American experts, who have made an intensive study of the subject, that in only 30 per cent. of spastic cases is mental defect a factor.

In a recent circular issued by the Parents' Club, attention is called to the need for reliable statistics as to the incidence of Spastic Paralysis and associated conditions, as a preliminary to the establishment of a pioneer centre for specialized treatment on the lines of those in America which have achieved such striking results. In this activity, the Club has the support of the Central Council for the Care of Cripples who have sponsored it since its inception.

Enquiries, which are welcomed, should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary of the Club, Mrs. W. A. Colgan, "Gossamer", Outwood Lane, Chipstead, Surrey.

Obituaries

Professor John Hilton

The sudden death on August 28th, 1943, of Professor John Hilton means a grievous loss to the National Council for Mental Hygiene of whose Executive Committee he had been a member since 1939. This was the year in which Professor Hilton made a broadcast appeal for public financial support of the Council's work, for which the Association has reason to be especially grateful.

Professor Hilton's reputation as a champion of the rights of the ordinary man and woman found new expression in his espousal of the cause of those troubled in mind and spirit, to whose problems he gave the same friendly and sympathetic consideration which had earned him such popularity as a broadcaster and journalist. As the Council knows, despite his many interests and a busy and strenuous life, no appeal for help or advice in a difficulty went unheeded, and the many who wrote to him approached him not as a stranger but as an understanding friend.

In recording its deep sense of loss, the Council desires to extend its profound sympathy to his widow and family in their sad bereavement.

Sir Francis Fremantle

The C.A.M.W. record with regret the sudden death on August 26th of Sir Francis Fremantle, O.B.E., M.A., M.D., M.P., who, besides being a Vice-President of the Association, was for many years Chairman of its Parliamentary Committee and upon whose support in Parliament for any legislation which particularly concerned mental welfare the Association could confidently count.

Sir Francis was for 13 years, 1902-14, medical officer of health for Hertfordshire and M.P. for the St. Albans Division since 1919. His life was dedicated to public service and at the time of his death, at the age of 74, he was still giving active support to a number of organizations in his constituency.

To Lady Fremantle and her son, the members of the C.A.M.W. Council offer their sincere sympathy.

Clifford Beers

A great reformer has passed on. Clifford Whittingham Beers died on July 9th, 1943, at Providence, U.S.A., but his fine enthusiastic and farseeing spirit has left behind it work which persists and grows. At a time when such ideas as his were regarded as almost too progressive, and, in some quarters indeed, as subversive and revolutionary, he, a recovered patient, demonstrated the value of individual study of each patient, and a more hopeful attitude towards the whole question of insanity and its treatment. He gained support from some of the best men in America, both doctors and others, amongst whom Professor William James, the psychologist and writer, stands out.

As a man he left no stone unturned in his work. He was encouraging, idealistic, and persuasive, and never lost sight of his goal—the treatment of man to enable him to reach the best that he is capable of in a well balanced body, mind and spirit. The immense help that his wife gave him contributed very largely to his capacity for unremitting labour for so many years.

Clifford Beers established an international reputation as the founder of the Mental Hygiene movement over thirty-five years ago. He first attracted public attention after publishing his remarkable book, "A Mind that Found itself", which describes his experiences and the treatment he received in hospitals while himself undergoing mental treatment. The wide interest which this aroused won him the support of many prominent Americans, and also of the Rockefeller Foundation, the Commonwealth Fund and the Milbank Memorial Fund, as a result of which he organized the Connecticut Society for Mental Hygiene, from which emanated the National Committee for Mental Hygiene in New York and the many Mental Hygiene Societies throughout the United States.

Mr. Beers was especially interested in the founding of the National Council for Mental Hygiene in England in 1922, and attended the Association's first Annual Meeting. Thereafter he kept in close touch with its work and progress, and on those occasions on which he visited Europe he never failed to spend some of his time with the Council. During a visit to this country in 1937 he had the honour of being received by the Council's President, the late Duke of Kent.

Through his inspiration Mental Hygiene organizations were established in no less than 53 countries, and close liaison was maintained with all of these by the setting up of an International Mental Hygiene Committee. The first International Congress on Mental Hygiene, organized by Mr. Beers himself, was held at Washington, D.C., in May, 1930, and was attended by over 4,000 persons, including delegates from Mental Hygiene and other social welfare organizations from all parts of the globe.

Mr. Beers retired from active work with the movement in 1939, and his death occurred after a long period of ill-health.

Reviews

Mental Illness: A Guide for the Family. Edith M. Stern with the collaboration of Samuel W. Hamilton, M.D. Commonwealth Fund, N.Y. 1942. \$1.00. This small book, suitably adapted to English conditions, and perhaps also to English temperament, should help to enlighten and reassure many people in this country who "have been initiated into the service of mental patients by experience". Paul Winterton's

Mending Minds seems to offer the nearest English parallel, but is written for a wider public and does not attempt in the same way to get beneath the skin of the anxious and bewildered relative, or to address him so intimately and directly.

Written primarily for the family of those mentally disordered persons who have to be admitted for a shorter or longer period to a mental hospital, the present

work takes up its theme at the point where "mental illness strikes" and tries to show what part the relative can play before, during and after hospitalization.

