

Important Anniversary

Yesterday the world observed the 100th birthday anniversary of Sigmund Freud, the Austrian physician who is generally regarded as the founder of modern psychiatry—although there is some evidence that the psychiatrist's couch was used fairly extensively in ancient times.

Freud has had as many detractors as admirers; and his true place in medical history has yet to be determined. The consensus, however, is that his benefactions to the treatment of medical disorders of various kinds far outweigh any mischief that well meaning but incompetent imitators of his methods have done in the same field. Certainly, he ranks very high among the many scientists and philosophers who have experimented in the relation of physical disease to mental maladjustment. His theories on the subject of dreams—a subject which has baffled laymen and experts alike from the earliest days of which there is any record—are perhaps not as widely held these days as they were for some years after he propounded them. Nevertheless, there is hardly a lecture on psychosomatic problems in which they are not mentioned, if only by way of parenthesis; and the "Freudian complex" is still a favorite topic wherever the experts gather together to talk about the unknowable and the strange as affecting human behaviour.

There is one phase of Freud's original thesis with which his present day disciples, for the most part, do not agree. That is the place of religion in mental wellbeing. Freud himself had no room in his psychiatric folio for religion which he called "mass obsessional neurosis". Most modern psychiatrists, and all the eminent ones, contend that religion is an important factor, if not an indispensable one, in mental and emotional health. At the same time, the churches have almost completely given up their former detestation of psychoanalytical methods. The present Pope has declared it to be, under proper safeguards, a legitimate form of treatment; while in several learned societies theologians and psychiatrists work in close co-operation on joint undertakings.

The New Challenge

The Earl of Home, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, who is touring Eastern Canada this month and will visit Charlottetown on the 16th, told the Canada Club in London, England, last week that the Commonwealth is facing a situation as challenging to traditional thought as that which faced Lord Durham and the British people in the Canada of the last century.

The British Empire had been built, Lord Home said, and the old Dominions rested their associations on the monarchy, on Christian religion, on the European interpretation of democracy and on common inheritance. "That unity holds. But today a new experiment in the art of living together in society is much more ambitious. The new relationship is not only between the U. K. and the new partners but between each old Commonwealth country and the others, for it is nothing less than the launching of a multi-racial, multi-religious Commonwealth with no formal constitutional bond of union."

Previously sentiment and loyalty were the dominant factors in the old association. Inevitably the emphasis for some would move from sentiment to common interests—interests of security, interests in economics. Against this focus on common interests, Lord Home emphasized the background of industrialization of the great underdeveloped countries which is taking place and the change in concentration of the available capital resources. The task of coordinating these different interests was all too difficult and might be beyond us but for the power of an idea. "This idea which must inspire the new Commonwealth", he says,

implies the acceptance of obligations far beyond the mere labels of independence or self-government or self-determination for they can only have meaning for humanity if independence is based upon law and justice, if government is based upon elective representative institutions through which the people control the executive and if self-determination carries with it the duty to live in harmony with your neighbour."

That and nothing less is the way of freedom which Canada has demonstrated in living and that is the gift beyond price which the Commonwealth can bring to civilization.

For Safer Driving

The campaign for safer driving on our highways should not be a sporadic affair, but a continuing drive all through the year, and especially during the summer period when the traffic is at its peak. A commendable move in this direction has been taken by the Provincial Government through the Motor Vehicle Registration Department. As noted in Saturday's news columns, applicants for registration will be required to submit to and pass a written, visual and operational test. The regulations have also been tightened up in amendments to the Highway Traffic Act passed at the last session of the Legislature. In addition, provision is being made for the showing of safety films in halls and rural theatres throughout the Province.

It is to be hoped that in the near future there will be a general overhaul of our traffic regulations all across Canada, and general agreement reached between the Provinces on some standard practice which will embody the most approved highway safety principles. Last year we had thirteen highway fatalities in this Province, and a great many other accidents involving injuries more or less serious. The overall picture in Canada has reached alarming proportions, and it will not be remedied except by leadership on the part of all our government bodies, and the fullest cooperation by the public generally.

