

Manners are often overlooked in a nurse's training, due probably to the rush of her work, and she may be in danger of losing the confidence of her patient through an appearance of hurry which must, therefore, be wholly foreign to her nature.

Towards patients and strangers alike, a nurse should be at all times courteous, sympathetic, and helpful, but in every way free from familiarity.

The essential qualities then of a fully-trained nurse are sympathy apart from sentimentality; an intimate knowledge of all the details of her work which will serve to inspire confidence in patients and doctors alike; a cheerful self-forgetfulness, holding sacred any information confided to her by doctor or patient, ever avoiding all conversation of a personal nature; and lastly, accuracy and minute attention to detail. These latter qualities a nurse only acquires in her probationer days when her habits are being formed and her powers of observation developed by the routine ward-work, rough and heavy though it may have seemed, for only by such work can she become alert, quick, and have gained that observant and practised eye by which all details of a sick-room and all wants of a doctor are grasped without effort.

The natural outcome of such attributes will be punctuality, neatness, quietness, cleanliness even to the minutest detail, method, and order.

All this is but an outline of what might almost be described as a limitless subject, on the bearing of a nurse towards her patients, doctors, fellow-workers, and the public at large.

From '*Gynaecology for Nurses*,' by SIR COMYNS BERKELEY.

THE ANATOMY OF THE MIND

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In trying to find out how best to promote Mental Health in the community, we constantly find that many parents, nurses and teachers are already putting into practice the principles of Mental Hygiene without knowing it. But much help can be given by passing on knowledge already gained of intellectual and emotional processes, by pooling our knowledge, and thus saving each individual and each community from having to learn by painful experience, and by making the same mistakes.

Even more than in the case of physical disorders, advice on mental maladaptation is a very individual matter; but the minds of men and women follow certain general rules of structure and content, and I propose to give you some notes as to what determines the structure of the mind in the adult human being, some examples showing the intermingling of bodily and mental processes, and one or two instances of how groups of the community are affected as regards mental health by widespread social factors.

Mental development occurs by the interaction between the individual and his environment, and as this interaction goes on the personality is built up: *personality* may be described shortly as the individual as known to his friends. The human being is equipped with certain *inborn forces* usually called *Instincts*: in man these inborn forces show two general groupings or trends, first, the self-regarding instincts or instinct of self-preservation; second, the other-regarding instincts or forces impelling to the formation of emotional ties; the second group is referred to as the Sex Instinct. Some confusion in popular speech is caused by not distinguishing between instincts in this strict sense of inborn forces and instinct, meaning the behaviour or path by which the inborn force expresses itself. As an illustration, if a child is hungry and sees food (in some cases even if it isn't hungry), at an early age it doesn't instinctively know what to do to get it, it may look longingly and cry, and it

is only by learning a series of movements, gradually getting more accurate with repetition, that it becomes able to grasp the food. An action in which the child is proficient at birth is that of sucking.

Unhindered satisfaction of an instinct is accompanied by a feeling of pleasure, and frustration of the process by unpleasure as it is called; it is not exactly pain. In very early life all the activities of the child are directed to the immediate attainment of pleasure and, as it has no doubt at that age which feelings are pleasure, life is simple. In the early world of consciousness of the child the centre of interest is its own body, and its needs are the great concern in his world, he does not differentiate himself from his surroundings, he is in close association with his mother and takes it for granted that her interests are identical with his own, as they normally are; in fact he feels that the concern of his world is the immediate satisfaction of his needs, and he is justified in feeling it, as his calls for what he wishes, his slightest gestures in fact are followed by immediate satisfaction. Later, he discovers with surprise and displeasure that his wants are not immediately and magically satisfied, and that to obtain his pleasure he has to conform to certain conditions of the outside world; he comes up against reality and has now perforce to start the process of growing up, a process which has been defined as a progressive diminution in egoism, and entails separating himself from his parents, not geographically, but as regards intense emotional dependence.

