

Both Feet Back on the Ground

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Part One

This is a story of patience, persistence and dedication to Truth. It all took 30 years and produced in all the participants qualities they did not know they had and still marvel at. A compassionate heart is a heavy load to carry. I might add none of the characters in this story is imaginary.

It all started with my son David, a delightful person with many good qualities and very few bad ones. He entered the world at 6^o months pregnancy weighing 2 lbs, forehead presentation and forceps delivery. He started life on 2^o oz. of milk which he took two hours to drink. This was condensed milk said to be good for premature babies by his dedicated Sister. It was mixed with a little breast milk

He grew into a very pleasant young man with an IQ of 132. He joined a Territorial Regiment as a volunteer for a year and had much enjoyment from the experience. Then he decided to do a backpack travel of some distance.

Early Problems

At first all was well and then the letters stopped. We decided on a journey home from abroad to call on him to see if anything was wrong.

David met me at the station, pleased to see me but was a shocking sight. Skeleton thin with clothes torn and cobbled up. When we got to the hotel he sat on the bed, burst into tears and said "I think I'm going mad". He ate slowly but was unable to pack. We decided to make our way home as soon as possible.

We rested en route to stay two days with very old friends who knew him well. They were so kind to the lost soul he had become. He kept bursting into tears and was at times quite incoherent. It was all a terrible shock and I have the deepest sympathy for anyone faced with such an agonizing experience. I sat up with him most of the time and said "I don't know what is wrong with you David

but I promise you I will never rest till you are better even if I have to go to the ends of the earth". He nodded but was not capable of speaking much or eating. "It's all a terrible dream" he said.

We were met at Heathrow and managed to whisper to David's brother "David is terribly ill." "He's never been ill in his life. What's the matter?" "I don't know, perhaps he'll be all right when he gets home."

Seeking Help

I took him straight to our kind GP who was just about to retire. He said "You are a family who has never given me any trouble at all and now this. It is schizophrenia". "What's that?"

He tried to tell me but I was too shocked to take it in. All I could think of was Jekyll and Hyde and other such horrors.

"I am going to send you to the best hospital in the country. They are excellent and will help". I silently cursed all doctors who put forceps on babies' heads.

Nothing helped. My husband had gone abroad and kind as my other son was, nothing really helped. If only I knew what to do. My mind was a large empty void. If now you asked me what the worse aspect was, it was the loneliness. No one to talk to, no one to help. Nothing to read. Just one long unendurable hell.

Next David was admitted to hospital, to the neurological department of the chosen hospital. I stopped crying. Crying did no good and just made one look awful.

Doctor No 1. A neurologist. Kind and efficient, sympathetic and concerned. But I knew David was very ill indeed. One day he didn't even know me and tossed restlessly on his bed in a world I couldn't enter. Then they said "You are to see a psychiatrist as David has been diagnosed as a psychiatric case".

Doctor No 2. A Psychiatrist. He was elderly, kind and pleasant. "I am supposed to go abroad tomorrow". He said "Let's put it like this, David has a chance, it is only a small chance that he will recover if you stay."

1. A pseudonym.

If you leave him I think he will never recover"

"I will stay but have I done anything to cause this?"

"Nothing at all so put it out of your mind."

"Could you be David's psychiatrist?."

"No I'm sorry, I am retiring."

When I got home I wrote to thank him and said "I am going to do something for people who have this diagnosis." "He answered at once "I am delighted. Your decision is excellent. Help is long overdue."

I did cheer up a bit but not for long.

David was still in hospital but I went to see him every day, a long journey. One day they said, (the neurologist saw me every day and was always so kind) " He is to have a brain scan which may help in the diagnosis and you may take him home after." But when I collected him he was in an awful state. "I've had air pumped into my head and the pain is terrible". He insisted on coming home, an awful journey and when he got in he fell on his hands and knees, screaming "I cannot stand the pain. There can be no God to let such agony be given to human beings. I am in a pit in hell, hanging on by my finger nails. Somebody please help me".

Gradually the pain abated but then there were nightmares and neverending voices, the mutters, the silences, the inability to walk or talk or be anything at all. No resemblance at all to David. The nightmares seemed to follow food as though his metabolism was affected.

Later I told his good neurologist and he said he should not have gone home.

Sometimes I wished he'd die to be released from his terrors and tortures. There seemed to be no hope. His connection with reality seemed tenuous and made his personality have no connection to his former self. The outlook seemed grim.

The great news was that David was to be transferred to psychiatry from neurology. At last, we shall have an expert on what he is supposed to have. The words psychiatry, psychology were quite outside my understanding, but now there were experts, consultants to boot. At last there was hope. My spirits rose yet again.

I wrote for an appointment to the Consultant psychiatrist, the mecca of all my hopes. In the meantime David returned home which

appeared to please him. He had spent two to three days in the psychiatric ward. He was put on stellazene because he had read that largactil made people dribble and he said "I refuse to dribble"

I think medications are absolutely essential but if the experts would only move with the times and add other discoveries and/or enter the further world of research, what a difference it would and could still make.

The stellazene made him grimace, roll his tongue and give secret smiles. "Tell me the joke." "You wouldn't understand it." It turned out to be purely mechanical.

Communication was nil and most nights I spent at the top of the stairs to watch if he went out as he was apt to do. The nightmares continued and life for me and him was a hell.

David used to steal milk and I had to hide it to leave us some. I said "Did you drink a lot of milk abroad?" "Oh yes, lots, they had all colours. It was lovely. They had every hue you could imagine".

Idiot No 1. The great day arrived. I got a date to see the psychiatrist. It has taken three months waiting but I thought he must be very good to be so busy. I felt pleased and hopeful and grateful.

He kept me waiting and then emerged into the corridor where I stood.

"Ah Mrs Hervi, I've seen your son. I can't get through to him at all. He's a hopeless case. It is a waste of time bothering".