Maritime Development

The Globe and Mail, Toronto, notes that effective initiative by the Maritimes in bringing forth a broad plan for Eastern seaboard development would be an encouragement to the formation of other Provincial groupings along the same lines. It must, however, be "practical, complete in detail and free of visionary hyperbole." If a series of well-established development commissions then kept the urgency of these broad-area requirements before the public—and the Dominion Cabinet—"Ottawa's shilly-shallying would be more clearly shown in the mean perspective which is its only present distinction." Nothing, however, is to be gained by abusing Ottawa until we have demonstrated our own initiative along the lines suggested. The Toronto paper says the "rest of Canada wishes the Maritimes every possible success in their co-operative venture; and if their initiative sets a new pattern of leadership for the whole Dominion, no one will begrudge them that honour." It is encouraging to be placed thus in the van of progress, but we have a long way to go before this status can be realized in fact.

EDITORIAL NOTES

National Tourist Week.

The Music Festival is showing that talent is widespread among the younger generation, needing only the stimulus of public interest and encouragement.

A University of Michigan professor says that grandparents are responsible for juvenile delinquency because the grandparents were responsible for the kind of parents who are blamed for the delinquency of their children. This line of argument, comments an exchange, could go right back to Adam and Eve.

The absurdity of the jury system in the United States was illustrated in a case in the Criminal Court of Chicago, when 183 people refused or were rejected for service, and the judge got a gangster to plead guilty to a charge of murdering a member of another gang, and sentenced him to 16 years. The judge castigated "the lethargy of the public", but fear of gang revenge might have had more to do with it.



VITAL STATISTICS

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents.

LONELY OLD MEN

Sir.—In that interesting column "We And Our Neighbours" Mrs. Frank wrote about the lonely old men we see around the Square. I too have wondered about them. Couldn't they have a room of their own somewhere, perhaps in the old Post Office? A warm room, a few chairs, some magazines, a checker board, above all a place where they can talk with their cronies and be comfortable.

I am, Sir, etc., BOETHIC.

AGAINST FLUORIDATION

Sir—My attention has been drawn to a letter in your issue of March 28, 1956, over the signature of Dr. F.S. Killmer MacMillan of Cincinnati, Ohio, on "The Value of Fluoridation". The numerous misconceptions in the statements made by Dr. MacMillan are based on nothing but on his recently completed three years' postgraduate work on biochemistry. As such they must be rejected by one who as a medical man has been working on the subject of chronic fluorine poisoning, both clinically on man for the past 34 years, of which six were spent on research whilst serving in the Royal Army Medical Corps during World War II, and experimentally for 4 years at the Department of Physiology, Middlesex Hospital Medical School, University of London, England. With all due respect, Dr. MacMillan has obviously to go a long way before his views on the fluoridation of public water supplies can be taken seriously. When in his letter he disparagingly mentions that in one of my papers I described "no less than 24 deviations from normal" in chronic fluorine poisoning, he is deliberately suppressing the fact quoted by me that all these 24 "deviations" are in every respect identical with the same number of signs and symptoms encountered in chronic arsenical poisoning. Surely, it is not asking too much of a postgraduate student of biochemistry to present more original, more accurate statements to intelligent readers of The Guardian than are those which are known to have been many times made by others and as often rejected. Amongst others, the remark on "the philosopher's stone", and the one that "it is difficult to understand how the aluminium is transformed into fluorine" or that "fluoride compounds used for water fluoridation are not a by-product of aluminium plants" have been met with before. Since in his study of the problem of fluorine Dr. MacMillan does not appear to have taken the trouble to study all my 34 papers published on the action of fluorine in important medical journals in Great Britain, in the United States, and on the Continent of Europe, he may find it profitable at least to read my book "The Drama of Fluorine: Arch-enemy of Mankind", which was written in popular language for the benefit of the lay public. He will then find that the fluorine in aluminium cooking utensils is not a product of transformation of aluminium, but is derived from cryolite, a fluorine mineral which is indispensable in the manufacture of the metal. The metal is, as every housewife knows, readily corroded by both acids and alkalis contained in the food or used in the process of cooking, with the result that impurities, including fluorine, present in the metal are set free so as to contaminate the food. Dr. MacMillan will learn at the same time that the amount of cryolite employed in the manufacture of aluminium, which has been left over in the process, represents a waste product which up to a few years ago used to be thrown into rivers and into the sea, with the result that the fish died. Since there is no safe way to dispose of this waste product, it is difficult to conceive a more lucrative undertaking than filling