This conviction on the part of the young child that his wants will somehow be met is not to be called an illusion, we have no right to say that the world of youth is an illusion; for the child it is a true picture of the world, in that it corresponds to, and is justified in, his experience. The child's sense of life, his belief that his wants will be met immediately and almost automatically, that the universe as he sees it is deeply concerned with him and his needs and is bound to make him happy, this becomes an illusion only if it is carried over into adult life, for then it ceases to fit his experience and ceases to be justified by events. A factor of great importance to the developing mind of the child, using this to mean both intellect and emotions, is a sense of security in parental, or other, affection and care. If the child feels sure of parental love, and lives in an awareness of harmony between the parents, his mental stability is but little menaced by poverty and poor physical conditions in the home.

THE UNCONSCIOUS

This term applied to a region of the mind seems at first sight to be a contradiction in terms: if it is in the mind how can it be other than conscious? Many ideas, mental events, which are not immediately used by the mind are passed into the unconscious, i.e. one's knowledge of French remains unconscious while one is talking English; such ideas, however, can be recalled to consciousness by an effort of recollection, they are accessible as it is called. But there is another type of unconscious fact, from the point of view of Psychology. Our Ego or Self may disown an idea because it is extremely distasteful to our ideal of ourself; our ego exercises a censorship and our pride in ourselves makes us refuse to acknowledge ideas and feelings which nevertheless we ourselves have elaborated. These are completely blocked out of consciousness. As the Psychologist expresses it, they are repressed, we cannot summon them voluntarily; in contrast to our knowledge of French, they are inaccessible. In the process of Psycho-analysis, which is a highly specialised department of Psycho-therapy, these inaccessible and disowned feelings and ideas are largely what the patient is enabled to bring to the surface, usually to his surprise.

In the sphere of the unconscious also are mental experiences from earlier periods of life, which we have completely forgotten; you may say: 'No one could remember everything that has happened to him.' But it is not want of room, as it were, that determines the forgetting of certain events; remembering is a very selective process; or if you prefer it, forgetting is selective. We may say, 'Why bring them to the surface? Why concern ourselves with them at all?' The ideas, the realm of the unconscious, though inaccessible to us in ordinary circumstances, have nevertheless a certain power to affect our conduct.

We may make this more understandable by an analogy, if we realise that no analogy is quite correct in all particulars and also that an analogy proves nothing; it may help us, however, in dealing with unfamiliar ideas; our ego, our self, according to the idea we cherish of ourselves, sits up on a platform and receives certain approved ideas to be incorporated into the mind: the guard at the door has general instructions as to the kind of ideas to be allowed in, but at times certain undesirable ones do get in and, although not allowed to come up and be publicly accepted by the ego, they do move about in the rear of the crowd of ideas and may trouble the action of the accepted ones, and also keep the guard constantly on the watch. The self does not consciously say of each idea: 'I will accept this one, I will not accept that one.' The guard or censor has had general instructions merely of the kind to be brought up. Because for long, sex was regarded as something far from admirable a good deal of this repressed material has to do with sex, so that much conduct that we find it difficult to account for can be traced to the effect of repressed ideas and feelings about sex. The sex instinct in the course of development of the individual is directed at different stages, to different objects, and an individual through a desire to linger at a childish stage of development emotionally, may cherish in the unconscious childish attitudes and ideas which would not be admitted into the full conscious mind.

The person concerned may be quite unable to understand why he behaves like that, and if asked for a reason gives some more or less consciously formulated explanation, which is a substitute acceptable to himself, a presentable reason, instead of the real cause of the behaviour. This is called *Rationalisation*.

A *complex* is a partially or completely repressed idea with strong emotions grouped round it. A fairly common source of complexes is that various attitudes and ideas of the child's mind, which are normal for the child and should be temporary, may persist in adult life, e. g., at one period in childhood there is an excessive attachment to the parent; if the child instead of 'growing out of this,' gets thrust into the unconscious, it persists there in its infantile intensity on into adult life, and tends to give trouble in the psychic sphere, delaying or even preventing the development of adult interests and affections.

