

SIFTING THE NEWS

By Hugh Murphy

It was not until 1547 that an insane asylum was established in London at the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, a name soon abbreviated to "Bedlam." The conditions in it fully justified the significance which the word bedlam had acquired. A medical book written at the time Bedlam was opened summarized the accepted treatment of the insane in these words:

"I do advertise which is made or lunatycke or frantyycke or demonyack to be kept in safe garde in some close house or chamber where there is tyllt light; and that he have a keeper the which the madde man do fear."

The brutality implied in the above found full expression in the brutalities practiced on the insane. They were chained and often kept in cages for the edification of visitors. Bedlam was one of the show places of London.

As for treatment: one was to bind them in whirling chairs and spin them until the blood ran out of their ears; to plunge them down chimneys onto a pile of writhing snakes.

Even in the beginning of the nineteenth century, while the brutalities of earlier times were ameliorated somewhat, the insane were still treated harshly. The idea persisted that the insane were willfully destructive and obstinate and consequently, attempts were made to intimidate them, bully them and beat them.

Shakespeare, in his treatment of King Lear showed more knowledge of insanity than is to be found in any medical book of his time. He is the first to speak of a "mind diseased," and in doing so, he anticipated physicians in this knowledge by nearly half a century.

Today psychiatrists treat mental derangement as a disease, but strangely enough, they are applying something like medieval shock treatment to victims of schizophrenia (dementia praecox), which is the most common form of insanity.

Whether social or physical difficulties causes schizophrenia, no one knows. A schizophreniac may believe he is Napoleon or that his children are trying to kill him; or he might fall into rigid positions lasting for hours. For some there are no more human emotions—only a slow retreat from life into death-like stupor. Less than six per cent return to sanity.

Until 1934 medical science could do little for schizophrenia. Then Dr. Manfred Sakel, of Vienna, now of Manhattan, announced that he had been shocking schizophreniacs back to sanity with large injections of insulin. In 1935 Dr. Lazlo von Menduna, of Budapest, successfully shocked schizophreniacs with metrazol—a camphor-like drug. Physicians the world over hailed the discovery of this treatment somewhat resembling medieval methods and set to work to test it.

Metrazol is a powerful stimulant to the centres which regulate many of the vital functions of the body, such as blood pressure, heart action and respiration. Use of the drug is simple. A patient receives no food for four or five hours and then about five cubic centimetres of the drug are injected into his veins. In about half a minute he coughs, casts a terrified glance about the room, twitches, wails and freezes into rigidity with his mouth wide open and arms and legs frozen stiff. He goes into convulsions for two minutes and passes into a coma in which he remains for about an hour. After a series of such shocks his mind may be swept clear of delusions.

The patient is usually subjected to such treatment about three times a week for five or six weeks. If no improvement is noted after ten treatments he is usually given up as hopeless.

The treatment in itself is horrible enough so that no patient submits to it willingly after the first. One patient described it as "death by the electric chair." Other dangers are that during the treatment patients will arch their backs with such violence that crushed vertebrae result, that they will dislocate their jaws or cause other more minute fractures.

So, although the metrazol treatment is widely used and has been successful in many cases, it is condemned by some psychiatrists as "dangerous."

The insulin treatment is also a subject for controversy. A patient is given increasingly large doses up to about 70 to 100 units of insulin (normal dose for diabetics is 20 units). He sinks into a coma; his skin turns paper-white or cherry-red; he snores loudly and soaks his bed with perspiration. After three-quarters of an hour glucose is given to revive him. As he awakens he shouts and bellows.

Danger from insulin is that "irreversible shock" may be caused by too little sugar in the blood during the time the patient is in a coma and that glucose may not be able to pull him out of it

Naybob Production for November Was \$44,824

Naybob Gold Mines, Porcupine district, reports production for November at \$44,824 from milling of 8,824 tons of ore for an average recovery of \$11.72 a ton, compared with \$33,883 from 4,235 and an average of \$8 in October.

The company announced recently that the \$50,000 mortgage has been reduced by \$25,000 in four months. In the three months of September, October and November, production was \$11,771 from treatment of 12,192 tons of ore for an average recovery of \$9.16.

GAS MASKS FROM ENGLAND TO BE SENT TO FINLAND

Reports from London, England, say that British firms have arranged to supply 60,000 gas masks to Finland. With fear of Soviet planes dropping gas bombs from the sky, this is one of Finland's pressing needs. The Finnish people have been using homemade masks to protect themselves from this form of Soviet warfare.

