

The Spirit in Which Applicants for Training in Psychiatry Will Be Welcomed

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By Edith K. Dunton

IN a few weeks five war emergency summer courses will be in operation at our five biggest colleges for women. Each college has chosen her plan in accordance with her particular interest or particular resources. Vassar's "Plattsburg" for nurses will be the biggest school: a college's splendid answer to the Red



Miss Jarrett

In charge of the Smith College Psychopathic Hospital School for mental nurses

Cross cry for nurses, nurses and more nurses. Mount Holyoke's project involves the training of a smaller group of women, especially fitted by education and experience to profit by an intensive course in the supervision of the health of women workers, particularly in munition and other war industries. This course is given by request of the ordnance department, women's branch of the industrial service section. Bryn Mawr, with an economics endowment and her nearness to Philadelphia as assets, has devised an eight months' course including lecture and field work in com-

great number of instances of hysteria, neurasthenia and psychoneurosis caused by the awful sounds and sights of the battle, front has caused a popular sympathy which has never been extended to victims of the

same kind of disorders in civil life.

The fellow whose nerves were shattered by spending days and nights among the bursting obus gets commiseration—quite rightly—such that everybody says he ought to have special psychiatric treatment if the specialists think that may do him good.

Out of the success of such treatment may grow a new readiness to do something for the "imaginative" fellow who merely once had a finger or two pulled off in a calculating machine, and who is felt by his family to be a good deal of a "cry baby" because he is still "nervous" a year or two later.

So the Smith training school, though primarily a war emergency school, is really something more than just that. While war lasts for some months or even years after it the workers who hold the certificate of the school may normally expect to be employed among shell-shocked soldiers; after that in many walks of civilian life where the social worker with a knowledge of psychology and psychiatry may be valuable, even invaluable.

Enter the New Kind of Nurse

The course is not a long one, as preparation for responsible employment goes. It totals eight weeks. The academic instruction will be given at Northampton, July 8-Aug. 31. Admission is contingent upon the applicant's agreement to complete the entire course with six months of practice work following immediately upon the eight weeks at the college. The practice will be given at various centres where there are opportunities for social work with psychiatric cases under direction of trained social workers. The major studies in the academic course will be sociology, including methods of social case work, psychology and social psychiatry. Minor studies will include hygiene; occupational therapy, military usage and the writing of records and reports. The candidates, of course, for this kind of work will be carefully hand-picked.

There are good names connected with this undertaking to respond to the shell-shocked soldier's "S. O. S." At the head of the committee is Dr. Southard, director of the Psychopathic Hospital in this city, and fertile in eutheic and eugenic plans for betterment of the human stock. President Neilson of Smith has taken keen personal interest in this war work which will have its focus at his college. The other members are Walter L. Fernald, M. D., director of the school for feeble minded at Waverley, William L. Russell, M. D., New York, and L. Pierce Clark, M. D., New York.

The lecturers of the opening session make up a quite formidable list, being: Professors F. Stuart Chapin, sociologist, and David Camp Rogers, psychologist, of the Smith faculty; Miss Ruth Swan Clark, instructor in psychology, Smith; Dr. Edith R. Spaulding, director of the psychopathic hospital reformatory, Bedford Hills, N. Y.; Dr. Southard; Dr. Bernard Glueck, director psychiatric clinic, Sing Sing prison; Drs. Clark and Fernald, just mentioned; Dr. William L. Russell, medical superintendent Bloomingdale Hospital, White Plains, N. Y.; Dr. Herman M. Adler, State criminologist of the State of Illinois and Director Juvenile Psychopathic Institute, Chicago; Dr. John A. Houston, superintendent Northampton State hospital; Captain Frankwood E. Williams, division of reconstruction, Surgeon-General's office; Mrs. E. E. Southard, lecturer Wellesley College; Drs. Lawson G. Lowrey, chief of staff, and Abraham Meyerson, chief of out-patient department, Boston Psychopathic Hospital; George A. Hastings, assistant on war work, national committee on mental hygiene; Dr. Josephine N. Curtis, chief psychologist, Boston Psychopathic Hospital.

Plenty of Hope

"Few of us will ever get back to normal mental life," said a Belgian officer to Dr. Southard at Washington the other day.

"Yes, you will," replied the more optimistic American. "The powers of mental recuperation of the average individual are

known to be 'shell-shock,' the physician

still has to sit right down and find out what is the matter with the man.

"Yet, for all its looseness of meaning, the word is not a dangerous one and it does well enough to indicate a lot of troubled conditions that are abnormally numerous among the fighting men at the front but that we always have with us in considerable numbers in civil life.

It's a Great Reconstruction Work

"The incapacitating effects of the various troubles that are roughly grouped under the term 'shell-shock' are sufficiently serious to demand the training of a special class of social workers. That is the point of the courses which are to be given this coming summer. The women's colleges are inclined each to undertake some form of war work for which it is specially adapted.

