

The National Committee for Mental Hygiene

FOUNDED 1909

INCORPORATED 1916

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50 UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK CITY

10/1				
EDR				
October 1, 1917.				

Dr. George E. Vincent, President,
The Rockefeller Foundation,
61 Broadway, New York City.

Dear Doctor Vincent:

With reference to the report on the war work of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene and the needs for the coming year, I would like to say that I believe that this appropriation by the Foundation will be only a very small part of the amount received from all sources for soldiers with mental and nervous diseases. One-seventh of the men who are invalided home from France will be suffering from these disorders and no civil institutions exist which can be altered or expanded to care for those with war neuroses ("shell shock"). The Army is preparing to meet its obligation in the matter but if we have an experience similar to that in England, thousands of men still unfit for work because of functional nervous disorders (paralyses, tremors, disorders of mental states) will be discharged into the communities to constitute a serious economical and social problem.

Nearly all of these causes can be cured by expert treatment and it will be our task to organize the various forces in the community so that such treatment can be applied, to have enrolled the trained personnel required and to prepare plans for every detail of the work. We would like very much to reserve our appeal to the Red Cross until this time when, if it seems desirable to have this work done directly by that organization, we will act in an advisory capacity as we are now doing for the Army.

Dr. Vincent

Oct. 1, 1917.

No country is better able than America to deal with these cases intelligently, for here applied psychiatry really had its birth. Through its aid to the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, the Foundation has already done more than any other agency to prepare the country for this new problem. It seems, therefore, especially appropriate for the Foundation to make our war work successful.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas W. Salmon
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TWS/ES