

# A Committee To Eradicate Feeble-mindedness

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- 1 "To disseminate knowledge concerning the extension and menace of feeble-mindedness, and initiate methods for its control and ultimate eradication from the American people" is the purpose of the Committee on Provision for the Feeble-minded, a new organization with headquarters in Philadelphia. Although launched largely under the auspices and inspiration of those who have brought national recognition to the Training School at Vineland, N. J., the committee comprises many students and executives in the field of mental defectiveness.
- 2 The board of directors of the committee is composed of:
- 3 Dr. Milton J. Greenman, Philadelphia, chairman; E. R. Johnstone, Vineland, N. J., secretary; R. Bayard Cutting, New York city, treasurer; Dr. Charles H. Frazier, Philadelphia; Judge Harry V. Osborne, Newark, N. J.; Mrs. C. C. Rumsey, Glen Head, L. I.; Dr. Thomas W. Salmon, New York city; Bleecker Van Wagenen, New York city, and Caroline B. Wittpenn, Hoboken, N. J.
- 4 Among the members are men and women in all parts of the country who are actively engaged in the campaign against feeble-mindedness.
- 5 The executive secretary of the committee is Joseph P. Byers, former commissioner of charities and correction of New Jersey. Alexander Johnson, lecturer and national authority on the feeble-minded, is field secretary.
- 6 Among the reasons given for the formation of this committee now are the fast awakening interest in the problem of the feeble-minded, the realization that present institutional provision for them is utterly inadequate, and the recognition that their presence in the public schools, in correctional and charitable institutions, and at large, is a public menace not yet understood by a majority of people.

[END]

<http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/lib/docs/1777.htm>

Note the 'prestigious' positions of the board of directors. They include a Judge, the former commissioner of charities and corrections and a lecturer. Although this is written in 1915, it is clear to see how community attitudes were shaped. These members were very influential within their society and were probably looked up to by a large portion of the community.

Would there have been many people in 1915 willing, and able, to challenge these attitudes?