

weapons, whose production would present little or no problems for industry. I realize that some degree of complexity in military weapons is inescapable but, frankly, I believe that there are too many complicated weapons in the Army."

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## PSYCHIATRY

## Healthy Mental Growth Depends Upon the Parents

**H**APPINESS and a successful adjustment to what life requires depends, psychiatrists tell us, on two factors—our own hereditary predisposition and the influence of our parents and homes.

Failure, emotional underdevelopment, antagonisms, fears, and breakdowns can be traced to innate weaknesses and to the stunting influence of an unfavorable home.

Parents influence the development of the child not so much by conscious instruction as by providing an example of healthy adulthood. They act as a catalyzer in the process of growing up and of transmuting the infant's love of self into an attachment for others.

In a home where the father is effeminate and "tied to his mother's apron strings" or where the mother acts the part of a spoiled child, a young boy or girl cannot hope for normal growth. When such a handicapped child marries he is in his turn unfit for parenthood.

The consequences of such a vicious circle of maladjustment were emphasized by Dr. Bernard Glueck, New York psychiatrist. To wait until a child has become the victim of his own maladjustment to remedy the situation is just shutting the barn door after the horse has been stolen, he pointed out.

When the importance of the family in the destiny of the child is genuinely appreciated, he said, the best educational enterprises of society must inevitably be focussed upon deliberate preparation of the individual for marriage and parenthood.

"The personalities and conduct of the parents," he declared, "and the home setting created by them and the other members of the household, constitute the most important forces for good or evil which can affect the child's growth and adjustment."

Although the personalities of parents are, unfortunately, pretty much fixed unalterably in their own childhood, we can with our increasing knowledge little by little modify our homes so that each generation has a better chance than had their forebears.

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## PSYCHIATRY

## Mental Breakdowns Occur On the African Veld, Too

**N**EW EVIDENCE for a similarity between the minds of men in dark-est Africa and residents in the capital city of the United States was seen when a film taken in a mental hospital of South Africa was shown before an audience of anthropologists in Washington.

Mental breakdown occurs on the Veld as it does in the modern metropolis. And the mentally ill are considered "queer" by their neighbors in primitive society just as they are in civilization.

Bantu patients coming to the mental hospital in Africa bear evidence of never having taken part in the rites introducing them to manhood. Many have never been taken into the tribes as adults, presumably because it was recognized that they were not acceptable.

Neither had they taken part in the usual social customs of the tribe. Among the Bantus, the boys and girls customarily take part in a sort of courtship custom not unlike the old New England custom of "bundling." But Dr. J. B. F.

Laubscher, the psychiatrist who filmed these African mental patients, found that many of them had never been able to attain such terms of intimacy with any girl in the tribe.

Those who consider mental breakdown to be the result of the excessive strains of modern civilized life may find food for thought in the faces of the Bantu actors in Dr. Laubscher's real-life film drama. The patients in this far-away African hospital can be matched, case for case, in St. Elizabeth's Hospital at Washington, D. C. The amazing similarity of symptoms was pointed out by Dr. Winfred Overholser, St. Elizabeth's superintendent.

On the veld as in Washington, you may see men beating on their breasts or heads in the curious stereotyped gestures of the schizophrenic. You may see the tremors of the encephalitis lethargica victim. And you may see epileptics. Paranoid cases are not, however, so common among these primitive people.

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## ARCHAEOLOGY

## Old Romans Started Idea Of Family Portraits

**A**NCIENT Romans started the idea of family portraits.

People today look curiously at a family album of daguerreotypes, as something quite old in family groups. Tourists in European castles are impressed by the rows of ancestral portraits.

But to see the custom at its start, go back to ancient Rome. Noble Romans paraded the sculptured busts of their ancestors, literally paraded them. These proofs of their aristocratic lineage were brought out and marched along in funeral processions of distinguished dead.

Romans with pride in their family trees not only originated the portrait bust but also the family gallery, and the family group.

Exploring the reason for making family pictures, in the first place, a German scientist, Prof. Erich Bethe of the University of Leipzig, has traced the idea to a barbaric source.

Primitive man, including Romans in

their early history, believed that the soul of a dead person had great power to bestow good luck or bad on surviving members of the family.

Early Romans probably had this in mind, Prof. Bethe believes, when they buried the head of the family in the house itself, at his death. As he was the outstanding member of the family, his spiritual power was a special heritage.

There may have been other reasons also for this gruesome way of burial. At any rate, it continued until the Romans acquired higher standards of sanitation and placed cemeteries apart from their homes.

But belief that the soul lived on, influencing the Roman family, persisted. As the head was the most important feature of the human body, the Romans came to accept a death mask or portrait as a substitute for the ancestor's real presence in the house.

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