Modern Garden Sculptors

National Geographic Society
 In the spring the topiary garden designer's fancy turns to shears and clippers—the tools by which he shapes shrubs and hedges into odd and ornamental patterns that nature never knew. It is an ancient and imaginative skill. The term itself, says the National Geographic Society, goes back to the Roman Topiarius, a slave charged with training and trimming his master's ragged greenery into formal designs or fanciful figures. One of the most famous of all such early gardens was owned by the Roman scholar, Pliny, whose sea-fronting terrace "was adorned with representations of diverse animals in box." But long before Pliny's time, the Greek poet Homer sang of the legendary garden of Alicious, "where intervolved branches form a wall, and from the living fence green turrets rise"....and "ships of myrtle sail." EMBELLISHED FORMAL GARDENS Interest in topiary decoration has waxed and waned in many lands with changing fashions in

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OUR YESTERDAYS

From The Guardian Files
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO
 (May 7, 1931)
 His Honour Lieutenant Governor Dalton has received a telegram from Sir Henry Thornton, President of the Canadian National Railways, inviting Mrs. Dalton to act as sponsor for the new car ferry "Charlottetown" which will be launched at Lauzon-Quebec, on May 20th.

Reports from the North Shore regarding the opening of the lobster season are very encouraging. For the first two days good catches were made. The price is low but the quantity of the catch helps to make up for the low price.

Farmers in Bedoue were busy hauling potatoes last week. Hauling their trucks out and the quick drying up of the roads soon cleared the 1930 potato crop up.

TEN YEARS AGO

(May 7, 1946)
 With the lifting of permit controls for the shipping of table stock potatoes from the Maritimes, Island shippers will no longer be under the constraint of shipping one car to Halifax or Sydney for every car they wish to ship to Upper Canada markets.

The weatherman is sure in a freaky mood, this spring. Just when farmers might be thinking the soil would be ready for cropping, Jack Frost arrives in good form. Last night four inches of ice was made on tubs of water.

High winds and rough seas have retarded lobster fishermen in Georgetown and vicinity in their efforts to place all traps. Reports indicate catches are not up to last year but nevertheless they are considered good.

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NOTES BY THE WAY

Medical science seems to be getting rid of the common cold by the simple expedient of calling it a virus.—Oshawa Times-Gazette
 Education is where you find it. Twelve per cent of American teachers read comic strips, and there's a crowd in New Jersey that goes to school every day.—Branford Expositor

A Montreal man posing as a "Voodoo Doctor" sold baking powder to solve love and financial worries, says a new item. Might work if used in a cake, perhaps.—Woodstock Sentinel-Review

Tony Amato of Montreal is a fortunate man.... A prospective bridegroom, he arrived at the church minus the wedding ring and in consequence was immediately set upon by male relatives of the bride, who blackened one of his eyes and almost broke his nose. He became a hospital outpatient. Tony should thank his lucky stars that he did not marry into that sort of family. Forgetting that ring may well have saved his life.—London Free Press

The racing boys are telling the one about the horse which confided to a pal that he was going to run all out in the sixth at Fort Erie. The horse said his owner had promised him a bale of hay, and added: "And, that ain't money."—Windsor Star

A West Virginian boy aged 14 has been sentenced to life imprisonment. His crime was murder. He killed a nine-year old lad. His punishment, which saves his neck, exacts his life. Even if the term dwindles to 20 years and the prison life is mild, he will have paid heavily for his crime. It is terrible even though necessary to deprive a man of his liberty. To grow up behind prison walls must be worse. Because penal policy is changing through modern humanitarianism, let none think that the punishment is a slight return for taking life.—Peterborough Examiner

The Associated Press reports that when Bulgania and Khrushchev visited the House of Lords in London three of their lordships were asleep and two had their feet on a table. The House was in session but only 45 members were present of some 850 "lords spiritual and temporal" qualified to attend—and only 42 of them were awake. We don't find this funny. Those cats (not Bulgania and Khrushchev) should be schooled over Westminster Bridge and told to sleep elsewhere.—Ottawa Journal



Borrowing is a sensible solution when it comes to so many springtime needs—like getting your car back in shape, paying bills, home repairs, the kind of money problems that are always sprouting up this time of year.

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