

affected, though it may occur between the ages of 20 and 29, and in men between the ages of 40 and 49 years. It occurs mostly in the upper and middle classes, and the effect of the war may have some bearing on the increasing number.

In some cases the patient's surroundings and the friends around him keep in his mind too painfully the scene of his illness, and the influence of strangers is much better for him. In some cases of melancholy which become acute, beneficial discipline is necessary, either in a private mental home or in a registered hospital.

The anxiety neurosis in adults has tended to increase partly due to the insurance acts, which make illness far too easy and work just something to be avoided as much as possible, as the thought of work often brings dread and fear.

In some cases neurosis is added to physical disease often called traumatic neurosis. This is especially so when there is a question of compensation.

Most of the cases with anxiety neurosis are best treated in their own homes, living a life as ordinary as possible unless panic attacks should occur, when the case should enter a hospital for treatment.

But should an obsessional state of neurosis occur when symptoms will affect work or others, the case should enter a hospital.

Children suffering with neurosis can be treated at home if the parents will co-operate, but it is very often the parents who are the cause of the illness.

So many times is it noticed in a certain type of child that, owing to severe discipline, he becomes afraid and feels insecure, and as he becomes older gradually breaks out in the end and rebels. Or the opposite takes place with the child always around its mother's apron-strings, who cannot stand alone.

When due to such environment such cases should be treated in a hospital or given into the care of a good foster mother.

So often it occurs that some mother, not satisfied with the report given to her regarding the mental condition of her child, will take the child all round the country to various specialists, hoping that some miraculous cure will be found for the child, who in some cases may be a mental defective; despite the fact that appearance and manners of the child are anything but good, the mother cannot see the deterioration that is slowly taking place and will spend large sums of money hoping for the best, until finally she must accept the truth and let the child live a routine life set equal to his or her intelligence.

Thus it is necessary that the public should be instructed and educated to the dire necessity for early treatment and thus avoid much that is preventable in the field of mental illness.

Few people realise the grave mistake which is made by both relatives and doctors in general practice in delaying the admission of mentally sick patients to hospital. As time rolls on always the cry goes up for early treatment, but the stigma as recorded in the previous articles remain, and relatives encourage the patient to take up the attitude that he or she should not be sent into a mental hospital unless all else fails.

The public should be instructed that the mental hospitals are there not for their detention, but to cater especially for certain types of illness which have every

chance of recovery, and to dispense the new means which science has now discovered to bring these recoveries about.

Certain other types of mental illness which have every chance of recovery are now specially catered for in most mental hospitals in England.

But some cases are better treated at home. Such cases as chronic hysteria, which are a bad influence in hospital on other patients. In severe cases of hysteria, hospital is indicated.

Some neurotic cases are so often due to the environment of home life that hospital treatment is now thought to be the surest means of recovery, as remaining in the surroundings which caused the breakdown will only prolong the illness.

Drug addicts are treated in Homes or hospital by preference, and cases in which insanity is associated with childbirth also give the most hopeful prognosis if treated in hospital.

The discipline of a hospital is usually better in cases of mania. Patients suffering with Schizophrenia can be treated at home unless proper control is necessary and cannot be given in their own homes.

Old and feeble patients, the majority of whom are in the advanced stage of dementia, are best treated in hospital, as the skill of the trained nurse is now employed to give them every attention.

Occupational therapy even among the old folk is enjoyed, and in the summer they enjoy also the sunshine, there being so short a time left to them to do so. This must be a great comfort to their relations and friends.

New Plans to Help Spastic Children

PLANS TO SET UP SCHOOLS, clinics, sheltered work-shops and training centres for spastic children all over the country, are envisaged in the Annual Report of the National Spastics Society, published in September.

"Since the Society was formed two years ago," states the Report, "we have made far more progress than perhaps we ever thought we would in such a short time." It warns, however, that the Society cannot rest until the problem is recognised by the people of Britain, and every spastic who needs help is getting it in full measure.

Last year's appeal campaign raised £32,000, but the Society states that this sum must be increased tenfold before the needs of the many spastics in Britain can be met. There are about 10,000 child and 20,000 adult sufferers.

Reviewing the work of the Society in its second year, the Report reveals a rapid growth of membership—85 local groups comprising parents in England and Wales with over 4,000 members. Local groups are praised for opening treatment centres at Croydon, Bristol, York and Southampton, and a special day school at Swansea. The lack of adequate national funds meant that the main burden of this work fell on the areas, but the Society hopes, with the increase in national funds, to start national projects and to assist local groups to set up some 26 centres this year. At St. Leonards-on-Sea, premises have been acquired as a home and sheltered work-shop, and buildings have been given for similar purposes at Croydon and Ware.

A medical research programme to cost £45,000 over the next five years has been instituted, and a research physician is being appointed.

(Spastic children are sufferers from cerebral palsy, which originates from an injury to the brain before or soon after birth. Until recently they were given up as hopeless. The National Spastics Society was founded by parents of affected children in 1952.)

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