I stared at him in absolute horror and I could feel a look of contempt on my face. "Is it money you want?" We were on the NHS. "I will pay, I need help." "No I'm too busy"

So this was a psychiatrist. This creature I had waited three months to see and then wasn't even offered a seat. He was just a useless idiot and obviously held me in great scorn and contempt. "I too am busy" I said "I will bid you goodbye"

I walked downstairs in a daze and stood before the honours board listing all the eminent and distinguished people working in the building, "You can all go to hell" I said to myself. "I'll do the job myself

I asked David about his dealings with his so called psychiatrist. "He was only about five minutes with me and I thought he was the sort of person who'd cut my head in two, so I thought the sooner I get away the better". Too true that was . It was then fashion-

able cutting heads in two.

David seemed to get worse. Mutterings and mumblings and little communication. He lay in bed all day and seemed to have no energy at all. Dreadful nightmares continued and equally frightening "astral travels" "I float in a lot of dead bodies which I keep touching. Then the voices are terrifying. It is I think my inside thoughts coming outside". Was this the electrical system in the brain gone wrong or perhaps the metabolic system not feeding the electrical system with the proper nutrients? The psychiatrists don't know when one shouts or curses one is doing it to answer voices and no one else. This is typical in Tourette Syndrome.

I sat at the top of the stairs as usual and he said "Please don't come in my room" and then the screaming started up.

I went to see my nice GP who said "I retire tomorrow" "What doctor do I have in your place" "Can't tell you. I am not allowed to" he said. "Who do you and your wife have?" I said. "I wouldn't go to any GP. We go to Consultants" he said.

Then I had a brain wave. The chemist must know. "Oh Yes, Dr H gives the best prescriptions". He turned out to be kind but of a very undesirable background and the best friend of the chemist and they both had very unsavoury reputations. But at the time I had to see someone.

David was wild and incoherent and the Doctor suggested that he was admitted to a private hospital to get him assessed. I thought it a good idea and I might have a few days rest.

A private ambulance arrived with a boy about 18 as an attendant, spotty faced and undersized. David was still wild and incoherent, still in pyjamas and dressing gown and kept trying to get out. It was another long journey. When we arrived I was taken to see the Superintendent or whatever to sign a cheque for a week's stay before David could be admitted. It was to be a huge sum and I said "I'm afraid we can't pay this for long." He seemed sympathetic and said "Have you any mental illness in the family?" "No, have you?" I replied. He roared with laughter. I was learning fast. Being meek and despairing had done me no good at all and I'd had enough so I decided it was better to be a

person of dignity and give as

good as I got. A very wise decision as time proved.

The next thing was that the GP has taken off to foreign parts with his long suffering wife and then the Chemist's wife committed suicide so he left the area and there was nobody at all to help whatsoever. A foreign doctor took over the GP's Practice and was kind and helpful.

Doctor No 3. He knew nothing of David's illness but was always concerned but really didn't know what was going on in my mind and what little he gleaned he did not agree with.

About this time I got in touch with and joined an Association dedicated to researching and was delighted to find and talk to intelligent people. We arranged a symposium for a group of American doctors to speak in a big hall. They were excellent and a great inspiration. I learned all sorts of new theories and lovely words which mean something. Also a splendid book *How to Live with Schizophrenia*. Informative and inspiring and at last sense. It was by Drs Hoffer and Osmond and it changed my life. It recommended vitamins B₃ and C in mega doses. It was real inspiration and ended by changing my knowledge of the whole subject. A quarterly journal later turned into the Orthomolecular Journal.

I stayed for some time with the splendid Association I had joined who did excellent work but then started my own Association as I found later that the umbrella of mental illness was huge and included many different aspects of imbalance.

But let us return to David who due to lack of money on our part was transferred to a NHS hospital.

At last I was getting somewhere, very slowly but somewhere. I said to myself "I don't know where I'm going but I do know now who I am going with".

I set off ambitiously (after some sneering reports) to buy all the vitamins B₃ and C I could find and ended up with literally dozens of bottles of both in powder form. And later on with hundreds of bottles altogether and 10 copies of *How to live with Schizophrenia*.

I must mention at this time that my husband had returned from abroad and was most generous in letting me spend all our spare

money on these magic bottles of unknown medical value. He has continued to do so and deserves the gratitude of many people we were able to help later.

To return to David whom I went to see every day. He was definitely a little better but nothing at all like normal. The ward wasn't bad and the nurses reasonable but not very intelligent. They said I had to make an appointment to see the Consultant. After some time I got a date with him, The Lord High Executioner!

Idiot No 2. I think he wasn't as bad as No 1 but was again arrogant and patronizing. He was late and sat with his back to the light and my face to the light. He said "David's illness was caused either by incidents in childhood or damage to his brain." He kept looking at his watch to make me feel I was wasting his time so I kept looking at mine when he did. "He planned a lobotomy" David said but it was true. He ordered us to a meeting and a waste of time it was. Not a word of sense from anyone. "They talked of rubbish for that is all they knew". Sadly David kept running away. "Yes I know I promised not to go through the gate. I went over it!" David said.

Finally we thought David would be better at home when I could start the mega vitamin treatments.

Using Vitamins

The first efforts were quite astonishing. The vitamin B₃ powder about 5 gms turned David scarlet from the top of his head to his toes. He looked very funny but appeared to like it "It cleared my head" he said. It soon cleared and I tried B₃ on lots of people. Some got so scarlet they got quite frightened and had to have a shower. Sometimes I took some B₃ with them to reassure them. One thing was certain, they all felt better, more alert and normal. Nobody minded the vitamins but most loathed medication. I started to send my precious store of B₃ and C to people in need. This went on for years then I had to stop because of the expense. My family was spending a great deal of money which we really didn't have.

I devoured my magazines from the USA and learned all sorts of different aspects of mental illness. At last something was making sense. Hypoglycemia interested me a lot.

The opposite of diabetes. Diabetes have large soft eyes. Hypoglycemia have hard shiny eyes. Why ?

I also volunteered to work in the local women's prison to see why women went to prison. This was most interesting and successful and I stayed for seven years, only once a week 7-9 pm. I was horrified at the number of schizophrenics and manic depressives in my class. In prison for being ill!

I was also having a lot of enquiries and wrote endless letters in reply. One day a dreadfully ill man called. He walked like a drunk and was painfully thin.

