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PERIODICALS

Agenda

November 1943, Vol. 2, No. 4.—*The Demand for Dwellings in Great Britain after the War*, Part I.—By M. A. Abrams.—The author's estimate is based on the probable number of families there will be when the war is over compared with the number of dwellings available. As an indication of the total number of families in Great Britain, he takes all married women aged 20 and over, all widows aged 20 to 64, 5 per cent of widows aged 65 and over, 15 per cent of all spinsters aged 20 to 44, and 12½ per cent of all bachelors aged 20 to 44. Setting aside replacement of obsolete dwellings, he concludes that to attain a separate dwelling for each household in Great Britain 13,385,000 dwellings will be needed, this number including 600,000 vacant dwellings required to ensure mobility. Against this, some 12,7000,000 dwellings will be available, the total deficit thus being only 685,000.

According to the author's calculations nearly 8 million dwellings will be needed in Great Britain over the next twenty-five years. This figure he arrives at by adding to the deficit of 685,000 in 1944, 4 million obsolete dwellings, and, for future replacement, 125,000 dwellings per annum for each of the twenty-five years; thus a total of 7.8 million dwellings would be needed to house every family in a dwelling built since 1919.

Based on an inquiry carried out in 1942, on behalf of the London Press Exchange, Abrams relates the answers of the 3,000 households questioned to all families in Great Britain. One of the findings seems to be that families of three to five persons want, if they have the chance, five rooms, i.e. three bedrooms and two sitting-rooms. Only those households with six or more persons want more rooms; and those consisting of one or two persons want, on an average, only four rooms.

Of some 500 young women who married since the war started, who were interviewed in 1942, more than half, i.e. 55 per cent, had not set up a separate home; "they represent to date well over 1 million suppressed families, and their number is steadily growing," assuming that the sample could be taken as representative of all the women who married during the first four years of the war.

M. J. Elsas.

American Journal of Mental Deficiency

July 1941, Vol. 46, No. 1.—*The Incidence of Consanguineous Parentage in Mentally Defective Patients.*—By P. B. E. Duff and R. W. Dingee.—Among 2,082 patients in an institution for the mentally defective, 60 were found whose parents were blood relations. The relationship was that of brother-sister, father-daughter, uncle-niece, or first cousin, in 31 cases: the remainder were cousins at the second, third, fourth or even further remove. There was the same trend in sex differences among the children of consanguineous marriages as in the general hospital population, but the incidence of Mongolism was proportionately less among them, and of spastic paralysis and endocrine dystrophy proportionately greater. Idiots more often had related parents than would be expected from the numerical representation in the hospital. These findings conform to those of L. S. Penrose and T. A. Munro.

Some Outstanding Families of Mental Defects.—By G. E. McPherson.—Danielson and Davenport in 1912 published their observations of *The Hill Folk*, certain families in Western Massachusetts in whom mental deficiency was extraordinarily rife; in particular a group was described, descended from the union in 1810 of a feeble-minded woman and a drunkard, who had five children, all feeble-minded. The State School for Defectives, at which Dr. McPherson works, has been in touch with a number of the descendants. In seven generations there have been 557 offspring, of whom 131 have been found by psychological tests to be feeble-minded; 28 have been alcoholic, and 21 committed sexual offences. There has been much intermarriage between cousins in the family. They have lived squalidly in the woods and are largely supported by charity. Forty-nine members of the family have been admitted to the State School for Defectives. Their mental ages ranged from 2 to 13 years. McPherson compares them with several other families of the same kind at the State School. He has found 25 sets of 3 children each from the one family, 11 sets of 4 children from one family, 4 sets of 5 children, and 1 of 7 such children. There are also in the hospital 15 mothers along with 47 of their feeble-minded children. He points to the obvious eugenic importance of the matter, especially in regard to the fertility of the male members of these families.

Administration of a State Family Care System.—By H. M. Pollock.—Gheel is the outstanding example of a historic and successful experiment in the maintaining of family care colonies for the mentally ill and the mentally defective. Pollock here describes the advantages of the system, enumerating the other places where it has been successful, such as Dun-sur-Auron in France, and the Scottish system carried out under the supervision of the Board of Control. Community care of the German type is also described in the form practised at Erlangen. Pollock pleads for the wide use of family care, with well-organised central supervision, in the United States. He does not refer to the possible eugenic complications.

