

dry clothes and as treatment is only given in the morning, occupational therapy or other occupation can be carried out. Tact and kindness is necessary to the patient when he is recovering consciousness, and no mention of his experience made.

Though some of the recoveries claimed by these new and up-to-date methods might have been as successful by older forms of treatment, this method seems, in some cases, to speed up the recovery from schizophrenia.

Some of the improvements by this method of shock have been thought to be due to one or more of the following:—

1. The elimination of diseased cells.
2. Changes in the vegetative system.
3. Some unknown effect of a convulsion.
4. Avitaminosis produced by the high intake of carbohydrate.
5. Increase in cell-membrane permeability.
6. Alteration of tissue respiration.
7. Psychological stimulus or help.

Epilepsy, or what was called in olden days "the falling sickness," is said to be one of the problems of modern medicine. As knowledge advances, a variety of conditions are slowly being separated off. There are two main classes, major and minor (or *petit mal*).

It is in the major epilepsy that the true fit is seen. The presence of epilepsy does not imply that in all cases there is insanity, but where met in mental hospitals the patient is usually cruel, deceitful, untruthful and in some cases a potential criminal.

Treatment now consists in attention to personal hygiene, occupational therapy and the use of certain drugs, two of which are luminal and bromide. Phenobarbitone grs. 2 daily or epanutin seem to give some benefit. Colonies where the men and women can be employed in some useful work are many. The male colonists work on poultry farms, in orchards, farms and gardens, under supervision by men who are experts at the work. And the women are employed in domestic duties. Amusements, also, such as football and billiards matches, are arranged in these colonies.

There is a common association of epilepsy with mental defects, usually the more extreme degrees, such as idiocy and imbecility.

With adults, mental defectiveness is defined as a condition of arrested or incomplete development of the mind, existing before the age of 18, arising perhaps from injury or disease or from inherent causes. The four classes, idiots, imbeciles, feeble-minded and moral defectives all need care and control.

In the case of idiots the need of care arises when it cannot be provided in their own homes, as many adult idiots are cot and chair cases in need of hospital care. Imbeciles need care and training which often cannot be provided in their own homes. Often they need hospital care because of physical disabilities or bad environment or poor home conditions, neglect or poverty.

Moral defectives who are emotionally unstable, are liable by their anti-social habits to act with unreason, are violent, lie, thief and many are sex offenders. They require care, supervision and control for the protection of others.

Colonies are also provided for mental defectives and are equipped to follow modern practice in treatment, with a hospital unit, well equipped clinical departments and dental and ophthalmic departments.

The fundamental principle of treatment is to develop as far as may be possible the personality of the patient and to encourage co-operation by frequent personal contact. Handicrafts are taught to both men and women; sport is also encouraged. Some colonies accommodate as many as 1,500 patients of all ages and grades, excepting the violent and dangerous, who are housed in a more suitable institution in accordance with the requirements of the Mental Deficiency Acts.

—For educational reasons, and from the standpoint of mental

deficiency, some form of test was found necessary by which ability and mental efficiency could be estimated. Binet measured intelligence in terms of mental age; thus an average child of five years of age has a mental age of five, and if the child's mental age is the same as his actual age, he is exactly average 100 per cent. If his mental age is above his actual age, he is bright and is above 100 per cent. If below, he is dull and below 100 per cent., if less than 75 per cent. it shows mental deficiency.

The factors necessary in the use of Binet tests are the training in the use of Binet scale, a quiet room, no audience, and the child must not be sleepy. Praise, do not blame. Instructions should not be repeated, and the child should not be hurried. Commence a year below actual age. These tests are to discover any acquired information and skill.

Special schools and centres for training mental defectives are being developed, and child guidance centres for temperamental children are being set up. Out-patient clinics for psychological cases are now provided also, and mental observation units are attached to municipal hospitals or other institutions.

In most of these hospitals for mental defectives there are laboratories, operation theatres and X-ray departments, and occupational therapy is used. Social services are organised and skilled workers help in making adjustments in the home conditions. Parole wards, too, are now in use in most hospitals.

## The Birthday Honours.

THE FOLLOWING NURSES received Honours on Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday.

### Order of the British Empire. O.B.E.

Miss M. J. Smyth, Matron, St. Thomas's Hospital, London.

Miss K. S. Scrymgour, Matron, Royal Adelaide Hospital, S. Australia.

### Royal Red Cross.

Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service.

SECOND CLASS A.R.R.C.

Miss Ada A. E. Burman, Superintending Sister.

Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps.

FIRST CLASS R.R.C.

Major Edith C. Long.

SECOND CLASS A.R.R.C.

Miss Vera E. Porter, V.A.D., Commandant.

Captain Ardudfyl Jones.

Major Gweneth E. Jones.

Major Margaret M. Morris.

Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service.

SECOND CLASS A.R.R.C.

Squadron Officer Doris M. Trick.

Flight Officer Dorothy Wilcox.

THE COUNCIL OF THE Royal Sanitary Institute has conferred an Honorary Fellowship upon Dr. Huntington Williams, Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City Health Department.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)