THE SEX INSTINCT

The *Sex Instinct* has certain characteristics peculiarly its own; it is much more commonly frustrated than the instinct of self-preservation partly owing to moral codes and conventions laid down by the community for its own preservation. It is observed also in regard to the sex instinct that it may be denied its direct biological fulfilment, without immediate loss, either to the individual concerned or to the community, in many cases in fact with actual gain; this because the emotional force of the sexual instinct can be, and frequently is, directed into channels which are socially valuable. The instinct is thus *sublimated* as it is called, and cultural and other work valuable to the community is performed,

In using certain terms to describe the kind of mind, the mental disposition of an individual, we must remember that we are all a mixture of tendencies, but roughly can be grouped; and in the growing mind, early in the second year, we observe characteristic signs of individual disposition, and in noting its way of dealing with small difficulties and meeting new situations we see whether the child belongs to the group of the introverted or of the extraverted. The *extraverted* adapts himself to his surroundings, plays with whatever is at hand, and is constantly in search of new adventures; the *introverted* is shy and reflective, shows anxiety towards unknown objects and situations, and is afraid; he cannot take anything on trust, and by the time he is able to talk is constantly demanding meanings and explanations not so much for the sake of knowledge as for assurance. This type, the introverted, has a constant attitude of defence, and has been called picturesquely the tender-minded; the other, the extraverted, being the tough-minded. In the case of the introverted much can be done at an early stage in reassuring and encouraging the child, to make his course through life less fearful and burdensome to him; above all, his tendency to introspection, timidity and solitude can be counteracted by encouraging him to play with other children and by noting and duly praising any small successes on his part, either in doing some task or in meeting strangers.

An important factor in mental growth of the human being is that of play, which begins to act on the mind while it is highly plastic and open to impression, in the second and third year of life. Play, though a source of pleasure, is to the child his occupation, his reality, his education; not merely, as for the adult, an escape from reality and from the pressure of routine. There is a constant mental stimulus in making contacts with outside objects, in getting to know 'the wetness of water', 'the soapiness of soap'; and the child if he is intelligent at all is filled with a lively curiosity; he may suddenly ask where the kittens were before they appeared in the cat's basket, or where the baby came from, and to such a question, no matter at how early an age it is put, a short truthful answer should be given; almost more important than the matter of the answer is the manner. To the child it is just as interesting and mysterious, say, how a banana gets inside its skin, or how the milk gets into a sealed bottle, etc., so that he wants to hear just what he has asked and then get on to something else. From 3 to 5 years up to puberty, æsthetic and moral restraints begin to affect the developing mind, and this time is regarded as a period of latency, as far as sex feelings and frank curiosity on sex subjects are concerned. As regards the reproductive function the teaching of biology, the keeping of pets, nature lessons, prepare the child for the fact that in the higher animals and in man the two sexes are concerned in reproduction. If biology is taught in school the facts of reproduction are accepted by the child along with other facts; it has to be remembered, however, that a child may fully understand a litter of kittens while still believing that the doctor brought the baby.

To prepare the adolescent mind for new and powerful emotional onslaughts, actual sex instruction should be given before puberty; even if the instruction is inadequate it is important to indicate that this subject is not taboo by means of explanation, to the growing girl or boy, of the powerful feelings which will affect them we can often protect the mental content from distortion due to a violent uneasy curiosity or to fear. The actual age most suitable for this instruction varies in individuals, but probably it is better that the adolescent should receive instruction early, i.e., before leaving school, than not at all, or rather, less harm is done in telling some too soon than in telling others too late. If a boy or girl is ignorant and is already aware of powerful impulses, he or she is very often tempted to experiment, and

assurance that sex means nothing disreputable, unclean or shady, removes much of the inclination to experiment.

