

An Individual Psychological Approach to a Case of Folie Imposée

H. C. KRAMER, M.D., PH.D., *New York*

Folie imposée is one of the four subdivisions of folie à deux or the psychosis of association. The patients involved in this form of communicated psychosis are called the inducer and the acceptor. (These terms have been chosen among many others as the most convenient ones). There is usually one inducer present who takes the leading part in this form of psychosis. There may be two, three and four acceptors who become involved from the inducer's psychotic trend. There may be even more acceptors become involved although the literature referring to this peculiar kind of psychosis¹² lists as the largest number four acceptors; such an induced or imposed psychosis is then called folie à cinq.

Alexander Gralnick⁵ in "A Review of 10 Cases and the Entire English Literature," writes that "the number of cases of folie à deux is relatively small." However since many cases go unrecognized and unreported "our conception of the rarity of folie à deux may be mistaken."

Cases of folie à deux have been described as early as 1819.³ Various technical terms have been applied such as "infectiousness of insanity," "psychic infection," "contagious insanity," "reciprocal insanity," "collective insanity," "associated insanity," which latter has been changed to "psychosis of association," the term most frequently applied in recent English literature.

Four subdivisions of this kind of psychosis have been introduced by various authors. They are "folie imposée" (imposed psychosis), where the delusional trends are taken over by the acceptor unaltered and with little resistance; "folie simultanée" (simultaneous psychosis), where identical psychotic trends appear in two predisposed individuals nearly at the same time; "folie communiquée" (communicated psychosis), when the acceptor has taken over the delusional trends only after long resistance and maintained them even after separation; "folie induite" (induced psychosis), where new delusional trends are added to the imposed ones by the acceptor.

Gralnick⁵ offers the following factors as important in the study of cases of folie à deux: The length and type of association as referred to relationship, background and circumstances; the dominant tendency of the inducer and the submissive trend of the acceptor, to which many authors have pointed in describing the personalities of the involved people; their relationship which is of greatest interest because it excludes e.g. heredity and constitutional predisposition in the cases of non-blood related combinations; the prepsychotic personalities often described as suggestible, superstitious, and of weak character; in addition, sex and age. It is assumed that women have been looked at as more suggestible, more superstitious than

men and that younger people succumb more easily to the influence of older ones. The delusions are most frequently of a paranoid character and less frequently of a depressive coloring.

Gralnick points out that the homosexual drives, which have been mentioned most frequently, "have to await more thorough analytical investigations in the persons involved." According to Grover,⁶ homosexuality seems "to influence an intimate merging of personalities," whereas A. A. Brill maintains that "it is the result of an infantile stage fixed at the narcissistic phase of development in predisposed cases and which leads to homosexuality and paranoia." Yet cases of husband-wife folie à deux do not seem to fit into this scheme. Horney⁸ points to homosexuality as "evidence of an already distorted personality-structure accompanied by dependence upon others for affection." It is this craving for affection and acceptance which Alfred Adler¹ has stressed in his Individual Psychology as the most important factor of the inter-dependence in the relationship of people, blood-related or non-blood-related, whose feelings of insecurity and inadequacy have been deepened by systemic or functional inferiorities, faulty up-bringing, an ineffective maturation process and so on, and their compensatory attempts at adaptation in the mental and emotional sphere.

The comments on the importance which heredity and environment play in the problem of psychosis of association have been manifold and divergent. Heredity has been pointed out as important in a communicated psychosis of monozygotic twins. The study of a psychosis of association in non-blood related persons such as in husband and wife have favored the environmental factor as decisive. R. Dreikurs⁴ points to the fact that sometimes environmental influence and early conditioning may be decisive in the development of mental disorders, even in the presence of hereditary factors. "A more thorough study of psychosis of association may show that the family relationship seems to play an important part in the so-called functional psychoses and deserves more illumination," writes Postle.¹⁰ In this respect cases of communicated psychosis occurring between husband and wife, where hereditary and equal constitutional predisposition can be eliminated, may throw some light upon the development of psychotic conditions in general. Ignorance linked to poor adaptability, emotional imbalance and an early conditioning process may result in unconstructive compensatory reactions which finally may lead to the fixation of delusional ideas. In the increased competitive struggle of our time, feelings of inadequacy may sooner reach the point where a break with reality may become an individual's last resort to an intolerable life situation.