A. J. Lewis.

Boletín de la Real Sociedad Española de Historia Natural

1943, Vol. 41, pp. 459-64.—*Evolution of Eug. Dubois' Conceptions.*—By J. H. Nyessen.—In view of the wide scientific interest concerning Pithecanthropus, it may be of use to know that Nyessen gives a short summary of Prof. Dubois' interpretations as they developed from 1890 to 1940, emphasising Dubois' special interest in the brain and his view of phylogenesis as a process of alteration of growth.

H. J. F.

Brain

Vol. 66, p. 55, 1943.—*Genetic and Familial Aspects of Dystrophia Myotonica.*—By Otto Maas and A. Spencer Paterson.—The authors have shown previously that dystrophia myotonica is essentially the same disease as myotonia congenita and paramyotonia. They believe that the disease is more frequent than is generally supposed. In the families of the 94 propositi, 261 individuals showed definite signs of the disease, while another 285 showed suspicious symptoms. Although the disease is frequently noticed for the first time in the third and fourth decades of life, the authors observed it in patients aged 14, 12, 9, 8, 6, 5, 4 and 3. Patients generally die by the age of 50, but they occasionally found one comparatively well beyond the ages of 60 and 70.

In certain families, in which for the most part symptoms were only slight, members were often remarkably prolific. Such families were generally of low intelligence. Mental defect, however, and other symptoms affecting earning power, combined with atrophy of the testes, specifically causing impotence, caused a marked fall in the number of children in later generations. There was a high incidence of miscarriage and infantile mortality, due probably to the disease process and not merely to the low social status of the families affected. Twinning appeared to be particularly frequent and may have been related to a noxious influence on the germ plasm. Most of the affected families were low in the social scale.

The disease is transmitted as a dominant. In twenty families one member was markedly affected in both the first and second generation ; in others, even more generations showed definite signs of the disease. In several cases step-brothers and step-sisters were affected. No indisputable case has been found of the disease skipping a generation. The disease is inherited from affected male and female with equal frequency. The conclusion is reached that multiple factors are involved, which are recessive in isolation, but dominant when united.

There is evidence that in many families the disease comes on at an earlier age and in a more intense form in successive generations, even when allowance is made for possible statistical errors. Congenital mental defect, which is part of the disease process, contributes to this result. Mental defect was found in the first known generation of the disease only in one case, but was not at all rare in the second or subsequent generations. In some families the opposite process, that of regeneration, appeared to take place. This, however, was less common.

It was also usual for younger members of a sibship to develop the disease at an earlier age than the older siblings, and in a more severe form. Serious cases, and those with mental defect, occurred with remarkable frequency among the youngest born of a sibship.

ERIC GUTTMANN.

Character and Personality

September 1943, Vol. 12, No. 1.—*The Relationship Between Physique and Simple Reaction Time.*—By H. C. Smith and S. Boyarsky.—The three components of human physique described by Sheldon—endomorphy, mesomorphy and ectomorphy—are supposed to be related to certain temperamental traits, including speed of reaction. The authors measured reaction times to sound in fifty male students and classified them according to Sheldon's somatotypes. They obtained small correlations of 0.29 to 0.36 in the expected direction, ectomorphs being quicker than endomorphs, thus providing some experimental confirmation of Sheldon's theories.

K. F. Walker, R. G. Staines and J. C. Kenna discuss the concept of perseveration and perseveration tests in the light of psychological investigations of negative transference, retroactive inhibition, and memory for uncompleted tasks. They show that the results of " p " tests cannot usually be attributed to a single general factor of mental inertia. S. Anthony describes an investigation in which a list of words was ranked by children for pleasantness. The orders so obtained appeared to provide an index of each child's personality, structure and adjustment.

The other articles in this issue are concerned with attitudes and beliefs. E. L. Thorndike lists the responses of certain groups of adults to a large number of statements on religious, social and economic questions. T. F. Lentz finds that teetotallers, as contrasted with moderate drinkers, tend to be more conservative, more religious, less tolerant, but in many ways better adjusted socially and emotionally.

