

fruits of such seed may not appear until years of manhood. When a melancholic can forget himself in the interests of others more sadly placed than himself then he is well on the road to his own salvation; his melancholy is transmuted into sympathy. In nursing a melancholic much lies, not in an effort to combat his moods, but to enter into and sympathise with them and to give them better direction through understanding sympathy and guidance. To try to argue him out of them is useless. Perhaps no one has a harder battle than the melancholic when he really faces things and tries to work on his ruling temperament, but when he has mastered this temperament then he is almost always capable of great and beneficent deeds and often of very great genius. I need hardly to an audience like this point to the dangers of a melancholic temperament, to how a strong tendency to gloom may become fixed and develop at last into delusions and even insanity.

The lecturer discussed the influence of temperament in the types and development of the physical body, drew diagrams indicating the general attitude of each, discussed the influences of climate and contours of a country on national temperaments, indicated the seasons of the year at which each of the temperaments were most pronounced, and mentioned the temperaments likely to predominate in different periods of life. In summing up she indicated that those in whom the choleric temperament predominates should try to develop in themselves something of the hopefulness of the sanguine, the calm of the phlegmatic and the sympathy arising from a controlled melancholic. Conversely the sanguine should seek to

acquire the purposefulness of the choleric, the phlegmatic to develop the energy of the choleric and the melancholic his tendency to busy himself with the world. Many might say that the lessons of a study such as this could be covered, from the objective point of view, by the oft-quoted saying, "There's so much good in the worst of us and so much bad in the best of us, it ill becomes any of us to talk about the rest of us." These lines can only be taken in a very personal way, for it would go badly with the world if, in a general sense, criticism were stilled. Then we might sum up the subjective side of the question by quoting the words of a great modern philosopher and psychologist,

a great seer of human nature in its greatness and its frailty, as well as the representative figure in a nation's poetry:

"O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
An' fuilish notion!"

In thanking the Chairman for her kind words at the close of the lecture, and the audience for the way in which they received them, the lecturer said that in offering

to give this lecture she had felt something of a longing to build, in a way, a sort of connection between our College and that Guild of Barber Surgeons in the ancient City of York. That old philosopher, anatomist, psychologist, artist and probably physician had presumably little idea that his drawing would be the subject of a lecture in a British College of Nurses 500 years later.

BABY WEEK.

The first week in July will see the Sixteenth National Baby Week, that annual event when a vigorous and intensive effort is made by the National Baby Week Council to inform public opinion on matters concerning the welfare of mothers and little children which need urgent attention. When National Baby Week was first held, right back in 1917, it was for the purpose of spreading information abroad to the effect that the bulk of infant mortality and morbidity was of a preventable nature, and thus to appeal to the public to set up and support administrative measures designed for the prevention of diseases among infants and little children. Since those early days the administrative scheme has been con-

solidated—under the aegis of the Maternity and Child Welfare Act, 1918, and it now remains mainly for gaps in the scheme to be made good.

For this year's campaign the National Baby Week Council, appreciating the difficulties affecting administrative bodies and parents alike during the present financial strain, is directing attention in two ways: (a) to the importance of preserving the maternity and child welfare services at full strength, believing that therein lies the soundest economy from the health point of view; (b) to the importance of maintaining good nutrition commensurate with a lowered spending power on food.



THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS
(from the Guild Book of the Barber Surgeons of York).
Reproduced by the courtesy of the British Museum.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)