Some adolescents who come for advice seem at first very sophisticated and as if they only came to have their own knowledge confirmed, but frequently one becomes aware that as a girl expressed it to me, she was sophisticated only in patches. There is much difference of opinion as to who is best to give this instruction; a few years ago the Medical Women's Federation collected opinions on this subject by sending out a questionnaire to teachers, headmistresses, wardens of hostels, etc. Many stated that the younger parents were willing to impart the necessary knowledge if they themselves can be instructed how to do it. Many parents, however, find difficulty in giving this instruction; they are either ignorant how to do it, or find it impossible to open the subject with their own children. Some parents strongly objected to instruction being given to children at all. One father said he thought he would be good at instructing his boys by the time he came to his ninth or tenth son. Children sometimes find they can talk more freely to a stranger than to someone whom they are seeing every day, and the family doctor may do an immensely important service if he or she is the person asked for instruction. It is advisable at this stage to stress positive ideals, restraint, self-discipline, responsibility to the race, the fact that sex is merely a part of the personality, and that sex conduct has to be harmonised with our other standards and ideals of conduct; rather than to paint nothing but gloomy pictures in the hope of compelling good behaviour through fear, or to torment an already timid adolescent by descriptions of disease and other pathological effects. All young adults should have the dangers of Venereal Disease and its far-reaching consequences put before them, but the purely physical side of sex should not be stressed. It is of prime importance that the instructor, whether parent, doctor, teacher, or merely an adult and trusted friend of the child should have made healthy, harmonious and socially valuable adjustments in the realms of sex; otherwise it is very difficult to prevent the disharmony and disappointment experienced from tingeing the advice given.

Hitherto education has dealt with the training of the intelligence, to the almost complete exclusion of the emotions. For a sound and happy adjustment in community life, emotional serenity is as necessary and probably more fundamental than a lively intelligence and a trained intellect. And the part of our emotional life which is based on the sexual impulse has up to quite recently been completely ignored in education. The attitude has been, both explicitly and implicitly, one of insistence on the intellect and the intelligence, so that emotions based on this impulse, because in a sense highly irrational, have been excluded from many educational systems. Segregation of the sexes during school life tends to foster the attitude that sex is something apart from the personality as a whole. Even with its inherent difficulties, co-education has immense advantages in building up a healthy and harmonious outlook on sex.

SUBLIMATION

The process of directing the energy of the sexual impulse, not to an object providing direct biological satisfaction, but to cultural ends or to other ends which are socially valuable; thus it ceases to be urgent as a physical need or appetite. Under conditions of modern life, especially in towns, sexual feelings tend to be frequently stimulated, while economic conditions and moral and religious prohibitions make its biological satisfaction difficult if social conventions are to be regarded. Marriage tends to be postponed to a later age. Physical exercises, games, athletics, by making the man or woman

more fit and healthy, cannot be expected to make them less vigorous in the sexual sphere, unless carried to an immoderate extent, producing exhaustion. We have to remember that the whole art of living lies in a free balance of expression and repression, using repression in its wider sense of control and not in the sense of psycho-analysis. The difficulties of sexual abstinence are very real to many healthy and active persons, and in regard to sublimation we have to recognise that the process is largely below the level of consciousness, and that however readily the will goes with it the will alone cannot accomplish it. According to many psychologists all forms of cultural expression are the product of sublimated sexual energy, poetry, music, painting, and also all forms of social service, nursing, teaching, helping the sick. It is involved in the whole conception of sublimation that the change is into a form more valuable to the community, a higher cultural level is involved.