P. E. V.

Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology

July-August 1943, Vol. 34, No. 2.—P. R. Newkirk discusses *Psychotherapy on Juvenile Delinquents* and states that after eliminating morons, severe psychopaths, and other constitutionally antisocial individuals, there remain about 10 to 15 per cent

of juvenile delinquents who could be prospective candidates for psychotherapy, the requirements being intelligence, suggestibility and personal confidence. The case of a boy aged 17 is described, who was given a suspended sentence of one to ten years in a reformatory after having committed numerous homosexual acts. During a period of three months the boy obeyed post-hypnotic orders with the greatest precision. Follow-up suggestions were given at first every two, and later every four, weeks, and no complaints had been received in regard to his conduct for a year and a half. The boy remained at work on his father's farm and later worked elsewhere, and was given gradually increasing privileges. It is curious to read that he was given post-hypnotic criminal suggestions to steal small coins and chewing-gum, to which he confessed and made excuses after having received new hypnotic orders. The result is interesting, however, since the effect of hypnotic suggestion in causing crime is still a matter of dispute. Many recent writers, according to W. R. Wells, agree more with rejection than acceptance of this possibility, but Wells induced hypnosis in one of his class and caused him to commit a theft, and L. W. Rowlands succeeded in making two of his subjects carry out acts of a criminal nature which would have been unquestionably repugnant to their moral principles if they had not been hypnotized.

In a second case treated by psychotherapy at the hospital improvement occurred, but the writer predicted that on the patient's return to the suggestive influence of his fellow-prisoners he would remain a recidivist. A recital of two cases is of little significance, and we are not told how many other cases were treated by psychotherapy, to what extent hypnosis was used, or the results. The writer is understood to believe that unless psychotheraphy can be applied to parole offenders it will fail, and that amendments in the law are required. In our report to the Home Secretary on the Psychological Treatment of Crime, Hubert and the reviewer stated that psychotherapy as an adjunct to an ordinary prison sentence appeared to be effective in preventing or reducing the chance of future anti-social behaviour, provided the cases to which treatment is applied were carefully selected. But we had no doubt that the treatment could be made still more effective for many if a special type of penal institution was available in which to carry out the treatment and other rehabilitative measures.

September-October 1943, Vol. 34, No. 3.—Dr. Pablo Osvaldo Wolff writes on *Narcotic Addiction and Criminality*, and points out that narcotic addition means an illness to physicians, but that the addict can be at the same time vicious and criminal and that his illness may be originated by his vice. A criminal may have acquired the habit of taking drugs, perhaps intentionally using certain effects of them to accomplish his criminal purposes. This person the author calls an addicted criminal, in contradistinction to the criminal addict who becomes addicted to drugs for one reason or another and afterwards, in consequence of their action, of abstinence syndromes and for other reasons commits crime. According to the author, every narcotic addict should be considered a potential criminal if he is deprived of his drug of addiction to an extent which makes it necessary to resort to crime in order to obtain it. He also refers to the type who uses narcotics to annul the inhibitions associated with an intention to commit crime and not because of habit, and mentions the four main classes of addicts set out by E. W. Adams, namely, stabilised addicts, accidental addicts, natural addicts, and criminal addicts. Dr. Wolff states that the drug pedlar, especially when he is an addict himself, is a person of low moral standing, and referring to American figures finds 51 per cent were sentenced for disorderly conduct, vagrancy and prostitution, and other acts usually committed by persons of this class ; 42 per cent of the crimes committed were caused by motives of profit, robbery and theft, while crimes of violence including murder and assault did not exceed 4 per cent. The types of offenders range from the degraded drug pedlar who at the same time may be an addict, to the wealthy wholesale distributor. The narcotic addiction itself very often introduces the addict into the sphere of vice. The pedlar is more dangerous because he spreads addiction than because he is a distributor. The illicit wholesale dealer is the real menace because he forms the link between the smuggler and the pedlar, and his crimes may be even more serious than capital offences, for he breaks the spirit of many people and does much more damage. Dr. Wolff discusses the effects of particular narcotics and reminds us that in the prevention of narcotic addiction medical, legal, and social aspects are closely associated. While physicians are searching for really efficient methods of treatment, legislators, criminologists and sociologists are studying method for the prevention and suppression of the anti-social consequences of addiction.

The present-day problem of narcotic drug addiction in this country is small, owing largely to the vigilance of the Home Office. But the harm done to individuals and to society, as well as the intricate problems involved in the prevention and treatment of large-scale addictions, are to be seen in those countries where drug addiction is prevalent.

W. NORWOOD EAST.

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