Report of Children's Aid for Month of November

The following is the report of the District Children's Aid for the month of November as presented by the local superintendent:—

Applications for children for adoption	1
Office interviews	125
Interviews out of office	130
Complaints received	35
Investigations made	39
Children involved	17
Mail received	89
Children in shelter	6
Mail sent out	106
Children boarding out	61
Wards visited	60
Court attendance	5
Juvenile cases	14
Children on probation to court	17
Children released from guardianship	1
Wards returned to Shelter	2
Mileage travelled	3562
Children committed to an industrial school	7
Children placed in foster homes (not wards)	1
Children given hospital and medical care	5
Children returned to parents	1
Investigations for other societies	3
Cases under the Unmarried Parents Act	1

To-day's Stocks

Aldermac	35
Aunor	2.15
Base Metals	23
Beattie	1.03
Biggood	1.34
Bralorne	11.15
Broulan Porcupine	50
Buffalo Ankerite	8.00
Canadian Malartic	72
Central Patricia	2.37
Coniagas	1.65
Coniaurum	1.70
Dome	29.15
Hollinger	14.85
International Nickel	45.50B
Kerr Addison	2.14
Kirkland Lake	1.38
Leitch	83
Lake Shore	27.00
Little Long Lac	3.05
McLeod Cockshutt	2.31
Macassa	4.30
McIntyre	55.50
McKenzie Red Lake	1.29
Mining Corporation	1.20B
Moneta	94
Noranda	77.00
Naybob	25 1/2
Nipissing	1.20B
O'Brien	1.51
Pamour	2.01
Paymaster	38
Pickle Crow	4.35
Pioneer	2.30
Preston East Dome	2.14
Premier	1.44
San Antonio	2.20
Sherritt Gordon	1.16
Sullivan Con.	76
Sylvantie	3.15
Siscoe	70
Teck Hughes	3.85
Waite Amulet	5.80
Wright Hargreaves	8.00

and that he may die from respiratory failure.

Only time can prove the value of insulin shock treatment. Most patients remain sane for a year after a series of such treatments; others who show no good effects immediately may ripen into sanity a year later.

How this type of treatment, known medically as "convulsant therapy" works nobody knows. One theory is that certain poisons invade the brain cells to cause schizophrenia and shock treatment helps the body combat these poisons. Another is that the terrible fear of death inspired by the shock treatment causes despairing schizophreniacs to turn back to life.

Odd Letters from Relief Applicants Out in Alberta

Many in Alberta Seem to Have a Lot of Little Worries.

(From "The Gateway," U. of A. Magazine)

The following extracts from relief letters received by the city department, are genuine and are not meant to be funny:

"I cannot get sick pay. I have six children. Can you tell me why this is?"

"This is my 8th child—what are you going to do about it?"

"Mrs. Brown has had no clothing for a year, but is regularly visited by the clergy."

"I am glad to say that my husband who was reported missing is now deceased."

"Sir—I am forwarding my Marriage Certificate and my two children, one of which is a mistake, as you will see."

"I am writing to say that my baby was born two years old, when do I get the money?"

"Unless I get my husband's money soon I shall be forced to lead an immortal life."

"I am sending you my Marriage Certificate and six children. I had seven, but one died, which was baptized on half a sheet of paper by the Rev. Smith."

"Please find out for certain if my husband is now dead, as the man I now live with won't eat or do anything until he knows for certain."

"My son has been in charge of a spittoon, now do I get the money?"

"In answer to your letter I have given birth to a boy, 10 lbs. in weight, and hope this is satisfactory."

"You have changed my little girl into a little boy. Well this make any difference?"

"Please send the money at once, as I have fallen in error with my landlady."

"I have no children yet. My husband is a bus driver and works night and day."

"In accordance with your instructions, I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope."

Bakeshops and Employees Think Competition Unfair

From both the master bakers of the camp and from their Union employees come objections to the recent advent to town of two chain bakery organizations. The master bakers feel the competition unfair, because the new rivals for trade do not pay taxes to the municipalities and do not support the community in the numerous other ways that local industries do. The Union employees also see disadvantage to them in the new competition. They feel that if the chain bakeries are successful in securing any material body of trade it will mean reduction in employment for local men and also reduced wages for those left employed here. Low wages is one of the features of chain corporation competition, the bakers claim, and the employees of the bakeshops who have built up a good union see the value of their work upset in case chain corporation tactics prevail. Both employers and employees in the fourteen bakeshops in the camp are agreed that the bread and other products made here will compare more than favourably with any chain corporation products, and that prices here at present are at the very minimum to allow decent hours and fair wages while maintaining quality in the goods produced. Both the proprietors and the employees of the bakeshops think that preference should be given local industry and local workmen, and also that means should be available to provide for chain corporations paying their proper share of taxes and other community expenses.