The case of a wife-husband folie imposée which I want to describe seems to me well suited for individual psychological observations which may help to trace the way of the conditioning process in both the inducer and the acceptor.

The association of Mr. and Mrs. R. is not of long standing. They met in 1937 and married after a short courtship. Mrs. R. stated somewhat boastingly, "On the first day we met he asked me to marry him." The most important factor in this "love at first sight" was the similarity of their origin and background. Both were born and reared in small communities of Austria where according to their own statements, "envy and hatred were thriving and often made life miserable" for them. The younger members of these small country towns were striving to leave their communities. They usually managed to go to Vienna, the big city, to look for financial and social improvement. Few accomplished this goal. Yet, the failure of many others never ended the dream of "coming back as a financial or social success."

Mr. and Mrs. R. were longing, as were many others, for this higher goal in their lives. It seemed as if Mrs. R. had put up this goal as a kind of compensation for frustration in childhood. She certainly must have felt this frustration to the bottom of her heart, exposed as she was from earliest childhood to economic, social and emotional want. Mr. R's feelings of inferiority were the result of a boyhood which was deprived of its meaning because of the overindulgent protection of a mother and two older sisters. He only later became one of the economic and social have-nots.

Some more associative trends may be pointed out. Both are individuals with a rather poor adjustment quotient. Both are sticking to habits and ways of life acquired in early childhood. Both are individuals who learn little by their own experiences and not at all by those of others.

In this case the inducer is a woman. Her prepsychotic personality is described as shy, bashful, seclusive, and over-sensitive. She has the appearance of an inconspicuous woman of the "sweet girl" type. Only when one has seen her in her "mad moments" one is able to conceive of her as the actual initiator of this psychosis of association. Her inflexibility, her stubbornness, her insistence upon her own ideas make it impossible for her to submit to anyone else's considerations. She includes everyone in her more or less systematized paranoid ideas except . . . her husband. She is firmly convinced that he is the only one in whom she can trust unwaveringly because "he believes in me."

The acceptor is a man, and although he is a young and well built man he is the submissive type recognizable by his subservient way of talking and acting. Most characteristic of his personality pattern is his vagueness and his ambivalence. This pattern seems to have been acquired in earliest childhood and is a result of his overprotected boyhood. He is soft and yielding, contrary to his wife who is stern and unyielding.

In this case the inducer and acceptor are of non-blood relationship. Their being together was of relatively short standing when they began to

withdraw from friends and relatives soon after their marriage. They want to make believe that it was the war with its sterner measures against aliens which brought about their supposed persecution by employers and fellow workers. If one examines these "persecutions" more closely they turn out to be due to regulations in war plants and defense work. In addition Mr. and Mrs. R. withdrew from their families and friends before the war started. More than once Mrs. R. stated that all the family members and friends have done much harm to her from the first time she met them by their "bad talk." She states that she complained about them to her husband who advised her to stay away from them and not to bother with them. "My husband felt like me; we understood each other perfectly well because we believed in each other."

Wife and husband are in their early thirties, the husband is one year his wife's senior. She claims that in her delusions the voices laugh at her and continue telling her that she is too old for her husband. Since she has strictly rejected the rejuvenating effect of the American way of make-up in her appearance and manner, when she compares herself with other young women, she must consider herself older than she actually is. She admits that no one has ever told her that she is too old for her husband, but that she could find out by the way they looked at her and talked about her. This idea of reference, developed before the real outbreak of her psychosis, reveals the building-up process of her delusions out of a deep-rooted inferiority feeling. From the first moment of her engagement to her husband she was possessed by jealousy which later on found its expression in visual hallucinations in which she saw film actresses, with whom she evidently felt unable to compete, fall in love with him.

Coleman's³ statement that "economic poverty is the ground upon which *folie à deux* flourishes and that it is the most potent reason to cause dissatisfaction with reality" fits also the development of psychotic conditions in general. As already mentioned Mrs. R.'s background is one of extreme poverty. Economic, social, and emotional frustrations characterize her childhood memories, not to mention mental frustration which she evidently felt less because of the low mental standard of her surroundings.

