

Attitude Changing In North Carolina Toward Those Who Are Mentally Sick

Disease No Disgrace and With Hush-Hush Period Over, More Progress Being Made With Cases Brought Out Into the Open

by William H. Richardson

The public's attitude toward the mentally ill has been greatly modified since the word "insanity" has been thrown into discard and a more charitable and understanding attitude assumed toward the inmates of our institutions for the mentally sick.

The light of hope and reason seems to be breaking at last, now that mental illness definitely has become an object of attack through preventive medicine and a recognized Public Health problem. Within the past few months, Governor Scott has designated the State Board of Health as the State agency in North Carolina which will administer Federal Funds made available in carrying on our mental

health program, together with available State Funds for that purpose. While the organization of a Mental Hygiene program has not been perfected, yet the ground work is being laid for an attack to be waged against mental illness as one of the present and future Public Health problems.

Let us for a moment review the present mental health picture in North Carolina, as it is reflected in our institutions for the mentally ill. According to a recent fact sheet, there are now 9,550 persons hospitalized in this State for mental defects, or illness. This, according to the latest compilation, is just 125 short of the entire available bed capacity of all general hospitals in North Carolina in

May, 1948. Among those in our State institutions are 1,286 feeble minded and 671 epileptics. There were 180 patients who received the first admissions to State hospitals for the mentally ill in February, 1949, alone.

BETTER CARE PROVIDED

North Carolina is now providing more hospital care for its mentally ill than in the past. Its average patient population in 1946 was 7,568 as compared with 8,552 in 1947-48. Furthermore, better care is being given the State's mentally ill. This shown by the fact that there were 6.9 patients per employee in 1946 and only 5.4 patients per employee in 1947-48. The cost of care, largely reflecting the higher cost of living, increased from \$393 per patient in 1946 to \$584 per patient in 1947-48. Physical improvement of State hospital buildings also is being accomplished. Approximately \$14,000,000, including Federal Funds, was made available by the 1947 General Assembly. Purchase of the Camp Butner site and buildings under construction already account for \$4,000,000 of this.

The above reflects investments for care and treatment and not prevention, but it is encouraging to note that more money is being put into this humanitarian service, which naturally means better care of the mentally ill and happier surroundings for them. Hospital care, however, is nothing new. That has been going on in humane states and countries for many decades. North Carolina has not always kept pace with progress in this respect. Hospital care is not enough for the mentally ill, any more than it would constitute a panacea for any other preventable sickness. As was stated earlier, Governor Scott has designated the State Board of Health as the agency to be responsible in North Carolina for the execution of the State's part in the nation-wide Mental Health Program now in progress and for which North Carolina is receiving its proportionate share of Federal Funds, more available for the purpose. While the Board of Health's Mental Hygiene work has not been fully organized, a long range program is being formulated, looking toward attacking mental sickness from a preventive standpoint.

CLINICS IN OPERATION

It is heartening to note that preventive work now is being done through one school social worker and eight mental health clinics partially supported by State and Federal Funds. These are located in two medical schools—two at Duke and one at Bowman Gray—and in Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Wilmington, and Raleigh. Assistance in financing mental health programs has been given by the National Mental Health Act. On a matching basis, North Carolina receives \$100,000 of Federal Funds for training professional workers, and for educational and clinical work.

A partial progress report happily can be made at this time. During the past six months, 1,171 patients have received help through the clinics above referred to. In many instances each patient represents two, three, or four others, who, as parents, teachers and employees, gained a better understanding of themselves and of other children and adults, as the clinic helped them deal with the problems and needs of this one patient. An additional 511 patients are under treatment at this time.

Prevention is said to be comparatively inexpensive. If two-thirds of those admitted to State hospitals in February, alone, remain in hospital care one year—as a conservative estimate of time—it will cost North Carolina \$70,080. This sum would meet the cost of two almost ideal, full-time mental health clinics.

PREVENTION PICTURE BRIGHTER

Up until recently, mental illness had not received the attention it should have received. There was about it a feeling of futility. But, with the advancement of sociological and other studies affecting human behavior, the conviction that mental illness, at least, could be placed in the category of preventable diseases has grown. In other words, we now are, at least, beginning to make a try at it.

Here are some facts to think about. Mental illness is no stigma, neither is it a disgrace. The hush-hush period of talking in whispers belongs to the past as it does in connection with such things as venereal diseases which were never successfully attacked until they were brought out into the open. The time has come when mental illness should be everybody's business because it affects the entire community in one way or another, just like any other illness. In fact, it is more far reaching than any of the simple diseases can ever be.

