

PSYCHIATRY

Germany is Curable

Psychiatrist prescribes proper treatment of the paranoid condition that he says has affected Germany for at least five generations.

► **RX FOR permanent world peace:** Recognize and treat the paranoid condition from which Germany has suffered for at least five generations.

That prescription by Dr. Richard M. Brickner, neuropsychiatrist and assistant professor at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, is presented in non-technical terms in his book, just off the press, *Is Germany Incurable?* (Lippincott).

The answer to the question is no. The individual paranoid patient can be cured and, Dr. Brickner believes, so can a nation.

First step is to make the diagnosis. The world at large must learn to recognize that Germany's troubles are not merely matters of economic disadvantages, population pressures, "encirclement" or all the other conditions of which Germans have complained in martyred tones since before the first World War. The Atlantic Charter will fail, as the Versailles Treaty failed, if it is left to be the sole basis for post-war planning, without taking into account the paranoid behavior of the German people for generations.

Second step is treatment. For the paranoid patient this starts with the "clear area" in his distorted personality, the part that is not completely taken up with ideas of his own importance, his need to prove his superiority and to protect himself, by murder if necessary, from the jealous plottings of those around him. In Germany this clear area, Dr. Brickner believes, can still be found

in those people who have not entirely succumbed to the paranoid trend, "catching" as it is.

Such people must be found, encouraged in their non-paranoid ways, and put in charge of all institutions in Germany, from schools to street-cleaning, so as to prevent these from being used to keep the paranoid trend going, as they were during the Weimar Republic.

The Atlantic Charter helps here by assuring that the population will learn to associate tangible rewards, such as food and jobs, with non-paranoid behavior.

Treating a paranoid patient is a long, hard job, as any psychiatrist can testify. Treating a paranoid nation or population group will be equally long and hard, but must be undertaken by the rest of the world for its own preservation.

"If the adherents of democracy can be persuaded of their appalling peril," writes Dr. Brickner, "much can be done to avert it. But this time we shall have to remove blinders and rose-colored spectacles and consign them to the scrapheap for good.

"We must learn once and for all that in dealing with paranoid behavior, isolationism exists only in fancy—once a paranoid has seen you, your isolation is over."

Science News Letter, June 5, 1943

PSYCHIATRY

Hypnotism Again Used In Treatment of Mentally Ill

► **HOPEFUL RESULTS** from new use of an old tool for treating mentally sick persons were reported by Dr. Merton M. Gill and Dr. Margaret Brenman of the Menninger Clinic, Topeka, Kans., at the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in Detroit.

The tool is hypnotism, but its new use is far different from the common idea of a Svengali using hypnotism to subdue and control another person. When the doctors use hypnotism the patient knows he will not be forced to submit but can move around freely, pound the table and talk back if he feels like it; also there

will be no danger of his forgetting what he said while the doctor remembers it. Hypnotism is being tried, the doctors explained, because for some reason not yet understood a person while hypnotized can remember not only forgotten events but forgotten ideas and attitudes. These ideas and attitudes may be the reasons for his fears and difficulties, and the peculiar behavior which make other people label him crazy or mentally sick. Once he realizes why he is acting the strange way he does, he may be able to reorganize his ideas and attitudes, both conscious and unconscious, to fit the pattern of life demanded by modern society.

The Topeka doctors have used hypnosis in a number of patients with apparently good results but state that it is too soon after the treatment to be sure of its final value. They do believe, however, that their results justify further study of the method, particularly as it achieves results fairly rapidly compared to other methods.

Science News Letter, June 5, 1943

MEDICINE

Too Much Fat in Diet Injures Red Blood Cells

► **COMES** the post-war day when you can once more get all the thick whipping cream you want, your doctor may be advising you to go slow on it to avoid anemia.

Drinking one pint of 32% cream causes human blood serum to become injurious to the red cells of the blood, making them more fragile and more easily destroyed. This discovery and its implications are announced by Prof. Victor Johnson, Dr. Joan Longini and Dr. L. Willard Freeman of the University of Chicago (*Science*, April 30).

The extra blood destruction resulting from taking a lot of fat or cream seems to be insufficient, the scientists state, to produce anemia in normal persons whose bone marrow is capable of replacing the extra red blood cell losses. It remains to be determined, however, whether: 1. Building new red cells after blood loss through hemorrhage, when the bone marrow blood cell factory is excessively taxed, might be hastened by a low fat diet or retarded by a high fat diet. 2. Abnormalities in fat absorption or abnormal sensitivity of the cells to the injurious substance might help produce certain anemias not associated with hemorrhage or blood loss.

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WYOMING

Yes, even **THIS** summer you may fish in its mountain streams, ride horseback through its hills and canyons, find Indian relics and marine fossils in a region of great historical and geologic interest.

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