PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

PROGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.


A study of this kind does not lend itself to abstracting, but it is highly useful and serves to correct or substantiate conclusions reached on more general grounds. From the valuable tables furnished by the author a few selections may be made.

Thirty-four children were born of 32 general paralytic mothers, and their record is as follows: four (under 20 years) living and healthy; two imbecile; one migrainous; 18 dead under one year and four dead over one year.

Forty-one children from 41 cases of maternal amentia: one living and healthy over 20 years; eight healthy, under 20; two imbecile; one psychopathic; one psychotic; 11 dead under one year and one dead over one year.

Thirty-three children from 30 mothers with manic-depressive psychosis; five living and healthy, under 20; four imbecile; four criminal; two psychotic; seven dead under one year and one dead over one year.

Sixty-one children of 56 schizophrenic mothers: two healthy, over 20; 12 healthy, under 20; six imbecile; one psychopathic; 21 dead under one year and five dead over one year.

Two hundred and ninety children from 229 imbecile or idiot mothers; 21 healthy over 20; 20 healthy under 20; 28 imbecile; five criminal; one psychopathic; 135 dead under one year and 21 over one year.

One hundred and sixty-one children of 144 epileptic mothers: 16 over 20 and 13 under 20, healthy; five imbecile; three criminal; four psychopathic; two psychotic; three epileptic; 78 dead under one year, and eight over one year.

This last record is of deep interest and clearly negatives importance being attached to heredity in epileptic cases. There are numerous other statistics of equal interest to which the student should refer. J. S. P.


The data of this study emphasize the seriousness of the problem of mental disease. It appears that approximately 4·5 per cent. of persons born in the State of New York may, under existing conditions, be expected to succumb to mental disease of one form or another, and become patients in hospitals for mental disease. In other words, on the average, approximately one person out of 22 becomes a patient in a hospital for mental disease during the life-time of a generation. In the several groups shown in tables, the ratios of those becoming patients to the whole population group are: All males, 1 to 21·3; all females, 1 to 22·7; native males, 1 to 23·3; native females, 1 to 25; foreign-born males, 1 to 18·5; foreign-born females, 1 to 19·2. Under present conditions
mental disease occurs among the general population with striking regularity, and it seems probable that the rate of incidence will not greatly change until the principles of mental hygiene are better known and more widely adopted.

C. S. R.


The material in this paper was obtained from 29 patients who died at various intervals after inoculation with malaria, and apart from the omission to search for spirochetes, Ferraro deals with the histological changes in a most exhaustive manner. The numerous data may be summarised as follows:

1. Treatment with malaria influences favourably the pathological process of general paralysis.

2. The beneficial influence of malaria is chiefly exhibited in its effect on the inflammatory reactions. Lessening of the inflammatory reaction seems a definite and constant observation but appears to be independent of the clinical outcome of the treatment.

3. This change in the inflammatory reaction consists in a diminution of the exudate and in a reduction of the new blood vessels. While the reduction of the exudate is of rapid occurrence, the reduction in the number of the blood vessels is a more gradual and slower process.

4. The influence on the parenchymatous changes is less definite. The loss of nerve cells is, of course, uninfluenced by the treatment, but the influence on the neuroglial and microglial reactions is more definite. While, in clinically unfavourable cases, the neuroglial and microglial reactions may appear uninfluenced, in the favourable cases the beneficial effect of the treatment is evident on both interstitial and mesodermic reactions.

5. No parallelism seems to exist between the resorption of the inflammatory exudate and the clinical course, but a rough parallelism exists between the clinically favourable cases and the subsidence of some of the ectodermal reactions (microglia and neuroglia).

6. There is no secure way of establishing a comparison between the intensity of the process in general, prior to the malaria, and the effect which the treatment has on it. It seems, however, the less pronounced the parenchymatous changes the higher are the chances of clinical improvement.

7. No qualitative change in the pathological formula of the exudate follows the treatment of paresis with malaria. The number of plasma cells remains in proportion to the number of lymphocytes.

8. Neither gummas nor granulomas of the tertiary syphilitic type are generally encountered in patients treated with malaria; transformation of the paretic process into that of cerebral syphilis cannot be substantiated either from the study of the exudate or from the presence of specific reactive tissue.

9. No appreciable aggravation of the paretic process in the early stages of the treatment, as claimed by other investigators, has been observed.

10. In the acute stage of malaria a swelling of the endothelium of the small blood vessels is observable as the only pathological sign attributable to malaria itself, but no granulomas or specific glial nodules were found.

R. M. S.

The author's statistics embrace 319 cases (201 general paralysis, 60 tabes, 58 taboparesis); six cases were fatal, two probably not in any way connected with the malaria method. A table is published giving the details for each of the years 1920 to 1926 inclusive. The method used is the malarial technique followed in every case by a neosalvarsan series. A "full remission" is claimed for 47 of the 201 paralytics, for 56 of the 60 tabetics, and for 33 of the 58 taboparetics. Forty-seven of the first class were "unchanged." J. S. P.


Of 542 tryparsamide-treated cases of general paralysis, full remission of mental symptoms and restoration of the patient to approximately his former status occurred in about 35 per cent. Speaking generally, some 30 injections produce the maximum of clinical improvement of which the drug is capable in the given case, but upwards of 100 injections are often necessary to modify materially the strength of the Wasserman reaction in the spinal fluid. Of 2,460 malaria-treated cases, a full remission occurred in about 27 per cent., with the production of an incomplete remission in an additional 26 per cent. Malaria, unaided by supplementary specific treatment, is capable of a definite influence upon the spinal fluid pathology; but this influence, especially as regards the Wasserman reaction, is gradual in its manifestation. Women seem to respond less successfully to malaria treatment, on the whole, than do men; but it is possible that this difference between men and women patients is more apparent than real. The seeming arrest of the disease process effected by malaria may be of protracted duration. Such a status characterized three out of eight patients at the end of six and one-half to seven and one-half years, 13 out of 25 patients at the end of nearly five years, and 21 out of 29 patients at the end of four to five years.

C. S. R.


The position of actinotherapy in mental hospitals in this country is discussed. An investigation of the results of ultra-violet irradiation in mental disorders at Parkside Mental Hospital is described and it is shown that certain types of psychoses appear to benefit. The physiological action of actinic rays in relation to mental disorders is discussed and their mode of action on the nervous system suggested. Reference is made to substances which sensitize the body tissues to sunlight and ultra-violet radiation. An allusion is made to glass, penetrable by a portion of the actinic rays, and its uses. The need for ultra-violet ray apparatus in every mental hospital is urged both for treatment of mental and physical conditions and for the study of its action. C. S. R.