A Case of Hypoglycemia

"I'm Ashley Thomas. I am very ill. I have hypoglycemia. I was in a terminal ward with two others who died. I have come to die. They said they could do nothing more for me. I passed a doctor's surgery the other day, (my present one I have had for 40 years), and went in as a last hope. " "I can't do anything for you but I do know a lady who is always talking about hypoglycemia, a lot of rubbish but you could go to see her".

Ashley continued "My symptoms are awful, I have to stay in a shed at the bottom of the garden as the slightest noise sends me flying across the room. I have dreadful nightmares lying amongst rows of coffins lined up. I have to put my face in my food and shovel it into my mouth. Can you help me? He showed me a note round his neck "Please feed with sugar if found unconscious".

I was shocked. "I'm not a doctor, just someone interested in sugar metabolism. I'm honestly not knowledgeable enough to help you". "I've got to die in about three weeks. Tell me what you know and let me try". So I told him what I would do. Reduce sugar very slowly and come off gluten which might be the cause of the hypoglycemia. Do it all very slowly and gradually.

Ashley was a painter and decorator. He was very intelligent. I was very worried about him in case I'd done wrong. I told Ashley not to mention me to anyone or I'd be in trouble, in prison probably!

After two weeks, the longest in my life, I had heard nothing and was worried to death so I phoned my doctor who was now also his doctor. "No I haven't heard. Yes, he's prob-

ably dead. Yes he could easily be buried without me knowing. You should mind your own business". I was incensed. "Who sent him to me? You because you couldn't do it yourself. I slammed down the phone.

Then one day the phone rang. I could hardly believe my ears "I thought you were interested in me?" To cut a long story short, Ashley had made a splendid recovery and was back in the house. He still had odd attacks but had discovered the most marvellous treatments for his condition. He often popped in to see me with his latest discoveries and funny stories. This Christmas his 1994 card said "Another month I've had in spite of the 30 years they said I'd never have!"

Next we had two very big discoveries.

Milk Allergy

David was going through a bad patch of lying all day on his bed looking totally exhausted. "I have tried to get up and I can't. I know it is pathetic but I can't help it". Then a doctor friend sent him a short article of great interest explaining about CoEnzyme A and pantothenic acid or calcium pantothenate. The adrenals immediately benefited and within a week or two, David rose from his bed like a Phoenix from the ashes, cheerful and full of hope.

At the same time I had read an article in a medical paper saying "Milk is a food for cows". What about all the milk David was addicted to? Isn't addiction a pattern of allergies?

David had appalling eczema for 14 years, groin to knees and it had started with all his coloured milks. He got told always that it was psychosomatic!! So off came the milk and in went the calcium pantothenate. Within two weeks there wasn't even a scar of eczema. We were ecstatic, he was on his way back.

Then one morning David came down with the left side of his face hugely swollen, about the size of a small melon. It wasn't a boil, no head, just a huge swelling. David was quite cheerful with his new found energy so it couldn't be an infection. "I'm going shopping" "You can't go out looking like that" "Actually I feel very well". "People will stare at you" "I don't mind".

This was a new found confidence. It was

beyond me. So off he went and ran into our GP "My goodness, what's the matter with you, come at once to my surgery. I'll give you some penicillin. Are you sure you have no pain?"

He came back as cheerful as before. I said "David do you know what I think your swelling is?" "No" "Your brain was waterlogged with all the milk you drank and couldn't metabolise and now it has drained out of your head".

It certainly was a turning point. What with mega B₃ and C, no milk, no sugar (after Ashley's hypoglycemia) and calcium pantothenate, David's progress was very definite. He'd cut out gluten after following the work of articles written by Dr Dohan. So we had come a long way but still had a long way to go.

Testing Schizophrenia

Then I was asked if I would take a few people to a hospital in a city where a biochemist was anxious to take samples from patients suspected of schizophrenia to see if any clues emerged in their sweat, urine and blood. A brave effort.

I chose David, Ashley and a man called James. I didn't explain too much but said it was to try to find out what caused their various illnesses. James was a big fat indulgent man who seemed more hypoglycemic/ alcoholic than schizophrenic. We were to be admitted to the dietetic department. David was co-operative but rather silent. Nobody was told, as it is my rule never to say what anyone else suffered from. I was a sort of control.

We were on a gluten free diet. The dietician was a delightful girl but had little idea as to what she was doing. Her gluten free bread was horrible and the rest of the food far too scanty. We were all to be interviewed. Ashley went first. In no time at all there was terrible yelling "No I don't beat my wife. My wife isn't the sort of woman men beat. I heard of people like you in the RAF and the tricks you get up to. I'm going to tell my MP about you". This was Ashley replying to questions from Idiot No 3 Psychiatrist. The door opened and Ashley staggered in. He was a dreadful colour and he was holding his side and moving badly. He was closely followed by a young bearded

man, his tormentor who was clutching a piece of paper. We all glared at him. We all felt very angry. He was reading the piece of paper and appeared to be going to stay with us.

I'd had enough of him. "Did you ask Ashley those offensive questions? It is disgraceful. Did you examine him?" "No he has a slight pain in his tummy" "He had a severe pain caused by hypoglycemia. How did you know what he had if you didn't examine him?" "I am going to report you to my MP for slander" said Ashley recovering his tongue.

Then in came the nice biochemist, flushed of face and agitated of manner "What's going on?" We were all vociferous in telling her. She leaned forward and snatched the bit of paper off the now discomfited psychiatrist and tore it up. "Now it doesn't matter". The tormentor got up and left the room. We didn't see him again as no one would agree to be questioned.

The next morning we took Ashley to the station and put him on the train. He still looked ill but had got back his sense of humour which cheered us all all up.

We had to stay a second night. After a meagre gluten free supper on our restricted diet, James began to be quite funny and likeable.

When people are put on diets, these must be attractive and satisfying so they stick to them. Ours was awful.