INTERACTION OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL FACTORS

This is well seen in connection with one of the commonest problems encountered by those charged with the upbringing of a child, i.e., in connection with food. Serious hunger is a very painful experience, and the appeasing of hunger, to the majority of the children and adults, is definitely pleasurable. To the child of 4 or 5, food experiences are frequently among his most important and dramatic happenings. He may take a violent dislike to some food, e.g., carrots or rice, which his parents consider essential to his health, and the adults may, by injudicious insistence, make the affair the subject of a dramatic contest between themselves and the child, so that the dinner table becomes the daily scene of emotional tension and a domestic battle rages. Especially in a household where some of the adults are finicky, fussy and capricious on the subject of food, emphasising eloquently that they 'simply cannot take' this, that or the other, the child may develop a strong antipathy to foodstuffs that are both wholesome and palatable. Again a new form of food may be refused by a child, as it is quite common for children to dislike strange tastes. After all, we should remember that we adults often have to cultivate deliberately a taste for a new and strange food, either when on a visit or when in foreign countries, so that we may dine pleasantly with others. A physical reason for the child's refusal of food may be, e.g., a slight cold, which in some children causes loss of appetite and if at such a time the mother or nurse is anxious and impatient and forces the child to eat 'for his own good' while his appetite is poor, the child may refuse these foods even when ordinary appetite has returned. From the psychic side, if the child feels, rightly or wrongly, that one of his parents, or both don't care for him sufficiently, he may take the chance of drawing attention to himself at the dinner table by refusing to eat, the unexpressed attitude being: 'I won't eat, and then I'll starve to death, and then they'll be sorry.'

According to one school of thought the mind at birth was regarded as a white unwritten page, as *tabula rasa*. That theory has been abandoned. For good or for bad the mind doesn't even start as a blank sheet at birth. In the course of its development the human body gives indications of its affinity with other branches of the great tree of animal life; at an early stage of ante-natal life the human embryo shows a series of deep grooves or pouches on the side of the neck, and a similar series of grooves inside; these correspond exactly to what becomes the gill-slits in fishes; in the completed human body the only easily recognisable 'slit' is the hollow which is the passage leading to the drum of the ear from the outside, with the inner pouch represented by the Eustachian tube; the other grooves all disappear, usually.

So, in the growing mind, which we can only observe after birth, we get definite but fleeting indications of the long ascent from the primitive mind of our remote ancestors. The child at one stage has to do little magical or lucky ceremonies to make things come right, a chair or a cup must be placed in a certain way. At another stage, inanimate objects are endowed with powers to help or harm; if the child bumps his head on the table he, childishly, as we say, strikes the 'bad table' for hurting him, a recapitulation of the belief in animism in primitive cultures. Among various primitive tribes when an earthquake destroyed a village or hailstorms destroyed the crops it was not regarded as merely a convulsion of nature; it was confidently accepted as a punishment for some crime committed by a member of the tribe; the whole tribe had thus to suffer, but in a sense the punishment had been deserved. This element in primitive cultures probably helps to explain or helps to rationalise to ourselves our feeling when we hear of a catastrophe affecting someone not a friend; the Germans have a word for it, they call it *Schadentfreude*; we have to describe it by a phrase, 'a feeling of slight satisfaction, tinged with malice, in the misfortunes of another, or of a group.' Probably this is based on an unrecognised idea that they deserved their misfortune as a punishment for something done. We seldom feel that mere dislike or envy on our part can be put forward as a presentable reason for our satisfaction, so we rationalise it in some way; explain it as, say, a judgment on them for something done.

SOCIAL CHANGES AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH

The industrial revolution, the supplementing and replacing of the old methods of handicrafts by the use of machinery, had a marked effect on the life of the community, and especially on the mental health of one section of the community. From the Middle Ages onwards the spinning, weaving and making of clothes for a household meant regular and skilled work, largely performed by the women of the household in the middle classes; or by women specially paid for the work supervised by the women of the slightly wealthier classes. Similarly a tremendous amount of time and energy was spent on preparing, drying and storing of foodstuffs for the household, baking, curing, preserving; these were skilled crafts, and it was the business of the women of the household to acquire the necessary skill, or at least to be able to oversee and appraise the work if done by others; much of this work was done in the home. With the introduction of machinery, spinning, weaving, dyeing became tasks for the mill and the factory; the manifold business of preserving, baking and storing foods, dairying, butter making these were no longer crafts for the home alone. The unmarried woman in such households by stages found her occupation gone; and owing to social prohibitions she must not, outside the house, learn another craft or profession and offer her services in the labour market.

