

GENERAL SCIENCE

Poor Spiritual Health

► THE DISEASE threatening the nation today is spiritual, not physical or mental, in the opinion of Dr. Julian P. Price of Florence, S. C.

Dr. Price, a member of the American Medical Association's board of trustees, called on American physicians to fight the spiritual disease afflicting the nation at the association's meeting in Miami, Fla.

Symptoms of this disease, he said, include "laxness of morals in our national government in recent years, the hold which organized vice has upon legislative and social life, increase in crime in our teen-age population, bribery and unethical conduct in amateur athletics, the mad search for pleasure which causes our people to spend four times as much for beverages as they do for religious and welfare activities."

Instead of antibiotics or other so-called wonder drugs, the treatment Dr. Price prescribes is a spiritual one.

"The only remedy which is of any avail—and to this history bears testimony—lies in a change of heart," he said. "It is my sincere belief that the greatest need of our

country today—and of our profession—is a spiritual rebirth, a return to God and to His eternal principles. And the rebirth must come in the heart of the average citizen—and in the average doctor of medicine."

He said some physicians tend to shy away from expressing their convictions publicly, and may be regarded by the public "as individuals of good moral character but men who are lukewarm toward religion itself.

"Our great need today is for every physician," he said, "to let his colleagues and the public know, in clear and unmistakable language, the principles for which he stands and the beliefs which he holds. Only in this way may we hope to set our feet on the road that leads to spiritual health."

He called upon his fellow physicians to combat the nation's spiritual sickness by taking part in government, devoting particular interest to public education, working with boys and girls, and charitable and philanthropic organizations, and having healthy, happy homes of their own.

Science News Letter, December 11, 1954

GERONTOLOGY

Chance of Living to 100

► THE CHANCE of living to 100 years is good for the person who can survive a reversal of biochemical and physical processes at ages 60 to 75, four New York Medical College doctors declared at the clinical meeting of the American Medical Association in Miami, Fla.

The doctors are A. A. Goldbloom, Otto Deutschberger, Irving Chapman and H. B. Eiber.

The aged who are surviving to 100 can be made more comfortable through the use of a combination of two new drugs, chlorpromazine and *Rauwolfia serpentina*, the doctors believe.

An intensive study of 1,000 old people whose ages ranged from 80 to 100 led the four doctors to the following conclusions:

1. Elevated blood pressure readings in the aged are not normal, and they can and should be controlled.

2. Cholesterol and phospholipid concentrations, fatty substances in the blood which contribute to hardening of the arteries, bore no relationship to age.

3. These substances, instead of continuing their anticipated rise, actually dropped after the age of 75.

4. Dilatation of the aorta, main artery of the body, was more frequent until the threshold period, then decreased.

5. The percentage increase of aortic calcification over the preceding decade also reversed itself during the threshold age.

In commenting on these findings, Dr. Eiber said:

"In other words, during the age period 60 to 75, which we refer to as the 'threshold age,' certain biochemical and physical processes reverse, and instead of continuing their upward trend, actually reverse and go down. What the mechanism of this threshold period is, has not been fully worked out, as yet. It is some invisible, not clearly understood barrier.

"Most of us die before reaching that barrier, or while going through it. But, once we get through, our chances of living to be 100 years are good."

Science News Letter, December 11, 1954

Questions

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GENERAL SCIENCE—On what theory are the Russians now attacking Nobelist Linus Pauling? p. 375.

What was the greeting on the first Christmas card? p. 378.

MEDICINE—What is lotio alba used for? p. 375.

NUTRITION—Why do the aged particularly need amino acids? p. 373.

PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY—How can atoms be used to time chemical reactions? p. 377.

PHYSICS—How can a meteorite's age be measured? p. 377.

PSYCHOLOGY—By what illusions can monkeys be fooled? p. 372.

VITAL STATISTICS—What are the chances that one of the parents of young children will die in a year? p. 374.

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