About 9 pm the phone rang in our little dietetic flat. Hesitantly I picked it up. It was Ashley in very good spirits. "Yes I'm having a nice cup of tea and Jennifer is making me a nice supper with some fried onions which are marvelous for warding off an attack of hypoglycemia. While they are cooking, Jennifer is sticking those bits of paper together" "Which bits?". "The ones the biochemist tore up and put in the waste paper basket. Do you know what he said "He is reasonably clean" "Me who'd had that hot bath for 30 minutes and in my best suit and with all my nails done specially. I really think I'll go to my MP" "It's all my fault. I did not know we were to see a psychiatrist" "Don't worry I've heard of these people"

We made our way home, James to stay with us overnight. I made a splendid dinner which James devoured voraciously. He re-

ally was a metabolic case.

Ashley was a lovely man. When I lived in London he often popped in to see me with all his latest dietary discoveries and his hilarious stories.

His recovery caused a great stir in the medical fraternity in the small area in which he lived. He got his story published in the Reader's Digest but he never gave me away. I got a rather nasty message from a doctor to tell me to "Keep my bloody nose out of their business". Very rude.

Ashley had great fun and it only took about a month for him to return to his usual self. For fun and really to torment the doctors, he used to clean his car outside his terrace house. In no time at all he had the best cleaned car in the area.

Doctor (1) a decent chap "I'm so sorry Ashley, I never thought of your illness being nutritional, really I didn't" "Oh, that's all right. I was lucky I found someone better".

Doctor (2) "Ha Ashley, I see you are better. Splendid. How did it happen?" "Well you see I didn't fancy that plot you booked for me in the local cemetery so I decided not to take it".

Doctor (3) "Hullo Ashley, you really do look well. How did this happen?". "Oh well, I decided not to die. The other two were not so lucky in my ward, they both died. The poor girl could only move one eyelid".

Yet More Psychiatry

Doctor No 4. Neuropsychiatrist. The next splendid happening was my husband had a contact at work with a very senior psychiatrist who would see David as a favour. We said we would be grateful if he would only deal with biochemistry (the only treatment) and requested no psycho anything at all, what I called Mumbo Jumbo, adding, I would really prefer a good witch doctor who did have some knowledge of their victims' backgrounds. After all dead objects were no worse than some of the awful things offered to the sick and their relatives. I had by then coined the phrase about their victims, usually mother and the sick one "Accused, Abused and Insulted". How this could be calculated to make them better I did not know. These psychiatrists profess to be helping their patients but in fact all they do is to make the well sick and the sick sicker.

Anyway, there we were, my husband, myself and David, on our next journey of discovery. We were to see a rather tired looking elderly psychiatrist. "You, I see, have already seen my colleague at Hospital X". "Oh yes. He took three months to see me and then I got five minutes in a corridor. You have no doubt read what he said?" He nodded. " I found your colleague callous, indifferent and incompetent". He froze practically solid! "Don't speak like that. Please get on with the history". "No" I said "because that is what he was, callous, indifferent and incompetent. Every time I say it and I shall continue to say it to everyone, I feel better and it is most important that I do feel better". He looked quite distressed but I continued "I think David has a breakdown in his immune system and his metabolic system. Food seems to be concerned". He said more sharply "Get on with the history". I saw he had had me. I didn't care any more and still felt a lot more help was needed. We had progressed but not enough and not fast enough.

It took two hours to persuade David to enter his hospital some miles away, for about two weeks to check on medication etc. I had learned not to mention anything he was on already, like his supplements and diet which he had just started. I was no longer frightened of any of them. They had made no progress at all since the biochemists had discovered neuroleptic drugs and that was all they know. Again I say "They only talk of rubbish for that is all they know".

I felt satisfied with the exercise. The psychiatrist turned out to be nice and saw David once a fortnight. I am not against medication and I think it is an essential part of treatment provided other things can accompany the patient's treatment with a view to reducing the medications with all their side effects while other treatments took affect. How this was ever to be achieved if one does not even mention vitamins/minerals and diet, I never found out.

In due course we collected David who sounded quiet and subdued. Then he burst out and said that the hospital psychiatrist who had interviewed him had asked him some pointless personal questions and then David had told the psychiatrist to "Get off and David never saw him again except at group discussions.

I soon knew the answer. My GP and his receptionist sent me a report from the above

psychiatrist and it went something like this "He is very clever but introvert and successful. She is very intelligent and hardworking and extrovert and checks David's medication twice, so she is the cause of the illness!!" The medical people offered to take up my case as they were very angry indeed. However I thought the ensuing fracas would not be worthwhile and I would be certain to lose with their lack of integrity, not to mention the Medical Defence Union.

When finally David saw his neuropsychiatrist for the last time, he said David had made a "Natural Recovery". He had been kind, helpful and efficient and we shall both always be very grateful to him. Let nobody think it was easy getting David back to work and normality. It was a long wearisome business. These sickies are their own worst enemies and find it difficult to accept their imbalances. A moral crutch is essential for quite a long time until the once good mental processes return to normal.

David, today, is back on even keel and happily at work. He does an excellent job and is very skilled at looking after all his own investments for his future. He also runs my office very efficiently, doing all the typing, copying, post office work and filing etc. He is a veritable treasure and best of all, a very good translator of all my scribbles.

It is he who said the other day, "You ought to write to Dr Hoffer again. It is some time since you wrote". I have always kept in touch. He was my lifeline and always answered my questions immediately, a veritable avenue of hope for David and myself.

When I suggested we write David's story, David agreed at once and said "I'll call it "Both Feet back on the Ground" but it must remain anonymous".

I agree entirely with this and tell all mentally sick people to all do the same and keep their revelations private. The world is not ready for miracles, another reason why I never mention names.

We, David and I, have worked out what we think are the areas of explorations which should be carried out on all patients showing signs of mental illness. Here they are. Some people may be lucky and find their clues

after one or two tests. No one can fail to benefit.

Suggestions for investigations into the biochemical and nutritional status of the mentally ill.

- (1) Breakdown of the Immune and Metabolic Systems
- (2) Allergic reactions to foods and environmental hazards such as petrochemical fumes, gas, paint, etc.
- (3) Additives to foods such as preservatives, colourants, emulsifiers, etc.
- (4) Dependencies on vitamins and mineral salts.
- (5) Deficiencies in vitamins and mineral salts.
- (6) Missing enzymes.
- (7) Malabsorptions of nutrients.
- (8) Junk foods which are mainly sub nutritional.

