

they each have their own individual ideas about how this common good is brought about!

And make no mistake, these ideals differ very greatly in the different groups. So how is it possible for one individual nurse to subscribe to two totally different sets of ideas and expect to further the interests of either? One must conclude that such a person is not very intelligent and requires further education. Or else she is a "career-girl" who has her eyes in two camps for opportunities of self-advancement and preferment; or she is afraid of antagonising people in high office who may be relied upon to give her a leg-up into a position which she is totally incapable of getting by her own puny brains and efforts.

In order to be of assistance to any one organisation, one must first join it freely from among all others, then stick to it loyally and steadfastly, even if it means professional eclipse! Which well it may! And in the past has certainly done so.

But what does this matter in the long run? If we have really and truly striven to do well with all that is within us; and if we have bent our energies and talents to bring happiness and security to our fellow nurses; and even if our ideas have been misjudged and misunderstood, then we must not be saddened or cast down. For because we have been loyal to our own chosen ideals we shall not have lived and worked in vain, and we shall be remembered.

G. M. H.

Holly and Candles

HOLLY AND CANDLES—two very Christmassy things—make the design this year for the one hundred million Christmas Seals to be sold on behalf of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis. It is an appropriate choice, for holly is gay and cheerful, and nowadays there is much to be cheerful about in the tremendous progress that has been made in the prevention—and cure—of tuberculosis. Candles, too, may symbolise the light of modern research which has achieved these splendid results.

So the picture in this country at any rate is a hopeful one, but even now more than 10,000 people died of tuberculosis in Britain last year—and many times this number were ill and incapacitated. There is often much surprise that, with our National Health Service, there should still be the need for a voluntary organisation to fight tuberculosis and help its victims. Yet government activities always need intelligent backing from the public, and tuberculous patients have many human needs which can best be met through voluntary effort. This—popular education and practical help—is what the NAPT exists for. Letters pour in by the hundred and the Association's free information bureau treats each enquiry as a definite personal problem.

1954 is a special year in the Christmas Seal story, for it is just 50 years ago since the scheme was started in Denmark by Einar Holboll, a Danish postmaster. From Denmark the idea spread all over the world, and in Great Britain during the last 21 years several hundreds of thousands of pounds have been raised for the NAPT and its affiliated Care Committees.

The work of the NAPT—which receives no government grant of any kind—is largely financed by the Christmas Seal Sale. The seals with their bright blues, green and gold are a gay little decoration for letters and parcels and only cost a half-penny each or 4s. per sheet of 100. There are Christmas cards to match at 8s. per dozen or in black and white with a coach and horses design at 4s. per dozen. The Seal Sale opens on 19th October, 1954, and both seals and cards can be obtained from the Duchess of Portland, Chairman NAPT, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.

The Future of Mental Healing.

By L. Goddard, S.R.N.

THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALING requires strategic planning and the public given to understand its benefits, by its principles being taught in industry, schools and professions, thus enabling the nation to become more efficient and economic.

Such planning would benefit both young and old. But firstly and lastly the great ideal must be the care and treatment given from practitioners who are trained in mental medicine, together with the help of a still greater amount of research still to be explored and proper organisation administered with capabilities equal to the task, even to choosing the candidates who intend or hope to be proficient as psychiatric specialists, and able properly to diagnose a true organic disease and a functional disease.

Such an organisation must be courageous and adventurous, sifting out and removing the old relics of the past, the hideous buildings which hold the patient for detention and where very little treatment is given. Today, most mental hospitals are giving useful treatment and many patients have recovered; also the public have taken advantage of the out-patient departments for nervous disorders in many general hospitals, but much still requires to be done to encourage patients to visit these departments and to understand the value of a psychiatrist.

The psychological problems which arise in most cases early in life, if treated early would yield much better results. But it is not easy to break down or thrust aside that deep-rooted idea that it is a moral stigma to be seen even visiting the out-patient department, or for the patient to have to describe his emotional states.

It is stated by some authorities that treatment should be commenced early, if possible, by the removal of the patient from strain and insecurity before the stress becomes too much for him and he becomes a burden on the taxpayer for ever more, and a useless liability to the nation. But the patient himself naturally wonders whether it is just nerves he is suffering from, being just for instance a mild passing depression. He really thinks little of it, but these symptoms may develop into a psychosis and may eventually lead to melancholia.

As to this state he is fully aware, and difficulty of thought, sleeplessness and poor health begin to worry him and he becomes a potential suicide. Prompt treatment is often favourable, more than 50 per cent. recover by giving up their work and undergoing supervision by a trained nurse in their own home. If the patient cannot afford this medium, the mental department in a general hospital, or out-patient department in a mental hospital will be of much benefit to him or if relatives cannot be relied on to look after him.

In young people it is not so serious. That sense of helplessness and frustration is more pronounced as life advances, although cases of suicide do not reach this age usually because they are less successful.

In England and Wales alone five to six thousand people commit suicide and about the same number attempt to do so.

The number is twice as many in males as in females and is slowly increasing in number.

In women, chiefly those at the climacteric period are

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