

**THE MAKING AND
THE UNMAKING OF
A DULLARD**

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The Making and the Unmaking of a Dullard by Thomas Edward Shields

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THOMAS EDWARD SHIELDS

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A DULLARD**

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By

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the Catholic University of America

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"The Education of Our Girls"

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DOCUMENTATION

**To the Misunderstood
Children**

Who are reached the stone of discouragement instead of the bread of hope and who are branded "dull and backward" when laid upon the Procrustean bed of closely graded schools

This Book

**is Dedicated in Loving
Sympathy**

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PREFACE

Though recent progress in educational theory and practice has for the most part kept in view the normal child and the development of normal faculties, it is gratifying to note a growing interest in those less fortunate children who, for one reason or another, fall below what might be called the level of school intelligence. That the organism should have its pathology no less than its physiology is the plain requirement of common sense as it is also a scientific necessity. Likewise it is clear that psychology of the normal mind must find its counterpart in the study of mental disease. And now that the advance of knowledge has made possible a more thorough diagnosis and a more successful treatment of those defects which hinder the growth of the mind, it seems reasonable to hope for something like a system of educational therapeutics which will turn toward the school many children who would otherwise go their way to the asylum.

intro

The Catholic Church from the earliest times has put forth the most earnest efforts to bring the blessing of education within the reach of those to whom nature seemingly refused the power or the opportunity of learning. In Rome especially, the Sovereign Pontiffs have been careful to provide institutions for the blind, the deaf, and other classes of defective children. The Holy See has also blessed and encouraged those associations of unselfish men and women who have given their lives to training such children in knowledge and virtue. And it is pleasing to see upon the pages of educational history the names of many individual Catholics who have made valuable contributions to the method of treating the less gifted or hopelessly dull and backward pupils to be found in every school.

The work which Dr. Shields has prepared is certain, in my judgment, to interest and assist all those who are concerned with the education of defectives. His study of the dullard is based on a thorough psychological insight; but, what is more important, it is evidently inspired

by a hearty sympathy for the parents and teachers upon whom the care of such children must devolve. I sincerely trust that this careful analysis and the numerous suggestions which are offered in his pages will be at once an enlightenment and a stimulation to his readers.

The book has been cast in the form of a dialogue which permits an easy presentation of the author's ideas while it offers full scope for the discussion of some delicate problems in psychology. I feel sure that in thus surveying the subject from various points of view Dr. Shields will not only open up new lines of thought where much serious thinking is needed, but will also create for the dullard a sympathy at once sincere and intelligent that will go far towards making of these unfortunate little ones useful men and women.

D. J. O'CONNELL,
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