

# Mental Hygiene Looks at the World

By MARY ROSS

ON May 6, 1908, a little group of fourteen persons met in the parlor of an old New England home in New Haven to found the first mental hygiene society in the world—that of the State of Connecticut. In their number were included a judge, a lawyer, a minister, a psychiatrist, a general medical practitioner, members of school and university groups and of a hospital, interested citizens—men and women, members of the family of one who had been a mental patient, and the recovered patient himself, Clifford W. Beers. None of the group at that time was widely known as a national leader; they were people whose interest had been caught and fired by the compelling energy of their friend, Clifford Beers, and the idea which had become the driving force of his life—to organize groups, communities, nations as friends of the insane, and beyond that, to work toward prevention of the sufferings and terrors of mental disease.

Just twenty-two years later to a day, on May 6, 1930, some sixty men representing all six of the continents and more than fifty countries met in the beautiful little hall of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington to establish formally The International Committee for Mental Hygiene. The difference both in the setting and the constituency of the group was significant. With the exception of Mr. Beers, who becomes the secretary-general of the new international organization, these were scientific men, psychiatrists chosen by their respective countries as their representative professional leaders. During the relatively brief time since that first gathering in a New England home, mental hygiene has been advancing from its immediate first objective as a movement for reform in the treatment of the insane toward a science of man in his world, a science which might hope eventually to bring understanding and control of mind and emotions and their interactions in personal and social life as the physical sciences are bringing mastery of more tangible forces. Yet though the leadership of the movement is now that of men trained and experienced in professional service and research, mental hygiene has become the meeting-ground of the whole range of social sciences. Its breadth and openmindedness were apparent at a glance in the program of the First International Congress on Mental Hygiene, which met in Washington May 5-10, bringing together in its attendance of 3,400 and its cooperating committees, speakers and members from the fields of education, sociology, social work, penology, research, psychology, the law, the church and the arts, as well as many branches of medicine.

THE International Committee for Mental Hygiene will serve as a clearing house for the sharing of experiment, experience and the nascent facts of this new science as they evolve in the four corners of the world. Its officers, aside from Mr. Beers, include as president Dr. Arthur H. Ruggles, of Providence, R. I., who has been chairman of the organizing committee which brought it into being; vice-presidents, Sir Maurice Craig, of London, England, founder and chair-

man of the National Council for Mental Hygiene of Great Britain; Dr. C. M. Hincks, of Toronto, Canada, founder and medical director of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene; Dr. Robert Sommer, of Giessen, Germany, founder and president of the German Association for Mental Hygiene; Dr. C. Ferrari, of Bologna, Italy, founder of the Italian League for Mental Hygiene, and Dr. Genil-Perrin, of Paris, France, co-founder of the French League for Mental Hygiene. Six honorary presidents represent the proud roll of the continents, with Dr. William H. Welch for North America, while thirty honorary vice-presidents provide for the representation of the participating countries, and an executive board and committee, to be drawn largely from North American countries to make possible meetings for the expedition of business, will complete the organization.

A KIND of a pageant of what this organization will mean was presented at the first evening meeting of the International Congress when the delegates from abroad answered the roll-call of the fifty-odd participating countries and walked across the platform of Constitution Hall to be presented formally to Dr. William A. White, president of the Congress, Dr. Frankwood E. Williams, medical director of the American National Committee for Mental Hygiene and chairman of the Congress committee on program, Dr. William H. Welch, Dr. William H. Ruggles and Mr. Beers.

During the week any American delegates who might have been provincial enough to imagine that the mental hygiene movement was an American product in present day practice as it was in initial impetus and organization had an opportunity to stretch their horizons by listening in bewilderment to the staccato syllables of Japanese, to mellifluous Persian, to Russian, Spanish, Finnish, Hungarian, Polish, Norwegian, Italian, French and German; while too much admiration could not be expressed for the many delegates from abroad who were able to meet the helpless English-speaking peoples on their own ground. It was an experience in internationalism to hear a gentle little psychiatrist from Siam declare that while the lesser stress of present-day Oriental civilization did not occasion as many problems in mental hygiene in his country as seemed to arise in the West, nevertheless they found a special need for work among their Chinese immigrants, insecure economically, perplexed by a different social order, and homesick—just as Americans, in fact, must deal with the special difficulties of the foreign-born and the first generation of their children in this country. A window was opened on another industrial order when the British representative of the Union of South Africa declared that his country had a special need of trying to prevent the development of people with inadequate minds and personalities because the native black population, five times that of the white group, monopolized the common labor jobs, and there was nothing to do with white morons!

