cases treated by a rapid current of hot air, a method which seemed to them superior to other ways of applying heat for the production of hyperæmia. In suppurating wounds the hot-air douche rapidly brings the suppuration to an end and causes cicatrisation. In cases of stiff joints the periarticular œdema is absorbed and the hot air causes an analgesia which permits of the joint being moved from the first. In chronic case of radio-dermatitis the itching disappears while the atrophy of the skin is much improved. M. Laquerrière found the douche give good results in cases of simple sciatica if combined with general treatment, but in chronic cases its utility is doubtful.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)