

PSYCHIATRY

Hypnosis Urged For Speed-Up Treatment of War Neurosis

Combined With Psychoanalytic Skill It Provides Approach To Ills Caused By Recent Experiences

RECOVERY from war-caused nervous and mental disturbances among both civilians and fighting men can be speeded up by use of hypnosis, Dr. Leslie Farber and Dr. Charles Fisher, psychiatrists on the staff of Chestnut Lodge Sanitarium, told members of the St. Elizabeths Hospital Medical Society in Washington, D. C.

"Now is the time for young psychiatrists to avail themselves of our modern knowledge both of hypnotism and unconscious personality factors," these psychiatrists emphasized again and again.

Just as airplane and munitions manufacturers are giving up hand work on many processes in favor of machine methods that speed production for war, so psychiatrists working under war pressure to return mentally and nervously shocked men to efficient living as rapidly as possible must adopt short-cut methods of treatment, explained Dr. Farber.

He warned that hypnosis is only a means toward treatment, not the treatment itself. But when combined with modern psychoanalytic skill and knowledge, it can be a much more effective short-cut to treatment than it proved to be in the first World War.

"Nervous and mental breakdowns due to war conditions," said Dr. Farber, "lend themselves to short cuts in treatment because their precipitating cause is in the recent past, rather than in childhood. Hypnosis provides a quick method of uncovering recent conflicts and integrating them into the conscious personality."

Dr. Fisher described some of the experiments of recent investigators who have successfully combined psychoanalytic insight and techniques with hypnosis, to produce cures. Even cures of deep-seated childhood conflicts have been reported. Several cases, including depression, phobias, migraine headaches and sexual difficulties, have yielded themselves to a rapid course of psychoanalytic treatment carried out through hypnosis.

"During the last War," Dr. Farber

told the psychiatrists at St. Elizabeths, "hypnosis was used with few exceptions as a kind of magic." He mentioned Dr. Ernest Simmel of Los Angeles as an outstanding exception.

"Like Dr. Coue, these early psychiatrists believed that hypnotic suggestion was enough to produce a miraculous cure. Even today there are many popular hypnotists who imagine they are curing people by commanding their symptoms to disappear.

"In many cases this works temporarily," explained Dr. Farber. "Under hypnosis people are extraordinarily suggestible and will obey the hypnotist in so far as they are able. They will not of course do anything dangerous or alien to their moral code. This has been demonstrated in a recent series of experiments.

"You can suggest, however, to a paralyzed patient that he is able to walk and if his paralysis is due to some unconscious psychological cause, he may astonish you by getting up and walking.

"Many forms of faith-healing," said

Dr. Farber, "owe their success to a superficial or temporary removal of certain symptoms, while leaving the fundamental causes in the personality unchanged.

"The fault is not so much with suggestion itself as with the type of suggestions given. The more skill and knowledge the hypnotist has, the more thorough and effective will be the treatment. Getting rid of a symptom is not enough."

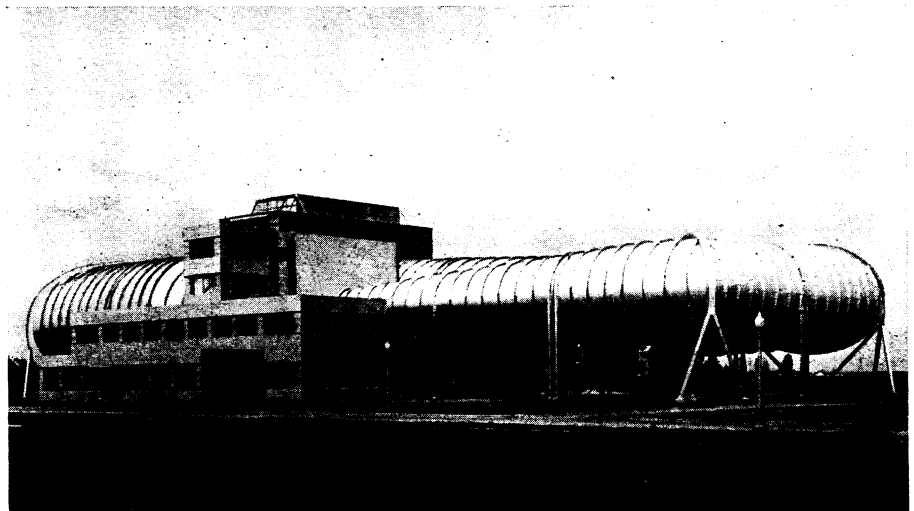
Science News Letter, February 14, 1942

PHYSIOLOGY

Average Person Can Give Blood Every Three Months

THE average healthy man or woman can safely give blood to blood and plasma banks for transfusions every three months, it appears from a report by Dr. Willis M. Fowler and Dr. Adelaide P. Barer, of the State University of Iowa College of Medicine (*Journal, American Medical Association, Feb. 7.*)

Second, third and subsequent donations to blood banks can be safely given as soon as the hemoglobin, the red coloring matter of the blood, has returned to normal. The average time for this after a donation of about one pint of blood is between 49 and 50 days, the Iowa investigators found from a study of 200 medical students, resident doctors and hospital employees. However, this can only be told by the blood test and the average healthy donor is likely to feel



NEW WIND TUNNEL

This 16-foot high-speed wind tunnel of the Ames Aeronautical Laboratory is devoted to urgent war problems. With another new wind tunnel at Langley Laboratory, this represents a 100 per cent increase in facilities for this purpose. Other wind tunnels are being constructed which will provide another 100 per cent expansion.