

of the cases which come to the hospital. There is always a grave danger that amyloid disease may develop in such cases. The treatment employed can only be done when the patient is in a ward open to the air. It consists in putting the affected limb in plaster, and leaving it thus until the smell becomes unbearable even to the patient. When the plaster, maggots and slough are removed the flesh is found to be quite clean underneath. For obvious reasons such treatment cannot be carried out in the ward of a general hospital. A new dressing for discharging sinuses is cod liver oil. It is most effective, but has one great disadvantage—it stains everything, dressings, bandages, plaster, sheets and the patient's clothing an ugly yellow colour and the stain is very difficult to remove.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

THE INTERNATIONAL UNION AGAINST CANCER.

Sir Kingsley Wood, the Minister of Health, presiding recently at the dinner given by His Majesty's Government at Lancaster House to the International Union against Cancer, said the fight against disease knew no political barriers and no national frontiers. Cancer research was proceeding unceasingly. Devoted workers in almost every country in the world to-day were working steadily and quietly and with little or no thought of personal fame or personal gain in the attack on cancer, which was still one of the most deadly enemies of the human race. This work went into the common stock for the welfare not of one country nor of one continent but of humanity. In Britain we were proud to belong to this Union and of the contributions we had been able to make to the common stock. We were determined, as were all countries, to leave nothing undone to fight this formidable disease.

Sir Kingsley said that although the cure of cancer had not been discovered, nevertheless if the disease was caught in its early stages—with treatment by surgery, by deep X-rays or by radium—it had shown a high recovery rate. It was simply untrue, as too many people thought, that a diagnosis of cancer was necessarily a death sentence. We could certainly say that the position generally so far as treatment was concerned was more hopeful than at any time and that thousands of people were being cured to-day. This was a great thing and a fact which could not be too widely known, for perhaps an even more deadly enemy than cancer was the nameless fear which caused a man or woman to destroy his or her hope of life by postponing a visit to the doctor until it was already too late.

M. Justin Godart, formerly Minister of Health in France, said that the most hopeful outlook lay in the fact that people, more and more, were losing the terror which the name of the dreaded sickness had been causing for centuries, and were, therefore, seeking early treatment.

In the name of all nations represented on the Union, he paid tribute to the work done in England since the end of the 18th century and said that the pioneer work of the Middlesex Hospital had shown the way to all other nations.

PROPER HOUSING.

Nothing is more fundamental in any consideration of raising the standard of public health, and also of the morality of the people, than the question of the provision of proper housing conditions, and the National Baby Week Council have done wisely in selecting for their theme of publicity this year, "Housing and Home in Relation to Maternity and Child Welfare." The opening sentence of the manifesto issued recently by the Council in support of this campaign is "The logical implication of mothercraft teaching, of the extension of the maternity and child welfare services, is the provision of proper housing conditions."

In a housing manifesto issued by the Council, it is stated

that local authorities are empowered to provide better housing for those who need it. Slums are being cleared; old houses are being reconditioned; and new houses are being built. The local housing authority's problem is to provide healthy homes at a cost within its own means (rates and subsidy) and at rentals within the means of the families for whom better housing provision is most urgently needed. High rents often mean a reduction in the family food bill, with consequent ill-effect on nutrition.

The National Baby Week Council claim that homes fit for mothers and children to live in must be spacious, quiet, airy, and open to the sun, beautiful, and safe. Mothers and children need houses in which there is space to move; fresh air and sunlight must be able to enter the dwelling freely. There must be a balcony or garden space, where baby can sleep and the toddler play in safety, within easy sight of their mother, and where she, too, may rest. Living things thrive in fresh moving air, and they sicken if deprived of the sun.

To provide labour-saving houses with peace and quiet is an admirable ideal, and we wish the campaign of the National Baby Week Council success in its endeavour.

SAVE THE TAVISTOCK CLINIC.

Steps which will be profoundly distressing may have to be taken at the Tavistock Clinic, Malet Place, London, W.C.1., the pioneer charity of its kind in this country, unless it is promptly relieved from serious financial difficulties. The charity concerns itself with those nervous disorders which are not classed as cases of insanity or mental deficiency. It also serves doctors as a centre for post-graduate training in psychological medicine.

Drastic measures in curtailment of the work and abandonment of partly accomplished extension are mentioned as possible "cuts" by Sir Henry Brackenbury, chairman of the Council, in the clinic's annual report.

"Here is a hospital which was the pioneer in a field now recognised as of first importance to national health," he says, "which is crippled in its beneficent activities and even brought into jeopardy by a general lack of appreciation that is amazing to-day."

The clinic, he adds, has large numbers of patients urgently requiring help and clamouring for succour. Plans for extending the work to meet the increasing demand made upon it were prepared some time ago, but these have had to be held up owing to lack of monetary support.

With a view to saving the charity, the Council is now appealing especially to employers of labour. Sir Henry puts forward remarkable facts of the serious loss caused to industry by mental ill health. "One-third of the incapacity of employed persons in this country," he asserts, "is due to the conditions with which this hospital is specially competent to deal." In addition to absence from work, there is loss of efficiency, "very great in the aggregate," which accompanies such minor troubles as do not actually incapacitate.

Last year, specialist doctors attached to the staff gave 23,882 hours of personal attention to the cases under treatment. Since the hospital was first opened, more than 10,000 patients have passed through their hands.

Till last month, the charity was known as the Institute of Medical Psychology, but the Council has now reverted to the original title, "The Tavistock Clinic," owing to imitation of the name by certain commercial concerns.

The need for such a hospital was emphasised by the Prime Minister in his recent speech (April 13th) when he referred to the work as "one of the most vitally important objects of research to-day for the safety of our country and the sanity of our people."

When such large sums of money are being given for hospital support, surely some generous benefactor will be found to maintain and, indeed, to increase this valuable work.

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