The mistress of the house could probably use the services of one daughter, of two, perhaps even of three, but of four or five, no. Whether or not the women of the Victorian era were apt for sublimation, they did not have opportunities for testing their aptitude. So we have the spectacle of what were called superfluous middle class women; living and forced to live, as parasites on the social body, with futility and frustration as their inevitable portion. So we have the phenomenon of hysterics and neuroses so frequently found in women of that period, as to be considered, in a way, natural to women of the middle classes. Then the further step of rationalising the recurring attacks of swooning, the vapours, fatigue, sick headache, by regarding them as a sign of delicacy of feeling, as an indication of a sensibility which was an excellent thing in woman. This widespread unemployment affecting

women of the early 19th century was gradually lessened by the removal of the social prohibitions; women were allowed to receive education and training outside the home, and in preparation for work outside the home, and their work is gradually being accepted as a legitimate contribution.

THE FACTOR OF UNEMPLOYMENT

At present the widespread unemployment due to economic and social causes, and affecting men more than women, has had its effect in disturbing mental harmony and adaptation to life, so that neuroses have increased among men. In the attendances at the Lansdowne Clinic for Functional Nervous Disorders for the first eight months of its existence, the recently published report states that the men patients slightly outnumber the women; and the director of the Clinic considers this preponderance is due probably to the effects of continued unemployment. The numbers are not large enough to draw any quite undebatable conclusion, perhaps fewer women suffering from neuroses come for treatment, because, as I have said, it had come to be accepted as a trouble women do suffer from, and 'nothing to be done about it' has till fairly recently been the attitude of the public both lay and medical. Achievement in some form is necessary to most people for that maintenance of self-respect which is essential to mental health, and prolonged enforced idleness undermines the morale of many people. We also seem to require some appreciation from our fellows for work done; even if a roof, subsistence and clothing is provided, that is not enough. The artist, the scientist who has the thrill of fitting a new fact into a pattern of others, the poet who sings because he must, these may find the achievement itself sufficient; but for those of us whose talents are more pedestrian, a recognition of the worth of our work by some one, as well as the mere performance of certain bodily or mental movements, is necessary for a happy mental condition. So that the unemployed workman who merely fills in his time feels the lack of something, the lack of appreciation of him as an individual, whose activities are necessary for the functioning of the social machine; he also feels humiliated that the money supporting himself, his wife and his children, is no longer what he is earning from day to day by his own exertions.

Knowing the subtlety of our mental structure, the extreme complexity of the psychic machine, its apparent vulnerability, the numberless ways in which it may be unfavourably affected from without and from within, some of us may feel we are beset with dangers; if we have a poor inheritance, difficulty and frustration in our external surroundings, is it any use trying to make a presentable individual?

SIMPLICITY OF TASTE

Those who have to do with the upbringing of the young may equally feel, are the difficulties too great? Man is, of all forms of animal life on the earth physically the most widely adaptable; he can live in the heat of the tropics, or thrive on seal fat within the Arctic Circle; probably, in the psychic sphere, his range of adaptability is equally wide, provided he gets certain psychic essentials. Granted these essentials, adaptability can be encouraged by a certain degree of variety and unexpectedness in the experiences which bear on the individual in early life; a too marked uniformity even of pleasurable experiences may make for an inability to face disappointment and frustration in later adult situations. This point was emphasised by a Psychiatrist speaking at a conference on Mental Health in London some years ago, one of the headings of this speaker's paper being: 'The Lack of Necessity of perfection in parents and teachers.' The reaction to defeat or disappointment shown by the developing mind in its most plastic years is,

more profoundly affected by example in most cases than by precept; if the parents or nurse or teacher show that they have not learnt self-control when their own desires are frustrated, the child is encouraged to express his disappointment in tears or rage, instead of facing his small defeat or trying to find some other way to his end. As adults we have to realise that the increasing refinements of civilisation make for many very subtle pleasures but also make us feel the little disharmonies more keenly so that the pin-pricks of life become tragedies. We must, to maintain happiness and mental health, aim at a certain simplicity of taste and robustness of satisfaction.

As regards the dangers from within, further, we have to realise how little we know as to the obscurer mental processes; the discovery of the realm of the unconscious and its importance in mental life was a tremendous advance in our knowledge as to why things happen thus in the mind: but that discovery was made only 30 years ago, and we have immense advances still to make.

