

# Doctors Concerned / MENTAL ILLNESS' INCREASE

**L**EADING Australian psychiatrists are preparing a nation-wide plan to assist the prevention and treatment of all forms of neurosis and mental sickness.

They are concerned at the increasing amount of "crippling mental illness" in the community.

The plan—actually a long-range programme—was drawn up at the conference of the Australasian Association of Psychiatrists, which concluded in Brisbane yesterday.

One objective is the establishment of proper psychiatric clinics throughout the Commonwealth. Linked with this is the establishment of clinics for maladjusted children, staffed by psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and play therapists.

Delegates to the conference included Dr. Basil Stafford (Queensland Director of Mental Hygiene), Drs. J. Bostock, Vincent Youngman, and Gregory Murphy (Brisbane); Drs. S. Silvester Minogue and Oliver Latham, and Professor W. S. Dawson (Sydney); Drs. Maudsley and John Williams (Melbourne); Dr. Brothers (Tasmania).

## **Educating Public**

President-elect of the association (Dr. Bostock) said last night that one of the main obstacles to be overcome was public apathy towards the welfare of mental patients, and this could only be overcome by educating the public.

Mental sicknesses could be cured if treated early and properly, he said. In the case of epilepsy, for instance, new treatment methods had changed the whole outlook, and if epileptics co-operated in treatment they could function as a normal person.

Dr. Bostock said that although the war had undoubtedly been responsible for many neurosis cases, the war had really pinpointed the number of nervous people there were in the community.

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The association will seek support for its campaign from State and Commonwealth Health Departments and from education and child welfare officials. The last report of the Queensland Health Department shows that during the year ended June 30, 1947, the daily average of patients in Queensland mental hospitals was 3671.