

PSYCHIATRY

# Can Predict Mental Disease From Study of Children

Prediction Makes Possible Early Treatment Which Would Prevent, or at Least Postpone, Mental Breakdown

THE DEVELOPMENT of mental disease can be predicted in advance by psychiatric studies of children, Dr. J. Kasanin and Louise Veo of Boston reported to the annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association in New York.

"We studied eight children who were examined at the Judge Baker Foundation of Boston because of mild conduct disorders, or were sent there for advice about placement and vocation, and who later on in life became psychotic," the investigators reported.

"In most of the cases the development of a personality disorder was foreseen long before the appearance of social criteria of mental disease. We studied the personality of the children as they were observed by the various informants long before there was a suspicion of mental disease."

Dr. Kasanin pointed out the interesting fact that in the small series of cases studied, the various mental diseases were the developments of special personality types.

Prevention of the development of a mental disease or breakdown should logically follow the prediction of it. In most of the cases in the study, the directions for treatment were not followed. Dr. Kasanin and his colleague suggested that greater effort in treatment made both by social agencies and by the individual might have prevented or at least postponed some of the breakdowns in this series.

The Rorschach test, which has been hailed as one of the most promising ways of predicting behavior, was described by Dr. Samuel J. Beck of the Boston Psychopathic Hospital.

The test consists of a set of ten ink blot designs, some black and some colored, designed by a Swiss psychiatrist, Dr. Herman Rorschach. The child being tested looks at the ink blots and tells what he sees in them, butterfly wings or volcanoes or polar bears or whatever they may appear like to him.

From the child's responses the psy-

chiatrist can tell his general intelligence level, personality traits and even what his behavior will be in certain situations.

Dr. Beck has been working with the tests and gave his results with them on a group of problem children. He was able to check these results against the clinical findings in the various cases. In only three out of 37 children tested, the Rorschach results were not substantiated by the clinical findings, so that these three had to be considered faulty diagnoses.

From these tests Dr. Beck concluded that a great majority of a group of problem children are likely to be suffering from anxiety attitudes which are damaging a portion, if not all, of their psychic apparatus.

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PHYSICS

# Hollow Ice Crystals Formed In Famous Kungur Caves

LARGE ice crystals, up to eighteen inches across, can be found at only one spot in the world, at the famous Kungur ice-caves of the Ural mountains, is the claim made by Dr. W. Altberg and W. Troschin in a recent number of the scientific magazine, *Naturwissenschaften*.

Creeping its way along the chill subterranean passages, the expedition of the Hydrological Institute of Leningrad, led by these scientists gasped at the fantastic structures taken by water in these remote grottos. They returned with a priceless set of photographs to share their amazement with the scientific world.

Snowflakes, seen under the microscope as beautiful, delicate six-pointed crystals of very varied designs, will not bear comparison with these strange Russian formations. Hailstones on very



ENORMOUS ICE FLOWERS

*These ice crystals of giant dimensions and fairy-like delicacy were formed as the result of very unusual underground conditions in the caves of the Ural mountains. They owe their beauty to their hollow formation. Some have been found as large as 18 inches in diameter. While nature turns out such huge ice crystals, scientists working in their laboratories have not been able to make one large enough to be seen with the naked eye.*

rare occasions have been found to consist of larger crystals, visible without magnification.

The cave crystals are not compact and solid. They are hollow, and six-angled, with a curious, spiral geometry. They show the intricate tropical forest effects of window-pane frost projected into three dimensions.

The odds against the coincidence of unusual physical circumstances necessary for the growth of large crystals to visible size must be enormous, the Soviet scientists say. Only at one other place on the earth's surface have they been reported and there not permanently.

The ice is deposited like hoarfrost by the cooling of moist air as it passes outwards through the caves. Those of the weird caves, so far explored, 22 in number, stretch in a nearly straight line for a distance of a kilometer. Measure-