

IN THIS ISSUE

THE great and growing interest in mental disorders, especially in their prevention, has stimulated much epidemiological research designed to obtain evidence on the causes of different kinds of mental disorders which can be the basis for developing preventive programs. Aware of this interest and of the many recent studies which have evaluated data on associations between a variety of factors and mental disorder, in 1959 the Milbank Memorial Fund sponsored a Round Table meeting at Arden House, at which present knowledge about causation of mental disorder was discussed. In preparation for this meeting, eight distinguished authorities were asked to prepare review articles summarizing the evidence relating to different kinds of causes which had been thought to lead to mental disorders. The papers were distributed to the participants in advance of the meeting. At the meeting, the discussion of each review paper was opened by a previously designated participant; a general discussion followed; and the reviewer then added his own comments on the discussion.

The Fund's formal publication of the Proceedings began in the January 1961 issue of the *Quarterly* (Vol. xxxix, No. 1), and is completed in this issue. Included in these Proceedings are the review papers, the opening discussions, summaries of the subsequent general discussion, and the closing remarks of the authors of the review papers. The first paper of the meeting—"Genetical Etiology in Mental Illness" by Professor Jan A. Böök—was printed separately from the Proceedings series in the July 1960 issue of the *Quarterly* (xxxviii, No. 3), so that, unfortunately, the discussion of the paper was not published at that time. However, this material will be added to the Proceedings which will be collected in a volume entitled: **CAUSES OF MENTAL DISORDERS: A REVIEW OF EPIDEMIOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE, 1959**, sometime in the latter part of 1961.

The reader is referred to the January 1961 issue of the *Quarterly* for a brief introductory statement outlining the objectives of the meeting and for the abstracts of all of the review articles presented at the meeting.

Two of the review papers, together with their discussion, will be found in this issue:

Social Change and Mental Health

H. B. M. Murphy, M.D.

Since the Enlightenment it has been repeatedly claimed that rapid social change was productive of mental disorders. The evidence advanced in support of this thesis is separated into two concepts: 1. Change as a specific factor in the production of certain cases of mental disorder. 2. Change that is disturbing to everyone but which produces a clinical form of the illness only in presently or potentially sick persons. This extensive review of the very large literature on migrating populations and populations undergoing social change now permits one to ask many different and more precise questions. Dr. Murphy concludes that non-Western peoples undergoing Westernization show an increase in identified psychopathology. However, whether this is due to an increase in prevalence or to improved facilities or other factors is not clear. The problems of investigating these questions are dealt with at some length.

Cultures as Causative of Mental Disorder

Alexander H. Leighton, M.D.

Eleven different ways in which culture is thought to increase the frequency of particular mental disorder is examined and a review of the evidence for each type of linkage is examined separately. This classification is expounded together with examples of studies, no one definitive, which are directed at testing each theory. The fact that a global, cross-cultural classification of mental disorders does not exist is discussed as a gap in the technical resources for studying these issues.



The decrease in dental caries for Norwegian school children during the War years and the increase in the post-war period

have been described by Professor Guttorm Toverud, in three articles on "The Influence of War and Postwar Conditions on the Teeth of Norwegian School Children" which were published in the *Quarterly*. In this issue, a fourth article on "Caries in Specific Surfaces of the Permanent Teeth" by Guttorm Toverud, Louis Rubal and Dorothy G. Wiehl extends the analysis to a consideration of changes in caries activity in each surface of the permanent teeth. Patterns of accumulating caries vary widely for the different teeth and, also, for different surfaces in the same tooth. These patterns are described and the differences in effects of changes in oral conditions on the various surfaces are discussed. In young teeth, that is, in teeth at an early post-eruptive age, caries activity was affected very soon after new conditions became operative. In older teeth, such as incisors and first molars of 12 and 13 year-old children, the previous caries accumulation in the most susceptible surfaces kept the caries prevalence in these surfaces at a high level for several years after war conditions had affected other surfaces. In first molars of these older children, caries rates for occlusal surfaces showed no reduction until the post-war years, but sharp reductions occurred in the mesial and distal surfaces in the second or third year of the War.



A paper presented in this issue "Age Heaping in the United States Census: 1880-1950" is a description of the techniques used and the results obtained by Dr. Melvin Zelnik in his effort to diagnose and apply corrections to the tendency for people to report their ages to census enumerators in round numbers or in certain even numbers. This task was carried out as a means toward another objective—that of securing reasonably correct single-year age distributions in past censuses in order to estimate the annual births and birth rates in the period before the birth registration areas included all the states. The larger job is the subject of a recently completed doctoral dissertation by the author; the present job represents a revised chapter in that thesis.