I must not close without a deeply and truly grateful thanks to all those professional people who helped us, sometimes at risk to themselves. But above all we want to thank Dr Hoffer who was the person behind all our work, who has brought science and investigation together in all our efforts to help the mentally sick.

Part 2

Having got David settled except for a few hiccups over food which is very difficult for both the person concerned and the carer, I was able to stretch my wings and give attention to the letters I was getting begging for help. It is very difficult to teach people how to help and the helped how to accept help. They are often not able to accept or believe anything inconvenient to them until the magic day comes when what you tell them to do seems to cause improvement. That is the beginning of success.

I have told you in Part 1 of my encounters with some so called doctors and psychiatrists which was a horrifying experience. Now accounts were beginning to filter in of other people, patients and parents who were receiving the same treatment. I really was very angry. We were told (1) the doctors' principles were that he or she should do the patients no harm and (2) to respect totally the confidentially entrusted to them. Where had all that gone? Or was psychiatry a different sort of pseudo medicine or had the few brave enough to talk, exaggerated or told lies? If psychiatry had turned into what I was being told, it had

deteriorated into a sort of pseudo science with no truth, no facts, no science, just a morass of mumbo jumbo built on the teachings of Freud, Jung and Melanie Klein.

Freud did the Mums and Klein did the Dads. The chances of escaping these prophets of doom and their accolytes was almost impossible and I was overwhelmed with letters and phone calls "I am going to commit suicide" "Why?" and then the dreadful story would all come out of the persecution of the families of the mentally sick. "What is going to happen to your sick one who will then be left at the mercy of his persecutors? You stand firm and fight".

It really wasn't the teachings of the prophets of doom themselves but worst of the lot were the followers who put their own (normally revolting) interpretations on the proph-ets' teachings. Really nothing was barred and sometimes did end in suicide like the poor boy who had no parents and was told he had caused his own illness. So he killed himself. Sadly his story got to me too late. Here I must say there must have been some good doctors and psychiatrists working in my field of investigation. I never got any splendid stories only the bad ones. To this day I cannot imagine why everybody concerned didn't turn on these wicked tormentors. I often wondered if the tormentors themselves were sick and had gone into the job to find a cure for their own illness. Some I found out certainly were. The situation was that they did an extra two years of training above the medical one and then became Consultants so no GP could question them but were very frightened of them too. Also they all stuck together like instant glue and nobody seemed able to confront them. I even wrote to an august medical body saying that all psychiatrists should have a medical examination every two years and preferably not by their own peers! Nothing happened. I was always very afraid that any interference on the part of anyone would result in more ill treatment to the patient but to give them their due, this did not happen and even those that stood and faced their persecutors did not find their positions worse. In fact things were overall better.

Getting Involved

The day came when my position on the side lines, reading and listening altered. It happened suddenly. The phone rang. A quiet little voice said "Our son is very ill with schizophrenia and we are being blamed. Can you help us? We are going to see him this afternoon." "Would you like me to come with you?" "Please we are very frightened" They arrived after lunch and were a really delightful Anglo Asian couple. They were very distressed and were so grateful for my interest.

We arrived at the hospital and son John was sent for. He appeared in the doorway. A very nice looking boy of about sixteen in pyjamas and dressing gown. He looked very ill, paused at the door and tried to cross into the room but could not. He obviously had some sort of disorientation where the floor looked uneven and he simply couldn't manage to rationalise it. His father got up to help him cross the doorway. No one normal could possibly have doubted the real love between the parents and John. I wondered how they could possibly have been accused of anything.

The parents were to see the Consultant Psychiatrist and asked if their great friend, Mrs Hervi, could come in too. I was very graciously invited to join the consultation. John's father began a most intelligent discussion about their problems and John's condition. He began to get very upset and got little comfort or help from the interviewer. Suddenly I'd had enough of the condescension and the arrogant manner.

"Are those your dogs outside?" I asked the psychiatrist. "Yes". "Is it advisable for them to be snarling and going for the patients who look very distressed?" He shot out of the room to quieten the animals. "I don't think Pavlov would be very pleased would he?"

John's father and mother looked so upset I thought I'd fill the gap. "Tell me, why do you blame mothers for the illness John has?". "I don't do any such thing. Everyone knows I am a kind and compassionate doctor who does his best to reassure mothers".

"Oh no you're not". Mum had found her voice at last. "You said to my husband, you bring your wife to me and I'll tell you why your son is ill". He looked astonished and

really frightened and tried to get rid of us all very quickly. I said again "Why did you say that of someone you didn't know?". He didn't answer and we all went to give John a big hug. He was quite unable to co-operate.

The interesting thing was that the parents were much more cheerful and so grateful to have someone to talk to. Again it is the loneliness and fear which defeats and allows the wicked to prosper.

They moved John to a hospital nearer to them with a decent biochemical psychiatrist and they were able to keep him at home. He improved very slowly but would not take mega vitamins or go on a diet so his progress became stationary and never improved beyond that stationary point.

I went home very thoughtful and I realised what a huge task it was to try to help anyone through that terrible barrier which had been artificially erected between the sick and their loving despairing parents. For what purpose?

I remember about this time a young journalist from a distinguished newspaper asking to see me. He had heard about my theories that mental illness started in the gut and not the brain. I found this out when as a voluntary Red Cross worker while abroad, I nursed a huge cross section of the sick ones of different races but all with the same symptoms.

We chatted and he listened, then said "To talk about food being involved in mental illness, or to be more exact the cause of mental illness, is really too much". He shook his head sadly and looked at me with kindness and pity, "Now I have heard everything and I can't accept it". We parted good friends and the next I heard of him was fighting the cause of the Jews in South Africa! I could see my job was more than hard. Emotion was not going to help at all.

I could see it was no good getting angry either, so I at this time evolved a way of diverting my emotional thoughts by making encapsulated thoughts into words. This was a good escape route for my emotions and served me well over the years as you shall see.