As regards dangers from without, he would indeed be a bold man who would prophesy as to the character of social changes ahead of us: so, the course of the philosopher should be, give ourselves and others the benefit of the doubt. Factors we know nothing of as yet may come in on our side.

It has been well said that one of the functions of a good hospital is that of keeping people out of hospital, by means of its out-patient departments and clinics. In the public mind the words mental ill-health still tend to conjure up a picture of hopeless invalids shut up in an institution, but we all know people who are never in the least likely to enter a mental hospital, and who could pass all ordinary intelligence tests, but who are so maladjusted to life from causes of which they themselves may be entirely ignorant, that they are sources of domestic misery, frayed nerves and thwarted lives. Psychiatry and the work of psychiatric clinics should penetrate social life so that minor degrees of psychic ill-health are recognised as such and treatment sought early.

Dr. Harrowes in his lecture last month pointed out that almost any symptom usually associated with physical disease might be produced by mental maladjustment: in addition, anxiety, fears, a feeling of martyrdom, recurrent fatigue, headaches, and depression, these when constantly interfering with the individual's happiness and activities have to be recognised as signs of mental malaise and maladjustment, and if we cannot resolve the difficulties ourselves we should seek advice.

Those of you who are nurses, or who make contacts through other forms of social service, have opportunities of seeing such maladjustments often at an early stage, when skilled advice and treatment has at least a good chance of helping towards recovery. Many of those who should be helped towards a healthy adjustment are unwilling to believe that their symptoms are not founded on organic or structural changes: for example, someone who suffers from recurring attacks of disabling fatigue will attribute the disability to bloodlessness: the periods of ordinary physical activity, when there is some scheme of deep personal interest afoot, suggest the psychogenic origin of the fatigue, but the person concerned is convinced that if only the right tonic were found all would be well. The word neurotic, as popularly used, still carries some stigma with it, and to many people, wrongly, implies at least an element of malingering. The medical profession is not blameless in this direction.

Are nervous disorders, cases of inadequate health due to maladjustment more numerous at the present day than formerly? Many people feel that the present day prospect is gloomy in this regard. It is a matter of common knowledge that as regards physical disease, terrible epidemics of plague and

smallpox for example devastated many countries in the 16th and 17th centuries. In Iceland in one year (1707) more than a third of the whole population died of smallpox (Jenner discovered vaccination in 1796) apart from those who survived crippled and disfigured, and we know that such epidemics do not now occur, but there is a widely held opinion that nervous troubles have increased, both relatively and absolutely. Here is a statement on this point given by Thomas Sydenham, an eminent English physician and scientist of the 17th century; some of Sydenham's most important contributions to medical science were studies of the nervous complaints grouped together under the name of Hysteria or under the alternative title of Hypochondria. (Sydenham seems to have practised largely among the wealthy and titled people of his day.) These two ailments were, he held, responsible for one-sixth of all human maladies. Cases of what was generally called hysteria were extremely common among the women, and only to a degree less so among the men, and in so far as men were less subject to them than women it was, he thought, on account of their more hardy and robust lives. Men who led sedentary or studious lives, particularly those at the Universities, were in his opinion constantly afflicted with Hypochondria, which was, in his words, 'as like Hysteria as one egg is like another.' As for women they were, he goes on, rarely quite free from one or other of the afflictions which made up hysteria; the few who were so were such as lived a vigorous out-door life.

The treatment of such nervous disorders at that time was largely by purging, bleeding, starving, and the use of fairly powerful drugs. So that the recognition at the present time of the extent to which psychological factors act in producing such disorders of health should promise at least a great reduction in the national drug bill.

