in alleviating their sufferings and in prolonging their lives, for where there is life there is hope, and all of you have seen patients who have been labelled chronic, but who, like the dry bones in the valley, have been breathed upon and restored to health and usefulness. As a consequence of that arid materialistic philosophy which has too long been in the ascendant, there has been among the public, at any rate, some falling away from the comprehensive philanthropy of the days of Lord Shaftesbury, out of which our lunacy system, of which we have good reason to be proud, has grown up. It has been recommended by a Royal Commission that the married insane, after three years of insanity, should be liable to divorce, and now it is suggested that when in cases of chronic insanity hopes of recovery are practically at an end, the ratepayers should be relieved of the cost of their maintenance, by euthanasia. I am confident that such suggestions will have no countenance from you, who have ministered to the insane, who know what they are, who are full of pity for them, who devotedly do your duty to them notwithstanding the distressing and harassing traits which many of them present, and who, in some instances, have learnt to love them.

The Aftermath of War.

Asylum workers should, to my thinking, all be idealists. They should have something to look to, beyond the dull routine, the trying and sometimes repulsive task of the hour, something to sustain them in their anxious and laborious undertaking. And their idealism will, I believe, be stimulated vastly by the work which now lies before them, for it will be theirs to soothe and solace many of those who have been struck down in this terrible conflict in which we are engaged. Much of the aftermath of war will find its way into asylums. There have been a large number of cases of cranial injuries, especially in the trenches, and some of these will inevitably result in mental impairment. There have been in every phase of the war an enormous number of cases of nervous shock and overstrain which will bear fruit in neurasthenia and psychical disorders. There have been, thanks largely to the interference of the criminal cranks in dissuading men from anti-typhoid inoculation, a certain number of cases of that disease which occasionally leaves mental exhaustion behind it. There has been throughout the country immeasurable anxiety and sorrow and bereavement, and these will undoubtedly in many instances deepen into morbid melancholy. You will assuredly have to do your bit not only now, but when the war is over, and, animated as you all are by patriotic fervour, strung as you all are to everlasting hatred of German barbarities, you will, I am sure, in the spirit of the enthusiast and not of the hireling, do your best to succour those who have succoured their country in its hour of need.

MENTAL TREATMENT BILL.

(Presented by Mr. Cecil Harmsworth. Ordered to be printed April 20th, 1915.)

Memorandum.

As the law now stands nursing homes cannot receive for treatment patients who are suffering from nervous breakdown affecting their mental condition (Lunacy Act, 1890, Section 315 (2)). Such patients can only obtain residential treatment if they are certified insane and sent to an asylum or hospital under the Lunacy Acts. This applies even if the breakdown is of a temporary character and almost certainly capable of being cured. As it is found that a sort of stigma attaches throughout life to a person who has once been certified as insane, there is great reluctance to have such cases certified, and the result is that persons suffering from temporary mental disorder do not receive the special treatment in a nursing home which is suitable to their condition and which is calculated to effect a speedy cure.

The object of the present Bill is to secure the proper treatment of such cases by making the law less rigid than at present. It removes the necessity for formal certification in the case of persons suffering from mental breakdown of recent origin and arising from wounds, shock, etc. In this respect it assimilates the English law to the law which has been in force in Scotland for fifty years and which has worked satisfactorily [Lunacy (Scotland) Act, 1866, Section 13].

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.61.254.480 Published online by Cambridge University Press

It is brought forward at the present moment in order to meet an urgent need which has arisen in the case of soldiers and sailors invalided from the front, and others whose health has broken down under the stress engendered by the war.

This Bill will enable a man who in the service of his country has suffered a nervous breakdown to accept the treatment without being certified, but only for a period not exceeding six months and under conditions which will provide security against misuse.

A BILL TO FACILITATE THE EARLY TREATMENT OF MENTAL DISORDER OF RECENT ORIGIN ARISING FROM WOUNDS, SHOCK, AND OTHER CAUSES.

Be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

1.—(1) Notwithstanding the provisions in any other Act to the contrary, a person shall not be liable to any penalty for receiving to board or lodge or for taking charge of, whether for payment or not, any person suffering from mental disorder of recent origin arising from wounds, shock, disease, stress, exhaustion or any other cause, if and so long as he complies with the conditions imposed by regulations made under this Act.

(2) Regulations may be made in England by the Secretary of State with the concurrence of the Lord Chancellor, and in Ireland by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, as to—

(*a*) the period, not exceeding six months, for which such a person may be so received;

(*b*) the institutions, homes or houses into which such a person may be received;

(*c*) the statements and notices to be furnished as respects a person so received;

(*d*) the treatment of persons so received and their visitation, removal to other care, and discharge.

(3) Regulations made under this Act shall be laid before each House of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made, and if an address is presented to His Majesty by either House of Parliament within the next subsequent twenty-one days on which the House has sat praying that any such regulations may be annulled, His Majesty in Council may annul the regulations, and they shall be thenceforth void, but without prejudice to anything previously done thereunder before the expiration of the said period, and the regulations made under this Act shall have effect as if enacted in this Act.

2.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Mental Treatment Act, 1915.

(2) This Act shall not extend to Scotland.

(3) This Act shall continue in force during the continuance of the present war and for a period of six months thereafter and no longer, except that, as respects persons who at the end of the said period of six months are receiving treatment under this Act, it shall continue in force so long as they continue to receive such treatment.

VOLUNTARY MENTAL TREATMENT BILL.

(Presented by The Earl Russell. Ordered to be printed July 22nd, 1914.)

MEMORANDUM.

This Bill is intended to secure that persons whose mental condition is uncertain, but require medical treatment to prevent their becoming lunatics, may receive such treatment in a manner which is at present impracticable, owing to the present state of the law.

The existing law assumes that a given person is or is not insane, and takes no notice of early symptoms of insanity. These symptoms are curable by early treatment, but, although medical treatment of a person who is not insane may be given without fear of penalty, any person who keeps such a patient is liable to be prosecuted under section 315 of the Lunacy Act, 1890, on the ground that the

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