

JUKES PERPETUATED

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Editor The Journal: I am enclosing the report of a case which I think shows the difficulties experienced by many physicians and the incongruities under which the medical profession has to work.

Jukes, 29 years of age, married, electrician (?). Maternal grandmother lived to an advanced age but had always suffered with intense migraine. Mother suffers with migraine; has huge goiter with exophthalmic symptoms. Sister has immense goiter with progressive paralysis and uses a wheeling chair. Father was a railroader and was killed in a railroad accident at 30 years of age, when Jukes was 7 years of age, since which time he has been assisting in earning a livelihood for the grandmother, sister and the mother, who married later, bearing several children who were more or less neurotic.

Having become enamored with a school girl, jukes stopped school before completing the grammar grades, since which time he has been variously employed as messenger boy, delivery boy, clerk, carpet section manager, etc., until he was advanced to the position of electrician, all promotions being accompanied with increased Pay.

When a child, Jukes was the victim of choking attacks which were relieved by loosening the collar; outside of this measure no other thera-

peusis was regarded as necessary (petit mal?). Has always been considered "a very nervous person" by his employers and his mother-in-law, who opposed his marriage on this account, and in which belief she has persevered to the extent that she will not allow herself to speak to him for violating her wish in the matter, although Jukes is the parent of a very attractive child and about to become the father of another. In July, 1915, while riding a bicycle, the subject met with a slight accident, landing on his forehead; being in no way incapacitated, he proceeded on his way (petit mal?).

Jukes stoutly maintains that his first convulsion occurred in May, 1916, when he was about to play a violin selection at a church festival, which was very much disorganized by this first epileptic seizure; his wife promptly loosened his collar and was in no way alarmed by the so-called first attack. Convulsions have been as many as four a day, of the grand mal type, which are preceded by an aura in the form of difficulty in assembling his thoughts, and as infrequently as one in three weeks. There is a loss of weight and strength with gradual mental impairment, with an increasing aptitude for applying for maintenance for himself and family from the charity organization and township trustee, to say nothing of the trouble and expense he has been to various physicians who have rendered all kinds of service gratis, with the understanding that his pregnant wife would also be attended in a near confinement.

As there was a difference of opinion among some of the local physicians as to whether

the epilepsy was of the traumatic or neurotic type, it was made possible for him to go to a Chicago specialist, who did not detain him long, but sent him home. Jukes determined to go to the State Epileptic Hospital for a safe occupation, medical and custodial care, although he had previously enlisted the sympathy of some one to make the initial payment on a carpet loom for which the charity organization was to stand sponsor, with the understanding from Jukes that he was to make weekly payments, none of which have been met. It might be said here, that there is very little if any cooperation between these so-called charity societies which have charge of funds donated by kind but ignorant philanthropists, nor is there any inquiry on the part of the county trustee as to the deserved merits of the case, although he is the bursar for the county taxpayer's beneficence; it seems that there ought to be some concurrent effort on the part of these so-called philanthropic bodies, the doctor and the lawyer, to conserve and protect the charitably inclined against fraud, otherwise the supposed philanthropy becomes a misanthropy to society at large and there is no permanent assistance rendered to the indigent.

In this case, jukes had decided to go to the hospital for epileptics, the papers had been filed, and a permit issued for juke's transfer to the hospital, but as the order had arrived just two days later than he had anticipated, he again decided to move into a house where he placed his family and a water power washing machine ; the landlady was ignorant of his arrival and deposition., but this was a detail to jukes as was

the payment of the rent. When the state officer came and notified him of his acceptance to the hospital, Jukes was of the opinion that he was in a flourishing business, supporting his wife and child, and that the idea of his desire for institutional care was an intrigue. Thereupon, actuated by this characteristic epileptic conjecture, he secured money with which he procured a lawyer, who appeared before the circuit judge who had obtained the permit for admission to the hospital. Without consulting the physicians to whom jukes had appealed and without any inquiry as to how he had sustained himself and family, the judge promptly released Jukes from the state's custody on the grounds that "he had changed his mind."

QUESTIONS

1 I have medical findings ceased to be facts even in the circuit court when there is an attorney with a fee to collect?

Has the state no responsibility to the taxpayer in reducing the high cost of upkeep of prolific, indigent epileptics who should at least be sterilized if left at large, in order to inhibit a predestined offspring?

Should not the county treasurer be reimbursed to the amount of commitment costs when the patient or family has a "change of mind"?

Should not the commitment papers for an epileptic bear the signature of the nearest, most responsible relative, as an evidence of consent for institutional care? (The signatures and

affidavits of relatives are prohibited on Indiana epileptic commitment papers.)

Should not patients suffering" with some mental or nervous disease be handled with the same amount of consideration as a patient needing surgical attention or one needing medical treatment? It does seem that the sheriff, police and jails are not the proper avenues for the scientific management for those who are so unfortunate as the mentally afflicted.

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