If any reader has a problem concerning mental illness, he or she is invited to write a card or letter addressed to the State Board of Health in Raleigh and the inquirer will receive information designed to give assistance on any particular problem.

New Circular Issued On Atlas Wheats

The North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station announces publication of a new eight-page circular which tells the story of the new Atlas wheats—how they were developed and what they will do in resisting disease

and producing high yields.

The circular, printed in two colors and illustrated with several photographs and drawings, gives detailed information concerning the performance and characteristics of the new varieties. It was prepared by G. K. Middleton, professor of agronomy and T. T. Herbert, research assistant pathologist, both of the Experiment Station staff.

"The Atlas strains of wheat, 50 and 66 represent an important advance in wheat breeding in the Southeast," say the authors. "As the name 'Atlas' implies, these wheats are noted for their excellent straw strength. They possess other desirable characteristics, however, including resistance to powdery mildew and to both leaf and stem rust. Because of their ability to resist lodging, they can be used to better advantage than any other locally adapted variety for planting on soils of high fertility or where heavier-than-normal rate of fertilization are to be used."

The circular lists the average yields of the new strains at seven locations in the State over the past two or three years. In all tests one or both of the strains have outyielded all six of the other varieties tested, including Hardired, Redhart, and Carala.

Copies of the publication, Special Circular No. 8, may be obtained from county farm agents or by writing the Agricultural Editor, State College Station, Raleigh. There is no charge.

Life is simply a process of combustion.

—M. J. Schleiden.



Killed Oct. 18 through Oct. 21— 8
Injured Oct. 18 through Oct. 21 52
Killed through Oct. 21 this year 647
Killed through Oct. 21, 1948— 553
Injured through Oct. 21 this year 7,152
Injured through Oct. 21, 1948—5,811

November Supply Of Turkeys Plentiful

November is turkey time. And, with the U. S. Department of Agriculture reporting about 29 per cent more turkeys raised this season than in 1948, heavy turkey marketings in November are expected to cause both wholesale and retail prices to drop below those of a year ago, Mrs. Nina B. White, Home Demonstration agent for the State College Extension Service, said this week.

What's more, she added, there's a better-than-average crop of cranberries this year to team with turkeys as well as broilers, fryers, and stewing hens. All are listed by USDA as plentiful foods for November menus.

Pork also appears on the plentiful list, for the first time in several years, Mrs. White said. Last season's large corn crop and heavy spring pig farrowing were given as reasons for the increasing supply of pork.

Fruits are well represented on the November plentiful list, with apples, grapes, and winter pears sharing the limelight with raisins and dried prunes. Plentiful vegetables include fresh sweet potatoes, greens, cauliflower, canned corn and canned pumpkin.

Eggs are slated for an increase in supply in November, USDA says, and bountiful supplies of manufactured dairy products and dried beans and peas offer other sources of protein for fall meals.

Tree nuts—pecans, walnuts, almonds, and filberts—cooking fats, honey, sugarcane syrup, and molasses are other plentiful on Southern markets.

Aw, Whillikens!

"That fellow was an impudent fraud. How did he manage to wheedle money out of you?"

"Oh he told me such a sad, pitiful tale about his poor wife who is a widow with six children."

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NOTICE!

Privilege Taxes FOR THE TOWN OF HERTFORD.

Were due June 1, 1949. Individuals and business houses that have not paid this tax are requested to make payment immediately.

The Auditor, who recently audited the Town's books, singled out these delinquent taxes for immediate collection.

Your cooperation and prompt settlement of your privilege taxes will be appreciated.

W. G. NEWBY

Tax Collector For Town of Hertford

Picture Yourself—washing dishes this way

New Freedom from Kitchen Sink Slavery!

Here's the answer to your dish-washing problems—the amazing new G-E Portable Dish-washer! Washes all your dishes, glasses, silver, pots, and pans for you. Tested—proved! Priced lower than you dreamed possible. See it today—

Portable—not a permanent house fixture. No installation—no extras of any kind.

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Howard Pitt and Julian Powell

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Pitt Farm Equipment Store

IN HERTFORD

ON SATURDAY, OCT. 29th

The undersigned merchants and business houses welcome this new store to our community and wish it every success.

- S and M Pharmacy
- Hertford Banking Company
- W. M. Morgan Furniture Company
- Western Auto Store
- Hertford Furniture Company
- Hertford Oil Company
- Towe- Webb Motor Co.
- Darden Bros.
- Nixon's
- Hertford Cleaners
- Major-Loomis Co.
- Simons
- Hertford Hardware & Supply Co.