Here again was a case treated for her mental condition long before it was possible to be certain of the causative factor.

The interest of these cases lies not so much in the diagnosis, which was easy by the time they came under hospital care, but in the association of mental symptoms and physical disease. They were instances of acute confusion, of involutional melancholia with paranoid tendencies, and of anxious depression caused by well-recognized organic conditions.

Although it is the rule rather than the exception to find such cases with mental symptoms, the last two were included in this series because it appears that a physical cause is the basic factor. Both showed reactions very often met with in mental practice, and the cases as a group seem to support the view that however varied may be the detailed symptoms of any case of psychosis, the broad outlines tend to follow the familiar patterns. It is of perhaps special interest that this should be so, even in these instances where the causes were, in themselves, clear-cut clinical entities.

I am indebted to Dr. Yellowlees, Medical Superintendent, for permission to publish these cases.

Medico-Legal Notes.

REX *v.* ISAAC MITCHAM.

THIS case was tried at the Bedford Assizes, on October 19, before Mr. Justice Swift. The accused is 43 years of age, and was an inmate of the Three Counties Mental Hospital, Arlesey. He was charged with assaulting Dr. Finiefs, one of the medical officers, and with threatening to assault Dr. Fuller, the medical superintendent. He appears to have rushed out of a bath-room, with a wooden plunger in his hand, and to have threatened to kill anyone who came near him. Dr. Finiefs attempted to pacify him, and was struck on the head. Why the rather unusual course of prosecuting the accused was adopted does not appear.

At the trial a reversal of the situation common in such cases occurred, the defence asserting that the accused was sane. The defending counsel urged that Mitcham had a grievance in that he wanted to establish his sanity; other means having failed him, he adopted this method. A plea of "not guilty" was originally entered; but this was withdrawn and the prisoner pleaded "guilty." The judge ruled that every accused person is assumed to be sane, and that the raising of a plea of "irresponsibility" was a matter for the defence. He sentenced the prisoner to two months' imprisonment.

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