About this time as well as reading prodigiously, I was speaking at odd meetings and pursuing lines of investigation.

It came to my notice at one of these meet-

ings that a certain psychiatric doctor had some publicity over schizophrenia and night primrose oil which was apparently very efficacious unless epilepsy was involved when it was not advisable for such a programme. So I wrote (as is usual) to enquire of his progress and to suggest he might do a research for us on the subject. He wrote back most enthusiastically and said he would be delighted. I was elated but as usual not for long. I made a few very discreet enquiries and found out another Association had given this gentleman £13,000 for such a research programme. This was strictly confidential, so I wrote to ask if he completed a research for them, not mentioning any money. If so, might I have a copy of his research before I made a final decision. Our correspondence ceased at once and that was the end of that. Not very encouraging. The other group never heard anymore or got their money back.

I was by this time getting money in dribbles which went into an Account for Research Only and to this day not one penny has been used for any other purpose. This has enabled us to fund researches which were and still are very important. Also it kept out "do gooders" and gave me a few honest people. My husband and I paid for stamps, printing and any other expenses. My husband funds this to this day with great generosity.

About this time someone from a horrible generative illness family got in touch with me in case I had any ideas. I didn't have but it comforted them to talk to me. The sufferings of the patients and family were quite appalling. I had no ideas but suggested a few dietary trials might help. Some tried and found in fact that what I suggested did help.

Then one day someone from the group told me that there was a doctor in charge of research (of which there was literally none). The only thing he did was to round graveyards and collect family names where the disease started. He also spoke at their group meetings which I did not attend. At the last one he suddenly mentioned me and said I was a nutter and no one was to take any notice of me.

The audience was angry and two people got up to protest, one in tears. They said I was a very kind lady who tried to help them.

Later he phoned me to tell me to mind my own

business. I replied I did no one any harm and that he should investigate other lines of enquiry.

A nasty man, a GP in general practice when he wasn't going round churchyards at vast expense! This was paid for by the MRC to the tune of £26,400.

I was a little shaken but my husband said cheerfully "It's nothing to what you have said about him over time". "No but I had the manners to do so in private and not to an audience in a public hall. Never mind" I said darkly "I'll deal with him" but I had no idea how until the magic moment arrived.

I attended the next public meeting of the group where he spoke in a lot of taradiddles which didn't help anyone. Then we were all invited to go up to him privately and ask questions. I waited, then took my turn.

"My love" he said "how can I help you?"

"I just want to know, does this illness appear in any special part of the family?"

"No my love". Then I put on the table some of my information. He hardly looked at it and then said "It is all rubbish"

I replied "Why do they write it, for fun, I suppose. I find these doctors intelligent and concerned people and it is well worth reading what they write". He pushed it all away. "You're wasting your time".

"Do you know who I am? Clare Hervi"

I stared at him totally mesmerised because he had started to shake all the way from the top of his head to his toes. I thought he was going to have a stroke and got quite alarmed. All I was going to ask him was, in calling me a nutter, was it a medical diagnosis or just a slanderous statement but I never got the chance. He turned and ran for his life. I retained my dignity by just staying and watching his departing figure. "Now" I thought "You can depart into the obscurity from which you should never have emerged".

Like most of my stories it had another ending. One day working in my kitchen an announcement came that he was to speak on the Radio. His voice said "When reviewing this illness you must not dismiss the involvement of nutrition!" After that he really did depart into obscurity and to this day has never re-emerged.

I did try to attend as many advertised meetings as possible but did find them very

tiring and unproductive.

One which interested me was when Laing, after a visit to India, was to speak to a crowd of adoring students. The hall was packed. At last he appeared. All I knew was that he blamed all families for the illness of one member of the family. He said they picked one member, said to be chosen by the rest of the family, to persecute! The rest of the family went to him for treatment while the sick one stayed at home doing goodness knows what on his or her own. I had had endless letters "He has made us all so ill and our sick one is far worse". As I said before "He made the well sick and the sick sicker" He appeared on the platform to deafening applause. His hair had been styled and set, odd in those days, and he was barefoot. He started talking of his great friend and colleague who had suddenly disappeared from the public gaze (and in fact has never been heard of since). "He had turned his back on the world who had not really appreciated his worth". "Ha" I thought, "I could diagnose that quite easily". He continued to talk, using many very unattractive words and expressions of Anglo Saxon origin. I said to the student next to me "What an awful man". She looked shocked and said "But think what he has done for families".

I kept putting up my hand but nobody asked me to speak! I was going to ask him if his diet of rice had any effect on him while he was in India from which he had recently returned. I made my way home very despairing.

Next was a man, a psychiatric writer who was playing (I think this is the right word) to a huge packed audience. All hoping for magic from the great man's mouth. He chatted on with the usual nonsense and ended up by saying "I consider suicide to be a successful end to treatment of a schizophrenic!!" I could hardly believe my ears. There were many very sick looking people in the audience, desperate for help.

I put my hand up as usual and kept it up for a long time but nobody asked me to speak. I was going to say two things, (1) You may be a good journalist but you are an awful doctor. (2) I hear your clinic has two entrances, the first for pushing people to suicide and the second it is said is where people are admitted who want to

get better by orthodox

means. But no I wasn't allowed to speak. I realised I would have to employ different tactics, a nice very eye catching suit and a front row seat, not to mention great determination.

So the next meeting I got in very early in a eye catching bright red suit and the front row.

There were the usual dreary talks enough to send anyone to sleep and then up got a tall good looking man, a psychiatrist, to speak. Fortunately for me the Chairman got up in a hurry and his seat was taken by someone else. It really was my lucky day. The speaker spoke for quite a long time on the glories of psychotherapy and then ended by making a statement that he and all his ilk hoped the day would come when there would be a psychiatrist for every three patients. It really was my lucky day! Up shot my hand and the new Chairman said "Lady in Red in front row" (He patently did not know me). "I want to know in this brave new world of yours is there to be any place for biochemistry?". He promptly sat down, looking very harrassed and said "I'll have to take time to answer that question". I waited about an hour and shot up my hand again "I'm still waiting for an answer". Looking even more harrassed he snapped "Yes".