The program of the week's meetings was, broadly speaking, a recapitulation of the mental hygiene movement itself, starting with the relatively known and measurable factors

in the onset of mental disease, such as alcohol, syphilis, and heredity, and with the organization and technique for the treatment of mental patients in hospitals, and in the community, and proceeding toward the horizons still to be explored—the relation of mental health or its lack to the questions, activities and satisfactions that touch all lives—to education, religion, recreation, crime, dependency, sex and family life. Conjoint sessions of The American Association for the Study of the Feeble-minded, the American Psychiatric Association, The American Psychoanalytic Association, a conference of executives of mental hygiene societies, and a conference on nursing and nursing education, gave opportunities for the meetings of specialized groups, while a series of afternoon meetings gave a world view of mental hygiene as the more than fifty countries, in alphabetical order, offered five-minute reports of the status of their work; and evening meetings in Constitution Hall drew their thousands from the public as well as the members of the Congress for a view of the widest outlines of the field.

Obviously it is impossible even to suggest the facts, ideas and attitudes expressed at a gathering of this nature. Through the cooperation of officers of the Congress a group of the most widely interesting and suggestive discussions will be published in coming issues of *The Survey*. Eventually a transcript of formal papers (which were printed in advance of the meetings but presented only in abstract) and the prepared and informal discussion will be available in the published proceedings. Any account here can aim only at a composite general impression.

Outsiders wandering in to one or two chance meetings could be heard in the corridors occasionally complaining that here was assembled much of the psychiatric leadership of the world, but they could draw from it no clear-cut rule of life. At the concluding session a series of committees brought in the need for basic world statistics on mental disease and deficiency, such as recommendations as to specific steps to further mental hygiene; the increase of mental hospitals to meet the need for them; their extension through clinics in the community to do preventive work and after-care; the need to simplify legal formalities for admission so that voluntary patients seeking help might be admitted without an ordeal in court; the need for extension for facilities for mental hygiene study and treatment by psychiatric and social methods in the schools, colleges, and work-places; provision, as in Massachusetts, for the routine examination of prisoners charged with serious crime

before trial, by an impartial body, for all juvenile offenders and eventually for all accused persons; psychiatric study of all persons committed to penal institutions as an aid to their classification, occupation, discipline and release; the development of mental hygiene clinics in close working relationships with social agencies; increased education both of new recruits and existing members of the staffs of social agencies in the principles of mental hygiene. Yet for the optimistic observer who wandered in hoping to find a royal road to mental health in twelve easy lessons—to get the latest “advice” as to religion, education, family relationships or what you will—the comfort, of necessity, was only luke-warm.

**W**HAT did emerge slowly as the week progressed, and with cheering if still somewhat hazy outlines, was a view of mankind becoming aware of its own childish attitudes and emotions, seeking to find out *why* the craving for the things which disturb health and happiness—individually and socially; and working, with what knowledge and means are at hand to prevent the perpetuation of outworn ways in the coming generations, to correct them in people now adult insofar as is possible, or at least to keep them from being harmful to others. Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, secretary of the interior and a vice-president of the International Congress, drew a round of applause at the opening international dinner when he described war as “a developed

mental state in a mass of individuals carrying them into and through suffering, degradation and misery almost beyond conception,” with the use of propaganda which depends upon the development of emotional reactions, as a vital weapon. “We have learned to play upon the minds of our antagonists in warfare in hundreds of ways,” said Dr. Wilbur. “The mind of man is replacing the body of man in developing great world decisions. . . . Judgment and the use of the intellect must replace anger and the use of the emotions. . . . The peoples of the world can well meet together to discuss what has been done and to unite in efforts to solve the greatest of all questions capable of solution—the control of the individual and collective mind of man through the activities of man himself.” At the concluding meeting another burst of wholehearted ap-



Wortman in *The New York World*

*“Ah, Doctor, before you told me about psychology I never realized how hideous my childhood was”*

plause greeted the proposal by Dr. C. M. Hincks of Canada that an objective of the international mental hygiene movement be a canvass of the psychological factors that lead to war and the utilization of those factors to prevent war, since “nations, like individuals, need mental hygiene.”