THE CONTENT OF THE MIND, AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE

Man depends largely for his happiness on harmony in social relationships, and we have to realise that as the tremendous advances made by science in the past few decades have practically annihilated distance, no one family, tribe or nation can any longer live a life of complete isolation. Formerly each unit, family, tribe or nation was self-sufficient and could live selfishly with utter indifference to the fate of other tribes or nations; nations might prosper or suffer, destroy or be destroyed, their fate did not necessarily involve others. All this is changed; we cannot, if we would, remain untouched by the events, peaceful or otherwise, which are happening in other parts of the world. Like individuals, nations have adjustments to make. We are still too much inclined to take the definition of psychology as given by a boy of 13. 'Psychology is a science that tells you all about other people's minds': we are slow to apply the science to our own minds. We have begun to see that fear, envy, frustration, and jealousy are more potent to wreck the happiness of a life than a lack of intellectual brilliance, and potent to endanger the happiness of a nation. But we are slow to discover fear and jealousy in our own motives. We must learn by experience, and what we need to learn is, not more facts, as we need to know more facts if we are to cure cancer or fly to Mars, but to apply to problems of conduct, our own conduct as individuals and as communities, conclusions to be deduced from facts already known. People say: 'Human nature does not change.' At least the behaviour of human beings changes. Within recent history, to take our own country for example, if one Highland clan had a difference of opinion with another clan it was regarded as a dignified and sufficient retort for the men-folk of the one clan to go out some moonless night and either set fire to their neighbour's barns, or else drive away as many of their cattle as

they could. When the journey between Glasgow and London was made by stage-coach, travellers felt safe only if escorted by a body of attendants armed with blunderbusses.

INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATIONS

With modern transport and communications, above all with the increasing complexity and interweaving of financial and economic systems all over the world, we are more closely involved with practically all other nations on the globe than were the Highland clans of two centuries ago with one another. One of the most hopeful features of the present day is that Mental Hygiene is accepted as a subject of world-wide interest and is studied internationally, its international bearings being recognised.

To see how the laws of Mental Hygiene and an understanding of the structure of the mind of man have a direct bearing on society as a whole, let us look at one or two stages in the life of an organised community. When human beings formed themselves into an organised society for comfort, protection, greater power, leisure to cultivate the arts, etc., the individuals give up the right at all times to act as the impulse of the moment would direct; a standard of behaviour is arranged consciously and unconsciously, by ideas of conduct contributed by the individuals in their better moments, in the belief that in the long run it is worth while to have such standards and codes. We all at times have impulses that are immoral, unethical, illegal. In this country, as in many others, before the appearance of the Police Force, when civil disorder reached a certain height the military were called out to subdue it by force. At a later stage we have the phenomenon of the unarmed Police Force who can preserve order only because they have the support, moral and otherwise, of the majority of the citizens and they have that support largely because citizens expect the law as represented by the police to be impartial, not to take sides. When a policeman finds two persons engaged in a violent quarrel each may be ready to assert the goodness of his own motives and to impute to the other wickedness or cruelty. Unless in very minor matters, however, it is not the policeman who has to be convinced as to good or bad motives; he merely has to collect the disputants or at least stop the fight, and at a later date, in cold blood, the motives and the various stages of the disputes are discussed in a court of law, the disputants agreeing more or less to abide by the decision.

Even more than individuals do nations rationalise motives; we are seldom willing to admit greed, fear, offended pride, self-interest as reasons for our country's actions, and only too ready to impute those motives to other countries, and to us students of Mental Hygiene the League of Nations is one of the most interesting developments of modern times, the first attempt to set up a super-national body to criticise and control the actions of nations as such. At a recent International Conference on Mental Health the League of Nations was described as 'a vast experiment in Mental Hygiene,' trying to bring to the surface buried conflicts set up by national pride, prejudice and self-interest. When such conflicts are resolved by persistent and honest enquiry into our own motives as individuals, and as nations, we may destroy illusions but we need not endanger ideals, and there can come about an understanding between peoples in which social, moral and cultural values have first place.

In recognising however inadequately the importance of sound mental development at all stages, the pre-school period, the stage of formal education, adolescence and full adult life, we see that we have in the Mental Hygiene movement one of the greatest constructive forces in the world.

From '*The Scottish Nurse*.'