I waited till the speeches were over and then followed my reluctant speaker. "I'd like to speak to you please". He stared at me, not at all pleased. "It took you a long time to answer, didn't it?" "As a matter of fact I am eclectic". "I thought that meant you said what you liked when you liked and how you liked. That can mean you don't even know when people are physically ill and look physically ill". We stared at each other with distaste and he then said abruptly "I've got to go". "Yes I'm sure you have". Were these people afraid of being taken for what they were not, or indeed, for what they really were?

My next meeting was run by an Association to do with mental illness held in a big hall in Westminster. I carried out my usual strategies. We had if we liked, to write two questions to be asked of the last eminent/ distinguished speaker. It was all very boring, mainly to do with local government problems and I had difficulty in keeping awake. I had no hope of speaking to anyone

or of anyone speaking to me."

Now for the questions which were asked" said the Chairman. Then "The last question is from Clare Hervi"

I'd totally forgotten what it was and where I'd put it. My heart was thumping and my face as red as my red suit. Then it all came back to me.

(1) Why do psychiatrists abuse, accuse and insult the parents of the mentally sick?

(2) Who appoints psychiatrists to become judge and jury to accuse people of crimes they have never committed?

To my astonishment the whole hall erupted into a storm of applause loud and long and clear. So I wasn't alone in beliefs.

"I would like an answer please"

"I don't know" said the fount of all psychiatric knowledge on the platform.

"If you don't who does?" No answer. He sat slumped in his chair. Later we all assembled in a room for a glass of sherry (those were the days) and to shake hands with the Chairman of the meeting.

"That was a very good question Mrs Hervi".

"It didn't get a good answer, did it?" So there were lots of people on my side but too frightened to speak.

I was getting a little tired and often wondered what I was achieving. I did think something should be done but very difficult to assess. Once I had to travel across England by small local trains all night with newspapers to get home for breakfast. The train services ended at a main station and the newspapers were transferred to vans. The men on these were all very kind, transferring me from van after van till I got nearly home, very tired and very dirty.

Then it all escalated into a big public scandal. Some time before, we, a colleague and I, had reports of the serious ill treatment of mental patients in a well known mental hospital. We asked for an appointment and got one with the Consultant Psychiatrist who was operating the new system of Behavioural Therapy in a most brutal and distressing fashion.

My husband had said "I don't like you going to these places. I shall come with you. One of these days you won't come home. They'll lock you up".

"Oh no they won't. I'm not a bit afraid of them now. They are awful cowards".

We all expected a great bully to appear but he turned out to be a slim nice looking man with a quiet voice and beautiful corn flower blue eyes.

We all chatted amicably until suddenly he said in a very dreamy voice "You see, the mothers are all mad and when they have made their children mad, the mothers get better themselves". We were all aghast but what a vindication of our work.

The assistant psychiatrist said "They all hate their mothers and long to get away from them". My husband had had enough. "If they hate their mothers, why then do they always run home if they can manage it? That is not the behaviour of a normal person". No answer.

We all trooped out and my husband said, very crossly, "That man is mad". I said "I keep telling you what some are like and you won't listen". Then came the big breakthrough. A young bearded journalist called to see me. He was collecting information about the above hospital and wanted to know more. It was a provincial newspaper owned by a big London National. I told him I could tell him a lot but only on the strict promise that no names were to be disclosed or sources of information given, unless with permission. He promised and kept his word which gave me great pleasure. He is now an author of world wide reputation. I told him I had wondered whether to camp outside the ward to listen and watch but I thought I would be caught and not handle it properly.

Then came a phone call. The local Paper had really gone to town on the story. The middle pages were full of the appalling details all headed in huge black type, filth and brutality.

Oddly enough a few weeks before, I had managed to get the ear of the Minister of Health who was slow leaving his chair on the platform after a speech. "May I speak to you?". He was very angry. "One of the National Health hospitals is practising great cruelty and medical mismanagement on it's patients". He was even more angry when I said "It must be looked into" and gave him the name of the hospital.

But at last there it all was. Three suicides and endless cruelty. All called Behavioural

Therapy. The sick got nothing at all but were made to look after themselves completely, cooking, washing, cleaning, everything. There was a pattern of Reward and Punishment. If they didn't do their work properly, they didn't eat and if they didn't wash or clean, they lived in the squalor they created. The parents were terribly distressed as they were not allowed to help and the squalor and stench were awful. I had long reports from the mother of one of the running away boys.

But there it all was on paper. I had a brainwave and phoned the Paper and bought up the whole edition left and it was delivered to me as to a newsagent. These copies numbered about 200.

I was enormously proud of it and the same day posted about 12 copies to the Houses of Parliament to what I thought were sympathetic M.Ps. Of course I also sent one to the Minister of Health who had been so cross with me. Apparently they all landed on his desk at once and he said something very nasty about me. I didn't care. Within a few days, every Paper in the country carried an editorial on the subject and very condemning they were. The one I liked best was "It isn't their ignorance I despise but their arrogance" (referring to the doctors concerned).

I still have a few copies of the two hundred I bought, cheap at the price. They had done magnificent work.

I wrote to the London Editor and the young journalist got transferred to the London paper and has done very well since.

Then there was to be a Public Enquiry and after some jogging of the memory of the Minister of Health, I was to give evidence! It was explained he had no intention of excluding me!

Of the parents concerned hardly any would give evidence, so great was their fear. The one splendid one was a little Cockney lady whose son kept running away. She had four children and lived in a small council house. She had the Consultant Psychiatrist and his acolytes call upon her with a tape recorder, just starting to be used. Her husband had Parkinson's and her much loved youngest son had schizophrenia. Her self-invited visitors strode into her nice Utile home. "Ha" said the Consultant Psychiatrist, "All very neat and tidy, I see". "It's not really, not when

the family is here". She knew she had done something wrong and displeased them. "I wonder" said her tormentor.

