PROGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.


This paper expresses the opinions of the author, which are proposals that are still to be proved by clinical experience. He suggests that the tendency to make the environment in modern hospitals as agreeable as possible is of value, as it makes the patient realize that there is some place that he can fill successfully, and so he is less likely to utilize fantastic hallucinatory satisfactions. The author also comments on the principle of selecting staff with personality traits similar to those of schizophrenic patients, as identification comes about more easily with persons of similar type. In his view, identification with the analyst or with someone else is important.

G. de M. R.


The author gives as an outline that in early childhood the treatment is largely individual. The most important points lie in the parents’ handling of the situation, and treatment is largely indirect. During the school age and part of adolescence the direct and indirect methods of approach are equally needed. In adolescence the direct approach is most necessary.

G. de M. R.


After treatment by urotropin of cases of psychosis resulting from alcoholism, consciousness again became clear, fixed hallucinations and fixed delusions disappeared, violent headaches stopped; the extreme irritability, melancholy and disturbance of sleep and appetite disappeared; the patients were in a happy mood, and tremor left them.
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

In one case of hallucination idiocy, resulting from alcoholism, a regeneration of stereognosis was noticed, also of muscle and joint sense, and an improvement in speech and sensibility.

As regards the intellect, attention improved, as did the reckoning faculty, memory, the faculty of judgment-formation, or reflection and combining capacity. Apathy and lassitude disappeared; the patients were again critical in their attitude. All the pathological phenomena mentioned above lasted mostly for a long period of time (about five to ten years) and did not vanish during the period of abstinence (from two weeks to two and a half months after the patient's stay at the colony and, according to the statements of these patients, even after six months or more). The ability to work was restored in all the cases under observation.

In estimating the results of cures of alcoholic psychosis by urotropin we may assume that the pathological picture of this psychosis is to a certain degree of a functional nature.

R. G. G.

[146] A study of one hundred cases discharged 'against advice' from the Boston Psychopathic Hospital in 1925.—Jacob Kasanin and Esther C. Cook. Mental Hygiene, 1931, xv, 155.

Follow-up studies were made of 100 cases and information was secured in 95 of them. Up to the present time (June 1930), 15 patients have died, and 44 were committed to state hospitals, of whom 16 were discharged later. Thirty-six cases have been able to remain in the community without any further hospital treatment. Of the latter group, eight were not psychotic. When the later careers of the schizophrenic patients were compared with the careers of the patients suffering from an affective disorder (manic-depressive psychosis), it was found that only about one-third of the schizophrenic patients were able to adjust themselves in the community, whereas two-thirds of the patients from the affective group made a satisfactory adjustment in society. Fifty-two of the 100 cases discharged from the hospital are at the present time in the community. This high figure is understandable in view of the fact that cases that are taken out by the family against medical advice are probably less sick than those in which permission for commitment is given without hesitation.

C. S. R.
Grading of patients in mental hospitals as a therapeutic measure. —


A plan is described that is in successful operation as one feature in situational therapy in a research service devoted to the study of schizophrenia. The patients are formally divided into six groups in accordance with their psychiatric status. Each group is described in terms comprehensible to the patients, and to each group is assigned a grade letter. Patients are promoted or demoted from grade to grade in accordance with changes in the mental condition. All promotions and demotions are given ward publicity. This is an effective method of motivating efforts towards self-improvement and of stimulating hope in the individual patient. The method is widely applicable to state hospital practice, and yields excellent therapeutic results for the effort expended.

C. S. R.