

PSYCHIATRY

Wounded Show Mental Ills

► MANY OF the marines and soldiers wounded in Korea have been showing symptoms of mental disturbance. Sometimes these were so severe that the men had to be transferred to psychiatric wards, three Army and Navy psychiatrists reported to the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Cincinnati.

The irritability, restlessness, depression and pain shown by these wounded seriously complicated their treatment and convalescence.

Interviews with about 90 of the men showed that there were four chief factors causing these symptoms of mental disturbances: 1. emotional and family problems of long standing that had been activated by the anxieties of combat; 2. prolonged symptoms of anxiety, restlessness, startle reaction and battle dreams directly related to combat; 3. disturbances due to

the nature of the wounds themselves, some of which involved losing arms or legs, and to the problems of future adaptation; 4. reaction to the prolonged, painful and monotonous nature of the operations and treatment which in some cases would extend to two years.

These patients were very much improved, both mentally and physically, when the psychiatrist and orthopedic surgeon worked together in the surgical wards, instead of having the patient sent to the psychiatric clinic or ward.

Alertness to the problems of these patients now, the three doctors stated, will reduce the possibility of later mental breakdowns. The doctors reporting were: Dr. Douglas Noble, consultant at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md., Capt. Douglas B. Price, U. S. Army, and Comdr. Marion E. Roudebush.

Science News Letter, May 19, 1951

MEDICINE

Cancer in Men Increases

► CANCER IS on the increase, especially among men. This is the case for the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Ga., first area where a National Cancer Institute survey has been completed.

Surveys in New Orleans, Birmingham, Dallas, San Francisco, Denver, Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia have been made and the statistical reports are now being prepared.

By the end of this year the U. S. Public Health Service and its National Cancer Institute hope to know whether the disease is increasing or decreasing throughout the nation. Present statistics on how many peo-

ple have cancer, the basis for most cancer control and research activities, were compiled during the two-year period, 1937 to 1939. The new survey figures cover the years 1947 and 1948.

In the Atlanta area the rate at which cancer attacks has increased from 313 per 100,000 population in 1937 to 340 per 100,000 in 1947. The relative increase was much larger among males than females, from 176 to 212 per 100,000 (21%) among males, but from 250 to 259 (4%) among females. The death rate increased from 73 to 99 per 100,000.

The increasing age of the population

throughout the nation and improved case finding and reporting by physicians and others are credited with the increase.

Questions also to be answered by the surveys, Surgeon General Leonard A. Scheele of Public Health Service said, are: Is lung cancer on the increase? Are certain areas of the country "heavier" cancer areas than others? What age groups are most likely to develop certain types of cancer?

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