

PSYCHIATRY

Not Due to War Tension

Increasing child delinquency problem is blamed on lack of public funds for services, not on war nerves or war-shattered homes.

➤ JUVENILE delinquency during war time should get priorities in thinking, in activities to meet it and in the public funds, Dr. Max Winsor, of the Bureau of Child Guidance, New York City, declared at the meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association in New York.

The major part of the increase in delinquency since the war is not due to war tension and disrupted homes and families. It is due, Dr. Winsor charged, to the way pressure groups and taxpayers' associations have used, or abused, the idea of war economy to cut public funds for services to meet the delinquency problems held over from before Pearl Harbor as well as those arising since then.

Delinquency in New York City had decreased 56% between 1930 and 1940. But by September, 1942, it had increased 23% over the 1941 figure for white children from 7 to 15 years old, Dr. Winsor reported. Especially amazing, he pointed out, was the increase of 33% in delinquency among girls. The rise in delinquency among Negro children was much more moderate, reflecting the increased economic opportunities opening to Negroes during the war. Other communities, it is believed, are facing similar increases in juvenile delinquency since the war.

Delinquency, Dr. Winsor said, is a symptom of social disease. Its threat is especially dangerous in war, but this is true of all delinquency, not just that part occasioned by the war.

Some of the personnel of welfare agen-

cies, probation departments and schools and institutions must be lost to the armed forces. There is, however, no real manpower or womanpower shortage in this field, Dr. Winsor said. The root of the difficulty is the lack of public funds appropriated to employ the necessary personnel.

When fathers go off to war and mothers go into war industry and family incomes are reduced, we should see a strengthening, not a weakening of, school and recreational facilities, welfare and probation departments, to fill the gaps in caring for growing children. The delinquent child who gets only perfunctory, inadequate treatment from juvenile aid and probation services, who is referred to an institution but cannot be admitted because there is no room, not only fails to get adequate treatment but is confirmed in his delinquent ways by learning that nothing will happen if he continues to play truant from school, or to steal or engage in harmful gang activities.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1943

Lesson in Democracy

➤ RATIONING provides "the best opportunity since pioneer days" to show growing children the "importance of individual responsibility without which no democracy can exist," Dr. Helen Ross, of the Institute of Psychoanalysis, Chicago, declared.

Parents and other grown-ups can show children, by the way they meet the discomforts, inconveniences and temptations

● RADIO

Saturday, April 17, 1:30 p.m., EWT

"Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over Columbia Broadcasting System.

Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of Harvard College Observatory, will speak on "Science from Shipboard."

Monday, April 12, 9:15 a.m., EWT; 2:30 p.m., CWT; 9:30 a.m., MWT; and 1:30 p.m., PWT

Science at Work, School of the Air of the Americas over the Columbia Broadcasting System, presented in cooperation with the National Education Association, Science Service and Science Clubs of America.

"Pooling Ideas" will be the subject of the program.

to evade rationing, the way to become self-reliant, responsible members of the community. Between six and ten years of age, children put a high premium on self-importance. This need for achieving the status of an independent person, Dr. Ross said, can be capitalized on, through the parents' attitude toward rationing, to instil into the child the dignity of man.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1943

MEDICINE

Surgeons Will Sew Wounds With Nylon Sutures

➤ NYLON SUTURES will be used by surgeons this year to sew war wounds, replacing Jap silk formerly used, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company announced.

Millions of feet of the plastic filament formerly produced for tennis racquets and fishing leaders are now being made for surgical sutures and large quantities are being shipped to United Nations' medical depots throughout the world.

Nylon filaments are solid strands, in contrast to braided silk sutures. It is claimed that germs from infected tissue are not absorbed and cannot travel through the nylon as through braid.

The synthetic is also inert, non-irritating and does not fray or splinter, the company reports.

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