To understand and possibly eventually to re-direct the forces in men's spirits that make for war was perhaps the widest single objective suggested, as Dr. Hincks said, "with optimism but with scientific modesty." Behind and below the various immediate goals of mental hygiene lay a hopeful belief in the possibility of a social order in which individuals could grow to the fullest capacities of individual maturity. Isolated experience came from as wide and as differing sources as, for example, the theories of personality development in children outlined by Dr. Otto Rank of Paris on the basis of clinical experience; as the consultation bureaus to combat alcoholism, described by Dr. K. Herman Bouman of Amsterdam, Holland, where for more than twenty years psychiatrists, educators, and social workers have worked with drunkards to find out why they drank, and to help them, with a gratifying measure of success to alter situations and the attitudes which made the escape through alcohol desirable; from the story told by Dr. Lothar Frede of the Thuringian prisons, where prisoners capable of receiving education, in the broadest sense of that word, are advanced from grade to grade with increasing privileges and responsibilities, and always with work, until those of the third, or highest, grade (at any one time about 15 per cent of the prison population) live without bars, are permitted to go alone on errands in the town, and on Sunday walks with an educator (and without guards) to reaccustom them to the freedom to which they will soon be readmitted on parole. Thuringia has an educator for each sixty or at most eighty adult prisoners; in the juvenile institutions, one for each thirty; there are dreams of a training college for educating prison officers. Mutinies have ceased, and "domestic punishments," decreasing considerably in number under the new order, are administered not by the prison authorities but by a special court that counts prisoners among the jury. Under the old regime, said Dr. Frede, "on entering the penitentiary the prisoner not only gave up his clothes, but also his own free will; on his discharge he received back his clothes, but not his will; it had been lost irretrievably forever in the monotonous unnatural prison life. . . . In order to make the prisoner really fit for his future life in liberty he must, above all, be trained in the institution to cooperate with us in the shaping of his destiny."

**J**UST after Dr. Frede's address, the Honorable Sanford Bates, U. S. superintendent of prisons, speaking on Prisons of the Future, pointed out some of the sorry results of another attitude in penology. After the war, said Mr. Bates, the United States was faced with a possibly increased amount of crime, and increased severity, because of the more common use of the automobile and of deadly weapons. We could have continued an attempt to treat crime through the constructive instrumentalities that had been developing between 1900 and 1920, a period which saw the birth of the juvenile court and the development of probation, parole and the indeterminate sentence. (Massachusetts with the freest use of parole of any state showed a drop in its number of prison inmates from 64.5 to 45.6 per 100,000 between 1904 and 1927, while during the same period the country at large had a rise from 68.5 to 79.3). Instead we chose to fight.

We tightened on parole, we lengthened sentences, we attacked probation and for the time being we waved the social sciences aside. Now it is impossible to confine a fight to one side and so a few years ago there began increasing signs that the fight was to be general. Minor disturbances occurred in

prisons. Crime, having itself assumed a war-like appearance, instead of being scared off by the hostile attitude of society, increased in intensity. The culmination came with the terrible prison riots of the past year.

Justified though they may have been, those crime commissions who perceived the failure of punishment and called for more of it, the legislatures who increased penalties, and those of our judges and parole boards who lost their sense of proportion in the matter of sentences, must share in the indirect responsibility, while the prison assumes the direct burden. The urban underworld gangs in a spirit of vicious and truculent determination have thrown down the gage of battle. It is idle to discuss or determine who started the war. The fight is on and the position which we take with reference to the treatment of prisoners within the next few years will be of extreme importance to our future welfare.

**P**RISONS of the future, Mr. Bates believes, will be of strong construction where strength is needed, but will give prominent place to the hospital, the laboratory, the school, and mental hygiene clinic, the workshop, farm, and library. They will be manned by persons "trained in the science of human understanding"; a school for prison officers has already been established, and a notice sent to the universities, pointing out the opportunities in this field for college graduates, brought in more than 200 replies to the federal prison bureau in two weeks; work will be provided, for "idleness in prison is a public menace"; and gradually, with the aid of psychiatric and educational directors, individualized corrective and preventive treatment will be worked out according to the offender's needs. An excellent start toward a reorganization of the federal prison system to make possible some of these aims is contained in the series of bills (see *The Survey*, February 15, p. 563) which have passed the House and been approved by the Judiciary Committee of the Senate.

Straight through the gamut of social and individual questions which the program presented ran the general thesis suggested by Mr. Bates, the shift from blind emotional reactions to action based on understanding, from mass methods and mob thinking to individualization, from mob impulsion to individual and thence social responsibility. "A synthesis of the medical, biological and social preventive points of view" was the definition of the Russian mental hygiene movement offered by Dr. L. Rosenstein, director of the State Scientific Institute of Neuro-Psychiatric Prophylaxis in Moscow. In that city each of the forty public-health centers includes one or more psychiatrists on its staff, ready to assist those who wish help in dealing with alcoholism, with "fatigue nervousness," sex, marriage and children, the choice of work, the rationale of work, recreation and rest. In addition to mental hospitals as we know them, there are preventoriums for people who have difficulty in adjusting to social contacts, in which they live after working hours with assurance of rest and help which they could not get under ordinary living conditions. In Russia, Dr. Rosenstein reported, no delinquent child is brought before a court; instead there is a quiet talk with a committee including a judge, psychiatrist, teacher, and social worker, on whose judgment recommendations are based.

