

overlooked. Primitive fears, unresolved aggressions, and an inability to face reality are the factors which lead to a belligerent attitude to life.

Is it not, therefore, the duty of psychiatrists to prevent mass mania by the methods of mental hygiene? Have we forgotten the death and destruction of the last war, or are we impotent to prevent the next? I feel sure that if a move were made in the medical profession to rally those who stand for peace and cultural development, in opposition to modern barbarism, it would meet with considerable response and direct public attention to a vital and urgent problem.—I am, etc.,

LESLIE T. HILLIARD, M.A., B.Ch., D.P.M.
Maudsley Hospital, Oct. 16th.

SIR,—I am sure many psychiatrists will be in sympathy with the manifesto produced by their colleagues which you published in the *Journal* of October 12th (p. 694). It is a worthy document, but the criticism it lays itself open to is that it does not go far enough, and that in one or two places the argument is not clear. Thus in the first paragraph it analyses the psychology of the warlike individual. But—to me, anyway—it is not quite clear what the moral is. If it is that by understanding the psychology of the individual who is willing to respond to the call of war we can prevent him doing so, then I think we are on very dubious ground. Understanding the cause is by no means tantamount to removing it; and no one should realize this better than psychologists. Perhaps the answer lies in the statement that in understanding matters psychological we can understand the motives of statesmen, real, false, or unconscious. But again, where does this lead to? If the statesman is an astute realist he knows what he is doing, and why, and will not listen to our expostulations; if he is a hypocrite who disguises his motives to himself, he will rationalize them into making our arguments appear irrelevant; if he is a fool he will not understand them anyway.

The argument I am attempting to put forth is that the only sure way of making those who wish to wage war desist is by building up a mass of public opinion that will make them uncertain of support. I would suggest, therefore, that the psychologist can best make use of his art by applied psychology in the way of intense anti-war propaganda.

In another respect I cannot agree with the manifesto, in its suggestion that moral and religious appeals would hinder war. Is there any evidence to suggest that religion ever has stopped or ever will stop war? Surely throughout history all the belligerents have always claimed exclusive rights in the deity. In the same way, the tragic thing is that it is morality which is invoked on the side of war; and, as Mr. Lloyd George with much truth said, whatever the cost youth will always be prepared to sacrifice itself for its ideals. We must face realities, then, and realize that we must make use of man's primitive fighting qualities, and enlist them on the side of peace; people must be made to realize the causes of war, both human and economic, and to bring those who are prepared to make war to heel by making them realize that they cannot be sure of popular support.

Unfortunately, the man who believes in utilizing force has the trump cards; the peaceful man is bound to suffer humiliation or play to the other's suit, and if we are going to face psychological truths then we must also face that man is not *primarily* against war because of its immorality, or because human life is sacred, but because war is unpleasant. I, for one, have a rooted objection to being blown to pieces. I also don't want to blow the other fellow to pieces (though this is subsidiary), who probably feels the same as I do. But my objections

are not ethical but practical. In drawing attention to the idiotic arguments put forward in favour of war, and in analysing the causes generally, the manifesto does excellent work. Is it too much to hope that psychologists will follow it up by applying their knowledge of crowd psychology to put the cause for peace in such a way as to entice the pugnacious on the side of pacifism?—I am, etc.,

London, W.1, Oct. 14th.

W. LINDESAY-NEUSTATTER.

Fire-walking Experiments

SIR,—In the experiment described in the *Journal* of September 28th (p. 586) the fact that the surface temperature of the soles of the feet showed not only no rise of temperature but even a fall after the traversing of the red-hot embers admits of only two explanations: one, that the heat must completely disappear at the surface of the feet, which, as energy is indestructible, would necessitate its conversion into some other form of energy; and the other, that the skin of the feet has the power of permitting so rapid a passage of heat and absorption into the general circulation that there is insufficient time for damage to the tissues.

This abnormal power of causing the apparent disappearance of heat has been observed in experiments with metagnomes. I prefer the term "metagnome" to the more usual "medium," because the latter suggests a channel of communication for discarnate spirits. Fire-walkers are generally also metagnomes. One instance is recorded by the same careful investigator, Mr. Harry Price, in his experiments with Rudi Schneider, when the temporary fall of temperature in the room during a demonstration of telekinesis was checked by a thermometer. Similarly, the fall of temperature was checked by a thermometer by Sir William Crookes when observing the abnormal phenomena associated with Daniel Home. Daniel Home also possessed the power of handling red-hot coals without injury to his skin. It would be of great interest to know the views of medical thinkers as to the possibility of great heat being absorbed through the skin into the general circulation sufficiently rapidly to avoid any damage of tissue; of physicists, as to the possibility of the transformation of heat into another form of energy; and of psychologists, as to why this peculiar power of contacting great heat without damage to the tissues is possessed generally, if not solely, by metagnomes.—I am, etc.,

Canterbury, Oct. 21st.

WILFRID GARTON.

The Services

HONORARY SURGEON TO THE KING

Major-General D. S. Skelton has been appointed Honorary Surgeon to the King, in succession to Major-General J. W. West, retired.

DEATHS IN THE SERVICES

Lieut.-Colonel Arthur Charles Younan, Bengal Medical Service (retired), died at Minehead on October 11th, aged 73. He was born on December 19th, 1861, the son of Anthony Younan of Calcutta, and educated in Calcutta and at Edinburgh University, where he graduated M.B. and C.M. in 1883, after gaining the Vane Dunlop scholarship in 1882. Entering the I.M.S. as surgeon on October 1st, 1885, he became lieutenant-colonel after twenty years' service, and retired, with an extra compensation pension, on January 1st, 1915. His whole service was passed in military employment; he was for many years medical officer of the 25th Punjabis. He had a long list of war service: Burma, 1886-9, frontier medal with two clasps; North-West Frontier of India, Hazara campaign of 1891, clasp; Isazai campaign, 1892; Chitral campaign, 1895, relief of Chitral, medal with clasp; Tochi campaign, 1897-8, clasp; Mekran, 1898; and Mohmand campaign of 1908, medal with clasp.