in many directions. The National Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-minded has been formed to establish homes for this afflicted class. The British Child Study Association was founded in 1894 as a psychological society to investigate child nature: we look with interest for the results of their work. In several towns, as well as in London, separate classes for children receiving special instruction have been established, and in many other directions there are indications of a desire to obtain knowledge as to the exceptional conditions of childhood to be provided for and the best means of making such provision.

The experience gained by your Committee, and the fact that this work has been found useful in various directions, lead us to ask for reappointment in order that we may be in a position to give continued assistance in shaping the practical outcome of investigations conducted under your auspices. The Committee therefore ask to be reappointed.

FRANCIS WARNER, Hon. Sec.

REPORT OF THE ANÆSTHETICS COMMITTEE.

SINCE the reappointment of the Committee at the last annual meeting, the work, being for the most part clerical, has been largely accomplished by clerks, under the supervision of the assistant honorary secretary. The "complicated cases," 733 in number, were first submitted to the same thorough scheme of analysis that had been employed in dealing with the "uncomplicated cases." Owing to the many facts chronicled, often supplemented by considerable correspondence with the observers, the devotion of much time to this work became necessary. The different data collected from the entire analysis were then tabulated, and averages worked out where necessary; so that the Committee is now in possession of tables which show the result of the whole analysis of the record books. Upon these tables as a basis a full report of the investigation is now in process of construction.

The Committee beg that the Council will again reappoint it, and are applying for a further grant.

JONATHAN HUTCHINSON, Chairman.

CHRISTOPHER CHILDS, Hon. Sec.

GEORGE ROWELL, Assistant Hon. Sec.

REPORT OF THE THERAPEUTIC COMMITTEE.

DURING the past year the Therapeutic Committee have continued their inquiry relating to the frequency of employment of certain drugs at present included in the *British Pharmacopœia*. The interest taken in the inquiry conducted in 1895, and further evinced in the inquiry in 1896 concerning extract of aconite, has encouraged the Committee to endeavour to ascertain the views of members of the Association concerning ammonium phosphate. Circular letters have been addressed to those members of the Association who in 1895 stated that they employed this drug, and they have been requested to supply information as to the doses they employ and the objects for which they have given ammonium phosphate. The answers have been tabulated, and they show much agreement concerning the dose; the answers relating to the conditions for which it has been prescribed show greater difference of opinion; some use it for gouty conditions, but even of these a large number state that they have found it of little service and have now discontinued using it. Very many answers indicate that in their original statement of employing it often or rarely they have made an error. As answers to this inquiry are still being received it is inexpedient at present to give full details of this inquiry.

At the request of the Committee Dr. C. D. F. Phillips has continued his investigations concerning the physiological and therapeutic actions of hydrastis. Some of the results of the work of Dr. Phillips and Dr. Pembrey were embodied in a paper recently read by them before the Physiological Society. In a recent communication to the Therapeutic Committee Dr. C. D. F. Phillips gave a summary of the constituents of *hydrastis canadensis*, and referred to the physiological action of the various constituents. In his more recent experiments he has mainly employed the hydrochlorate of hydrastine, and he notes the readiness with

which it produces salivation in cats. He is convinced that it does not act upon the muscles of the uterus, and that it causes abortion by producing contraction of the blood vessels. As he proposes reading his paper at the Montreal meeting of the Association, it would be unfair to give his conclusions in greater detail.

Other subjects which have engaged the attention of the Committee during the past year are the actions of preparations of quillaia upon the heart, and the uses of senecio; upon both of these subjects preliminary reports have been made to the Committee.

NESTOR TIRARD, Hon. Sec.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CONTROL OF RAILWAY SERVANTS' AND MARINERS' EYESIGHT.

THE Committee regrets to have to report that its recommendations endorsed by the influential deputation of ophthalmic surgeons which waited upon the President of the Board of Trade in 1895 have not yet been adopted by the Government.

So far as the eyesight of railway men is concerned, the Board of Trade asserts that it has not as yet any legal authority to interfere. Fortunately much stricter precautions are now taken by the majority of the railway companies, and although further reforms are desirable, the case is not so urgent as that of the mercantile marine.

The Committee is of opinion that the time has come when Parliamentary powers must be obtained to enforce at least the eyesight examination on every seaman at the outset of his apprenticeship, and steps are now being taken to inform Members of Parliament of the facts of the case.

The Committee desires again to draw attention to the international character which the movement for reform has now assumed. Seeing the importance of international agreement in the conduct of marine traffic, and in the visual requirements of mariners, the Committee hopes that the Council will delegate one or more of the Committee to attend the Second International Conference on Railway and Marine Hygiene proposed to be held at Brussels this autumn.

N. C. MACNAMARA, Chairman.

GEORGE MACKAY, Hon. Sec.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRACTITIONERS AND ETHICAL COMMITTEE.

THE General Practitioners and Ethical Committee have held four meetings during the past year. The question as to the desirability of medical education including instruction in medical ethics was again considered, and the following resolution unanimously adopted:

That the examining bodies be asked to send a copy of any ethical rules or declarations to which their diplomates have to subscribe on obtaining their diplomas.

Your Committee have to report that this communication has elicited replies and valuable help from the following Universities and Corporations:—

Royal College of Physicians, London.
Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh.
Royal College of Physicians, Ireland.
Royal College of Surgeons, London.
Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh.
Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland.
Royal University of Ireland.
University of London.
University of Oxford.
University of Cambridge.
University of Durham.
University of Edinburgh.
University of St. Andrews.
University of Aberdeen.
University of Glasgow.
Trinity College, Dublin.
Victoria University.
Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow.
Society of Apothecaries.

The Committee are specially indebted to Dr. Liveing, the Registrar of the Royal College of Physicians, London, for his full and courteous response to their communication. A copy of the replies has been recently forwarded to all the Branches, with the request that they be laid before the Ethical