Wonderful!

(From an Exchange)

She had just arrived back from a tour of Europe, and her long-suffering acquaintance had no opportunity to forget the fact.

"And Paris!" she gushed. "Paris is wonderful. The people are all so well educated. Why, even the street-cleaners talk French!"

Fish and Chips

Captain Plugge, M. P., for Chatham, has been asking the Minister of Food whether, to acclimatise various town residents to country conditions, he would arrange for the better organization of the supply of fish and chips in rural districts.

Many Here Given Education in School Now to be Closed

Luck of Mining Fields Causes Closing of School After Thirty Years.

Cobalt, Dec. 11—(Special to The Advance)—Numerous men and women now living in Porcupine, together with many other former Cobalters scattered through the northern camps, will learn with mixed feelings that because of the vicissitudes inseparable from the mining industry the public school at Giroux Lake, where their earlier education was received, is being closed after a history extending back thirty years. Erected in Cobalt's heyday, the school section in that eastern area of the silver camp at one time had an enrolment of more than 225 pupils, but today the number has kept on declining until all that are left are Robert Moore, six years of age, his sister Edith, two years his senior, and Dorothy Bunclark, who is ten, and this trio is being transferred to Cobalt Central school with the new year.

Trustee Edward Rabley, chairman of the school board, told The Advance that while the school doors will be closed, the section will retain its separate identity for the present, so that if the swing of the pendulum ever brought back the possibility of reopening the building, that step can be taken without delay or formality. With the opening of the present term in September, the enrolment stood at eight children, but this number was reduced by three when one family moved away from Giroux Lake to Mileage 104, and two others were gone when a United States citizen who had been in the camp on mining business returned across the border recently. Four other children of school age in the district are pupils of Cobalt high school.

Final meeting in the school will be on Thursday evening of next week, when the last Christmas entertainment will be held, and at this function it is expected that Dr. E. F. Armstrong, ex-mayor of Cobalt who was present at the opening ceremonies in September, 1909, will attend and give an address. Records kept at that time a generation ago disclose that the late J. W. (Judge)

Mahon and the late Milton Carr, both well-known citizens of Cobalt in its prime, took a prominent part in the formal opening and one old-timer still living at Giroux Lake told The Advance they contributed an organ to the school equipment between them. The three children still at the school are all in different grades, and last term the four girls and three boys registered there were distributed over four separate classes. The teacher is Miss Margaret Wright, niece of Walter Little, M.P., who has been at Giroux Lake since September, 1922. Notified Saturday officially the school is being closed, her immediate plans are uncertain.

The school had two rooms when originally built and a third room for kindergarten scholars was added later. The first teacher in the present building apparently was the Rev. J. E. Smith, B.A., Presbyterian minister at Giroux Lake, who first taught in a tent to a few scholars. In between, and before this school was erected, Mrs. James Morton taught pupils in a small one-room school, and Mr. Smith had 41 children under his care when the present building was opened. At the height of the district's activity, the Giroux Lake school had in 1915 three teachers and 160 pupils registered, 92 boys and 68 girls, while the sister school at Temiskaming mine (long since closed) had two teachers and 69 pupils, of whom 40 were girls. The respective principals then were Arthur J. T. Merkle and Washington Winter. A former principal at Giroux Lake, Adam Beatty, is now surgeon on the Canadian Pacific Steamships' liner "Empress of Japan," with his home in Vancouver.

Hard to Explain

(From an Exchange)

Descending the stairs, Willie's mother entered the dining-room where her son was still eating breakfast.

"Did you wash yourself this morning, Willie?" she asked.

Willie gave a hurried gulp as he tried to hide his hands under the tablecloth.

"Yes, of course I did, mother," he replied.

"Well, how is it you didn't find this?" She held out a folded slip of paper. Written outside was

"For Willie for the movies"; inside was a quarter.

"Wh-where was it?" gasped Willie. "Under the soap in the bathroom!"

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