"Smith College, which has already won a great name through its unit in France, seems to be particularly well fitted through its psychological department and the facilities of the Northampton State Hospital, to cooperate with the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, in offering this instruction. We believe that this is the beginning of training for which there will be a permanent demand after the war, for 'shell-shock' occurs right along in industrial life and the means of coping with it have thus far been only very slightly developed."

Ante Bellum "Shell-Shock"

Long before a shot was fired in the present war the Psychopathic Hospital, as an examination of a few of its ever-fascinating card records will prove, was collecting data among the victims of shell-shock who may never have smelled gunpowder in their lives. Several typical cases of this sort have lately been published by Mary C. Jarrett, chief of social service at the hospital and director of the forthcoming summer work, in the magazine *Medicine and Surgery*.

An Italian laborer, bed-ridden for two years past because six years ago he hurt his leg by jumping from a moving car, is one of Miss Jarrett's pet instances of high cost to one's family of being shell-shocked.

There is really not much of anything the matter with this good fellow now except

that no one has been able to separate him from his fixed idea that he cannot walk. His leg was rather badly hurt at the time—a fracture of the tibia, which healed duly. Still, however, the chap complained of pain and stiffness in the leg, and for three years he was able only to do a little light work as caretaker on an estate. In the past two years he has sat at home doing nothing. He attempted suicide once because he could not endure his pains. He threatened to cut his leg off with an axe. His family sought out a physician who agreed to cut the leg off. Then the former employer intervened and sent the man to the Psychopathic. Examination of the leg by several physicians disclosed nothing whatever the matter with it. The owner's case was simply one of traumatic neurosis. It was recommended that he go to one of the State hospitals for voluntary treatment, but he refused to do so. Instead he went home, and there, a great, healthy hulk of a fellow, much sounder than the average, he spends nearly all his time in bed. If he could have had psychiatric treatment soon after experiencing his shock he might have been saved for many years of industrious effort.

The Shocks of Peace

How an industrial accident, giving a shock similar in general kind to one that a wounded man might receive, may change the character and prospects in life of a previous healthy, industrious worker was illustrated by the case of a single man of thirty-four, earning fourteen dollars a week in a factory until he was badly burned about the head by an open electric wire. After the wounds were healed the man remained very "nervous" and could not sleep. He suffered continually from headaches and backaches, but was not suspected of mental disorder. For two years he was away from work and then he resumed with his old company in an inferior position. Meantime he had begun to act queerly, writing strange things on slips of paper, asserting that people were

Colonel : clinched the point by adding that he could use ten such women immediately, if they were available, for work in military hospitals in this country.

Prevention is a most important part of the American plan for dealing with shell-shock. The "mental hygiene aides" or reconstruction aides, to change to the Government's name for them, who are wanted now are for work in the psychiatric divisions of cantonment hospitals. These are already busy with the care and disposition of men who show abnormal nervous symptoms. Two thousand such men are discharged from our camps monthly, because they show unsteady nerves, particularly susceptible to shock. This surprising estimate of the draft army's nervous calibre suggests that the best we can do at prevention will not more than offset the typically high-strung susceptibility of the American soldier. We are a nation of tens, alert, high-strung men and women. We play hard and we work hard, but we are used to doing both under very easy, comfortable conditions. Herbert L. Pratt of New York, just back from the front, puts the case thus:

"Why cannot we take a leaf out of England's experience? Why are the English women abstaining from wearing mourning? Why is every encouragement given to fettering the officers and men during their leave periods? Because the English women do not mourn their dead as others do, and the English people do not realize the seriousness of war? Not for one minute! It is because they realize that unless they do something to break the seriousness that naturally possesses men's minds in time of war, they will have a nation of lunatics on their hands."

Wanted—Women as Soothing-Power

Now doctor-power is scant for our medical emergency, and nerve-specialist power for the shell-shock cases is scarcer still. If women, older perhaps than the ideal recruit for Vassar's Plattsburg, or unable to take so long a training, or, if young enough for nursing ~~training~~ ^{experience} in social or medical-social work, and equipped with a special combination of tact, mental alertness, sympathy and patience that would make them particularly valuable in an untried or comparatively untried field—if women of special endowment and training can increase doctor power, in hospitals and outside, they will accomplish something vital.

Psychiatrists hold different opinions about the kind and amount of help that a mental hygiene aide can give. All agree that they can conduct correspondence and interviews with the patient's family and friends, in order to supply the doctor with the facts of his mental and social history. This history is generally essential to a diagnosis, and in a military hospital, where all the men come from a distance, getting it will entail laborious correspondence. Some few specialists think they can also help to question the patient, to elicit essential data. Many think that they can help with the psycho-therapy by noting the patient's changing mental condition, getting him to understand what is the trouble and to believe that if he himself tries it will help a cure. Convincing him that he can be cured is very important