That such a hope of and help for mankind in this world and through human agencies is the spiritual or religious value of mental hygiene was the thesis of a much discussed address by Eustace Haydon, professor of comparative religions at the University of Chicago, to be published in a forthcoming issue of *The Survey*. Following out some of the suggestions of Professor Haydon's paper, (Continued on page 287)



# Twice Twenty Years at Hull-House

By PAUL U. KELLOGG

**T**HE premiers of Canada and Great Britain sent messages. They had themselves known the shelter of Hull-House. Old residents and friends turned out in force—our foremost American philosopher for example, the upbuilder of Sears-Roebuck and the ranking American expert in occupational diseases, the president of the General Electric Company, and the first chief of the Children's Bureau, the editor of Collier's and the pioneer of child labor reform, a galaxy of men and women of all vocations, all faiths, all parts of the country. And for three days they held holiday with the people of Halsted Street with the zest of a college reunion and something beside.

But the picture I took away in my memory was one which has since been spread by press and screen throughout the country—of Jane Addams and three of her small neighbors as they sat at the end of the Hull-House dining room. One small child was Mexican, another Jewish, the third Italian, and without premeditation or grooming they had been whisked over from one of the children's rooms when the talkie people arrived with their cameras, their reproducing apparatus and their glaring lights. Miss Addams was asked to speak 200 words; but that brief commission ran into an hour or more, because of the delays and finesse of this new method for recording current history. And those children—did they get tired and fret and wriggle? Quite the contrary. She made it a game for them. They played it with a pastmaster who meets the spirit of youth on its own ground, as she has met the vicissitudes of city streets and become our great interpreter of the common life. They might have been in a garden, talking of cockles and pretty maids all in a row. For Hull-House and its mistress are something new and vibrant in those corridors of time long given over to quiescent saints in their niches and dour sages in their retreats.

Hull-House was established in September, 1889, but the fortieth anniversary was observed in conjunction with the annual spring exhibit in early May. While the year has been in process, Miss Addams has been writing the chapters of her *Second Twenty Years at Hull-House*, three of which were brought out in the *Survey Graphic* last fall, three more to be brought out this summer in advance of the issuance of the volume itself in Macmillan's fall list.

The spring exhibits afforded a colorful setting for the anniversary. The proverbial joyous echoes of the boys' club

and gymnasium, were matched by the quiet nursery school in the Mary Crane building, where the advances in nutrition, education, psychology and psychiatry interplay uniquely in the work of a preschool clinic. The Harlequins presented *Creatures of Impulse* in the Hull-House Theater, a Gypsy orchestra played for the social dance of the Inter-Club Council, the Punch and Judys put on *Conrad the Gooseherd*, and the Hull-House Players had *The Farmer's Wife* for their bill. The Music School presented *Reineke's Elfrieda* and the Swans and three of its pupils assisted at the Sunday afternoon concert of the Women's Symphony Orchestra. There were etchings, wood blocks and batiks, paintings, drawings and photographs in the studios; spinning and weaving in the textile room; pottery, the product of the Hull-House kilns; wood-carving, handiwork, embroideries, printing and other going exhibits that emphasized the cultural overture to life which has been such a marked development of neighborhood work in recent years and which Hull-House long ago pioneered. The Coffee House, the octagon room in the original building, the quadrangle, the corridors were overrun with the throngs of neighborhood folk and guests and every nook and corner yielded up its stories. There was supper for old residents Saturday night and breakfast Sunday at the Bowen Country Club, where the shaded lawns and deep ravines of the old lake bluffs have healed the bruises of many hard-pressed city dwellers and where Mrs. Bowen was at her hospitable best.

**T**HE celebration started with an afternoon meeting, under the auspices of the Chicago Federation of Settlements, where Graham Taylor of Chicago Commons told of those early impulses which reached back to the realization that culture is an obligation, education a debt which those who have had leisure to learn owe to their generation.

Saturday evening came the formal meeting with Miss Addams presiding at Bowen Hall, and deftly foiling the attempts of one speaker or another to drift into "panegyrics." But it was all so unpretentious, so genuine, so filled with the unspoiled spirit of neighborliness which has characterized the Hull-House group from the beginning, that "formal" is a misnomer. Miss Addams countered the applause that greeted her entrance by spending the first few moments singling out old-timers in the audience and beckoning them to come to the platform. John Dewey was the first speaker,