They then (recording) made her tell all about her SEX life in detail. Then they took the record away to play to anyone interested in listening! Totally revolting. She even asked for a second opinion and got the Superintendent of the Hospital who sat for 30 minutes with his hands over his stomach and his eyes closed while she desperately told every way she could anything to try to help her beloved Tim. At last he opened his eyes, "I agree entirely with my colleague. That will be £30 please". She was very poor but somehow found the £30.

When she phoned in total despair to tell me, I was angrier than I had ever been "Why on earth did you do it?" "To help Tim" she answered tearfully.

I have always told everyone if going to see anyone in hospital or prison, always look as nice as possible to try to do them credit. So when the big day of the enquiry drew close I searched critically through my wardrobe and found a large much loved hat made of a sort of short fur but it looked a bit grubby. Very old it was, so I toured my village to find a cleaning material, (those old days were not like today) and couldn't. Then I had a brainwave and went to the pet shop who at once supplied me with a powder for pampered dogs! It worked like a charm and my hat was restored to its original pristine purity.

I set off on the great day in higher spirits than in years. At my little local station I met a neighbour who said "You do look nice". "Do I? I am going somewhere special, what do you think of my hat?" "Smashing". "I'm glad, I've just cleaned it with dog powder". He looked very serious and then said "You won't go to Crufts Dog Show in it, will you". We both dissolved into gales of laughter. It was a lovely start to that most important day for the abused, mentally sick. I felt marvellous, I was walking 10 ft tall and I knew after all the years I was going to win. I could take on the world.

I was shown into a room with four inquisitors in it. They were (1) a plump, elderly, newly retired medical Consultant. (2) The Head Nurse of a distant County. (3) A young man from the Ministry (about 23) and a fourth I do not remember.

As it was a general enquiry covering so many aspects of the complaints, I had decided to concentrate my complaints on the horrific story of the invasion to investigate the sex life of the little lady and her very sick Parkinson's husband, not to mention her very ill schizophrenic son. I told the horrid story to a dead silence. Everyone was staring at me in devastated silence."

Dr B (the Chairman), would you or your wife allow a team to enter your house and subject you to such an ordeal"? He didn't answer, so I repeated the question. His head had sunk down on his ample chest and he was scribbling furiously. I repeated the question. Still no answer so I said "I can see you are not going to answer because, of course, you wouldn't allow them to do it. Nobody would and you are privileged because you are a doctor. But it was good enough for poor brave little Mrs Tibbs because she was just nobody". I paused and then said " I think it pertinent to ask, was this man a doctor or was he a voyeur?"

They were all very nice to me and as for the young Mr L from the Ministry, his eyes were popping out with astonishment.

Apparently the procedure, to which I referred, stopped at once.

Next day, dear loyal little Mrs Tibbs gave her evidence, starting "Haven't you seen our Mrs Hervi? She wont allow us to be cruelly treated".

"Oh yes, we've seen her" said the Chairman, "a very interesting lady". Mrs Tibbs continued "Dr S" (the subject of the complaints) " was once a kind and helpful doctor. Now I think he is a schizophrenic himself!!"

After the enquiry the ward was emptied and the patients sent elsewhere, the whole place cleaned and disinfected and it needed it too. Several of the participating doctors were transferred elsewhere and the ward was renamed. A veritable end to a horrible practice.

Now today, even worse treatment of the sick occurs. Poor sick people thrown on to the street, others wandering about, unmedi-cated, committing murders and such like, through no fault of their own. Still no research and none so far planned.

For my part I had done what I could and

transferred my energies to funding research, in which field I work to day.

There is one last little story to illustrate so well what I had worked for.

A young man, a classical scholar, had to leave university as he had developed schizophrenia. He had been admitted to a mental hospital. I had become very attached to his family and one day his mother phoned me in great distress.

"I went to the hospital to meet Tom's Consultant Psychiatrist. Some of the patients, of which there were quite a lot, were telling people which queue to join as one was biochemical and the other psychological causes".

My friend entered the Consultant's room and said who she was. "Oh yes, Tom. He has schizophrenia and (with a sneer) we know who's done it to him".

She fled from the room and did not remember driving home. She was dreadfully distressed but also a lady of quality and character as she had driven an ambulance on active service during the war, a FANY.

I said "Don't on any account go out in the car but phone this man and say exactly what you feel. Do it now at once."

About an hour later the phone rang. She had truly done exactly that and sounded better.

"I would like to speak to Dr Skunk" (as we had christened him). This to his Secretary. "I'm afraid you can't, he is on his ward rounds".

"May I send him a message?". "Certainly".

"Will you take the message down carefully and take it to him at once?". "Certainly".

"Tell him from me he is a nasty little bugger".

There was a pause and the girl said, "It's not my fault that he's a nasty little bugger!". "Is that all right?" "Splendid" I said. It wasn't exactly what I had intended but it was good. Then we both started to laugh and we both felt he'd got what he deserved.

That evening Tom's father received a telephone call from Dr Skunk "I am going to complain to the Minister of Health about your wife's rudeness".

"You do that. I'll be delighted to tell the Minister that I agree entirely with my wife's opinion". No more was ever again heard of

Dr Skunk.

To end this, I would like to pay tribute to the sick and their families who have endured so much. Also to some brave doctors and professional people who helped, sometimes at risk to themselves. Let us now hope that research will put an end to all the hurtful practices used instead of scientific investigation.

As I have stated several times before, medication does play a splendid part in the treatment of schizophrenia but it would be infinitely better if combined with nutrition and supplements. At present there is no sign of such scientific progress and it is impossible to get any doctor to prescribe nutritional regimes and mega vitamin additions to the medication. The only explanation is that to introduce cheap and effective nutrients would cause the pharmaceutical barons enormous loss of money. So the sick sit waiting for progress because of medical politics and vested interests.

A little hope lies in the fact that in North America there has been an amazing swing into the use of vitamins in the general field of medicine. Harvard Medical school has created a department of alternative and complementary medicine. Columbia University has done the same. For the past five years the college of medicine at the University of Colorado at Denver has been teaching their medical students all about the proper use of vitamins in therapeutic dosages. The American Government has just passed a Bill taking away from the FDA the power to legislate against the use of vitamins and this should be a signal to the rest of the world that they should ease up on any attempts to control the use of vitamins.