

PSYCHIATRY

Incurable Patient Recovers

► THE "swift and dramatic" recovery of a 72-year-old woman who had been kept in a locked ward of Topeka State Hospital in Topeka, Kans., for 17 years as incurably insane was reported by Dr. James M. Mott, Jr., staff psychiatrist at the hospital.

The recovery was not the result of any specific treatment, such as electroshock or medicines. Instead it seems to have resulted from a change in the regimen at the hospital and a new staff of doctors who looked on all the patients as potentially curable.

The patient had been sent to the hospital at the age of 55 after she had tried to kill her husband. A year before that she had shown delusions and other signs of serious mental illness. All the years she was in the hospital she continued to have delusions that people were plotting against her and trying to prevent her being paroled to leave the hospital. She worked willingly and expertly in the sewing room and was very likeable, but made a nuisance of herself to patients and attendants because of shouted harangues about the gangs she thought were plotting against her.

The fact that Dr. Mott looked on her as a patient who might recover, even though she had been considered incurable for 17 years, and treated her in that way in every interview apparently was what brought about her recovery. Previously a doctor had told her, she related, that "she might as well make up her mind she was going to be in the hospital the rest of her life, and to settle down and make as happy an adjustment as she could." She was so isolated from the world that she did not even know about red and green stop lights on city streets.

Dr. Mott soon after his first contact with her took seriously her desire to leave the hospital. He began discussing some reality factors involved in her discharge, such as where she would live, arrangements for weekly visits to the hospital, and the like. He also pointed out, and she readily agreed, that most people thought much of what she said and did was "crazy" because they did not understand her. He persuaded her gradually not to talk about the "plotting criminals" except to him.

She gradually stopped having hallucinations, began going down town, at first with a companion, and after about six months of Dr. Mott's treatment began applying for jobs. Within eight months she was able to take a job as housekeeper for an elderly woman with heart trouble. After that woman died, the doctor who had cared for her and her relatives gave Dr. Mott's patient excellent recommendations which helped her to find another job where she is now working satisfactorily.

Although she has only been out of the hospital six months, and therefore

cannot be considered "cured," her recovery suggests, Dr. Mott thinks, that a similar attitude of expecting recovery should be taken toward the thousands of other patients in mental hospitals who are now labelled incurably insane.

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ENTOMOLOGY

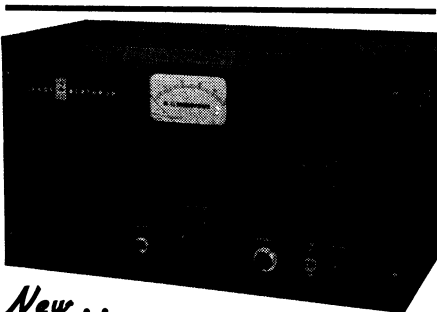
Cannibal Mosquito Preys On "Carrier" Cousin

► HAWAIIAN scientists are experimenting with a "cannibal mosquito" from Africa which feeds on its blood-sucking and disease-carrying cousins, trying to work out a program to control mosquito-borne diseases.

The beneficial insects, known technically as *Megarhinus brevipalpus*, are being cultivated and tested in a special breeding colony. They were imported by the Territorial Board of Health from the South African Institute for Medical Research.

The cannibal mosquito does not attack man or animals, entomologists say. But when it breeds in the same waters as more dangerous mosquitos, the larvae eat the young, blood-sucking variety.

One variety of cannibal mosquito was im-



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ported into Hawaii in 1929 from the island of New Britain. These all died, however, before any practical tests could be undertaken. The African variety is believed to be sturdier.

Dr. C. E. Pemberton, entomologist of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association experiment station, said the new variety has certain characteristics, different from the New Britain species, which may enable it to thrive under Hawaiian conditions.

If the experiment is successful, scientists in Honolulu are hopeful that the mosquito ally will help control such mosquito-borne diseases as yellow fever and dengue fever.

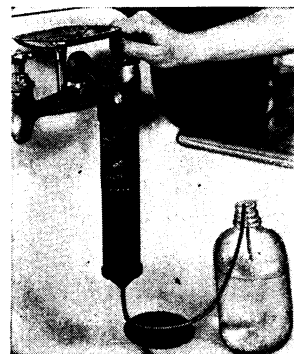
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