English readers will be astonished to find how admission procedure varies from state to state, ranging from the absence of all judicial intervention at one end of the scale to trial by jury as the unavoidable gateway to a mental hospital at the other. Remote as these things seem from present conditions in this country, the author's general attitude is not irrelevant to the English situation. She makes it clear that the individual patient's welfare is best served by a realistic acceptance of the existing legal procedure, combined with an expectation that those persons who are responsible for carrying out the law are on the whole humane and will co-operate with the relative in tempering the procedure to the patient to the limits of legality. Energy, which might have been dissipated in fruitless indignation or in futile attempts to circumvent the law may then be applied to the wider cause of reform, so that the angry relative becomes a valuable apostle of mental hygiene.

Acceptance of the authority and faith in the skill and integrity of the doctor at every stage of mental illness is urged throughout the book. This undoubtedly needs to be stressed, but the English reader may wonder whether it is not reiterated rather too often. The author's justification must be sought in the preface, where she describes the Americans as "a nation of self diagnosticians and self dosers" who "do not sufficiently respect our doctors".

The author is not herself engaged in the service which she describes, but has come to know something of the mental hospital from the inside, has consulted many people engaged in this work in various professional capacities and has had the collaboration throughout of Dr. Samuel W. Hamilton, Mental Hospital Adviser, U.S. Public Health Service, who has supplied the "Foreword". "Probably", he writes, "the way she says things is easier to understand than the way doctors would say them," and one might add that only a psychiatrist of rare imagination and sensibility could discard the protection of custom and of scientific interest and face with the relative what the catastrophe of mental illness means when it enters one's own home. The lay author deserves both praise and gratitude for what her book achieves in this difficult imaginative task.

Its appeal is rightly to the reason; because it is so it cannot take the place of—though it can most usefully supplement—the personal support which must be given to the relative by psychiatrist, psychiatric social worker and others of the hospital personnel. The general line taken is that of orthodox mental hygiene. "Once you have accepted the essentially simple fact that you are dealing with someone who is sick, you will be no more or less unhappy than you would be if your home were disrupted by tuberculosis or appendicitis or pneumonia." No doubt it is useful to stress this, as a counterweight to the shame, secretiveness, bewilderment and moral judgment which still attend a case of mental illness. Nevertheless, one may be heretical enough to question whether, in the realm of feeling and experience, mental illness does of its very nature give rise to distresses, alienations and questionings of a peculiar quality and depth. N.G.

The Mothering of Young Children. The Needs of Children at Home and in Nursery Groups. By Gwendolen E. Chesters. Faber & Faber Ltd. Pp. 82. 2s. 6d.

This admirable little book is especially welcome at the present time, when wartime nurseries are rapidly

being multiplied, as are the problems of children whose home life is broken by the claims of war. It is a hard world now for young children as well as for their deprived parents, and in the nursery world to-day there are too many small inmates who have already suffered through adult ignorance of the essential importance of mothering. Under war conditions, when bodily safety is threatened, there is a tendency to emphasize the physical aspect of child care to the detriment of the psychological. Miss Chesters, in her work of organizing war nurseries, has already done much to combat this tendency by promoting a better understanding of mental health among local authorities and nursery staffs, and her book represents a further valuable contribution to the same end.

On the first page the fundamental relationship of mother and child is made clear :

Children, like all living things, need a suitable setting in which to grow. The setting of a young child is called his environment. It forms the background of his development, and he grows largely in response to it. The baby's first environment is his mother. She forms at first his actual physical environment, for he grows inside her. And she remains his setting after he is born. Though he is no longer within her body . . . her mothering of him forms the background of his life. His own interest . . . tends to swing to and fro between himself and his mother, and to be largely centred in his relationship to her. Gradually the circle of his interest widens to include people other than her. He gets his first circle of friends.

The term mothering is defined as including at least two qualities, affection and wisdom, both necessary, "for each without the other can be equally destructive". The sentence following might well be written in letters of gold for nursery staffs and the committees behind them :—"Little can be more damaging to a child than careful planning for his life without genuine warmth of affection for him," and, it is added, without giving him a sense of his own intrinsic value. Many practical ways are suggested by which a child, even though separated from home, may be made conscious of this warmth of affection both in the mother whom he has temporarily lost, and in those who are acting as mother-substitutes. The wisdom necessary to good mothering is amply demonstrated in the author's observations, and advice, as for example, with regard to the causes of anger and its handling. "It may be necessary to restrain anger, but we must be careful not to make the child feel guilty or wicked for feeling angry," a remark which, incidentally, may serve to allay the emotional disturbances of adults who, in dealing with small children, find their own impulses to anger acutely stimulated.

The book covers many aspects of child care and development—the planning of a child's day; play in relation to thinking, feeling and muscular control; unsettled behaviour; friendliness and discipline. It has the charm of simple language and clear thinking, while the advice given is clearly based on good observation and deduction.

A.T.A.

Practical Psychology Handbooks. Nos. 19 and 21. Published by *The Psychologist*, 1 Southampton Street, W.C.2.

No. 19—The Parents' Problem, or How to tell Children about Sex. By R. Macdonald Ladell, M.B., Ch.B. Pp. 48. 1s.

Most well-adjusted parents would agree that when children ask questions about sex they should be given true and satisfactory answers suitable to their stage of