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Advances in Psychiatry

(Continued from page 340)

➤ **YOUNG MEN** were literally driven out of their minds by isolation, similar to that used in brainwashing, in an experiment reported to the meeting.

In the experiment, conducted at Harvard Medical School, young men volunteers were kept confined to an iron lung for a maximum of 36 hours. No drugs were administered, but the volunteers lost track of time and saw brightly colored visions which sometimes terrified them.

The volunteer lay on his back in semi-darkness. Movement of his arms and legs was restricted. He could not see any part of his body—he could see nothing, in fact, but a small patch of ceiling directly overhead. He could hear nothing but the dull, monotonous sound of the respirator motor.

An observer stayed with him all the time but never spoke. He did, however, feed the volunteer and take care of all his bodily needs.

Most of the volunteers were unable to endure the experiment for the 36-hour maximum. It was impossible for them to concentrate and think clearly. A few became panic-stricken.

In general, the personality structure of the individual appeared to determine just what reaction he would have to the experience.

The experiment was conducted by Drs. Donald Wexler, assistant in psychiatry, Jack H. Mendelson and P. Herbert Leiderman, teaching fellows in psychiatry, and Philip Solomon, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry, all of Harvard Medical School.

Mentally Ill

➤ **A VERY SMALL** percentage of the mentally ill are getting treatment.

At least this seems to be indicated by a study of a small town.

Dr. William D. Longaker and Frank W. Young, research associates at Cornell University, described a study in which a probability sample of the whole population of a small town was surveyed for psychiatric symptoms. Health data were collected by questionnaires, interviews with local physicians and from hospital records.

Only two percent of those in the community who were found to have psychiatric symptoms had gone as patients to the one and only psychiatric clinic in the town.

Naturally, those who had sought treatment were more seriously ill than those who had not, but all those considered to be showing psychiatric symptoms had at least 10% impairment.

Science News Letter, June 1, 1957

MEDICINE

Gin and Tonic "Allergy"

➤ **THE RECENTLY POPULAR** drink, gin and tonic, can pack an awful wallop if you happen to be sensitive to quinine, Drs. Frederick G. Novy Jr. and Gordon R. Lamb, Oakland, Calif., report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (May 4).

Many people do not tolerate quinine and even small solutions of it can bring on headaches, deafness, dizziness, vomiting and most commonly skin eruptions.

One unwary drinker found himself at a cocktail party at which gin and tonic was the only drink served. Although he happened to know he was sensitive to quinine, he had five or six drinks over a three-hour period and ended up flat on his back in a hospital 48 hours later.

The gin and tonic drinker noticed a burning sensation in his hands, feet and groin two hours after the party. From then on the skin eruption progressed to nearly all of his body and when he was hospitalized his facial features had swollen beyond recognition.

Another man who had been drinking six to eight gin and tonics a day over a long period began to lose his hearing and notice strange sounds in his head. At first,

a brain tumor was suspected and it was thought surgery might be necessary. A general examination before the operation, though, revealed the patient's drinking habits and he was immediately taken off the drink. After that, all his symptoms disappeared.

The doctors suggest a change in the old saying of skin specialists "New drugs, new eruptions," by adding "New drinks, new eruptions."

Science News Letter, June 1, 1957

Do You Know?

In the atmosphere of *Saturn* clouds as large as the entire earth can be detected about once a decade.

More than 300 strains of *corn* from the far corners of the world have been gathered as possible sources of rust disease resistance for breeding into modern corn hybrids.

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