She was born in a very small town in Austria. She had one brother two years her senior. "My mother was a straightforward woman, very nervous, and she hit us frequently. I was very sensitive, shy and bashful; I kept to myself and never had close friends," and she adds as a kind of excuse, "I always was co-operative but the others were not. My mother married again a short time after my father died. My stepfather was a drunkard who hated us and could hardly wait until we were fourteen and left home."

These are her childhood memories; the memories of her adolescent years are not less filled with resentment and bitter feelings. She already had

a well-fixed attitude toward life in her early teens. She did not succeed in becoming a dressmaker, a profession which was of somewhat higher standard in Austria. It is not difficult to find out why she had to abandon this idea. In seeing her today one would assume that she is lacking everything for this profession; taste as well as creative ability, skillfulness and adaptability. After a few months of training she had to give up. She went to Vienna to do housework. This profession received many of the frustrated individuals of the lower classes. She seems to have done fairly well in this field which does not need much initiative and constructive ability. She stayed in two places for a few months when homesickness caught up with her. Yet, her coming home was even more painful than she had expected. After a very short time she could not stand it any longer. "The drunkenness of my stepfather, his continual nagging, the nasty talk which went around about me in my home town drove me back to Vienna where I took up housework again." She changed jobs quite frequently. In one job she stayed for a year. It was there that she was abused by her employer and became pregnant. Her pregnancy was interrupted artificially. This event left her even more disillusioned and embittered.

A short time afterward she got a steamship ticket from an aunt who had settled in the United States. She sailed soon, looking forward to this country which was considered in Europe as the dreamland of wealth and success. Yet, we again encounter the same story. She did housework, was abused by one of her employers, changed places continually and claimed, "I had to change a great deal because times were difficult, and they wanted to put everything on me. They also told stories about me, and I became very sleepless and nervous." When she speaks of the people who talked about her, she becomes vague and says first her employers, then people from Austria who "knew her over there," and at last she also mentions her relatives. It appears as if even at this time she was near the breaking point and that only the acquaintance with her future husband delayed the outbreak of her psychotic condition.

Mr. R. was born in a small Austrian town not far from that community where his wife's cradle stood. His father was the teacher of the little town's public school. His parents owned a house which later became the cause of arguments between him and other family members. Mr. R. was the baby of the family which included two older sisters. "They spoiled me a little bit," he stated, "and I actually had three mothers instead of one." He is said to have been a bright child, easy to train and to manage. He was quiet and well behaved in school and at home. He finished grammar and high school and wanted to become a physician. As in the case of his wife, we do not know what prevented him from following his high goal. His sisters both became teachers and one of them followed her husband to the United

States. It seems that he gave up his plan of becoming a physician as soon as he became confronted with more serious study. He entered a trade school; since he was not on good terms with his sister and his brother-in-law, he went to Vienna where he worked for two years with a company making fire engines. He got along fairly well and liked his trade. In the meantime financial arguments developed with his brother-in-law. The latter became the supervisor of the town school after his father-in-law's death where his wife, the sister of Mr. R., was a teacher. They took possession of the house of his parents and Mr. R. felt rightly or wrongly that he had not gotten his due share. He felt like "an outcast" and tried to go into business himself by opening a mechanical workshop in Vienna. He was not successful and had to give it up after two years.

He followed his sister to the United States where he arrived in 1936. He first secured employment as a mechanic and got along fairly well. He stayed with his sister but arguments developed and he left her house and lived on his own. One year after he had arrived here he met his present wife and married her in 1937 after a short courtship. "I was very much devoted to my wife and she clung to me maybe because we never had a home of our own which she had craved for so many years."

Very soon after their marriage they broke contact with their respective families and friends. Although they claim that their trouble started four years after their marriage, her undue sensitivity seemed to have affected him also soon after their being together. Even during this prepsychotic period of their married life she seemed to have developed ideas of reference. "I felt that they considered me too old for him, that they looked down on me; as a matter of fact they hurt me any time I paid them a visit, so I stayed away and so did my husband." It is true that some of their relatives wanted her to change her hairstyle and to adapt herself to the American way of dressing. She misinterpreted their utterances and claimed that they did not approve of her. "He did not want me to change either my dresses or my hairstyle; he wanted me as natural as I was. He did not like the American women's way of make-up." It is doubtful, however, if this really was his opinion, for he went out with American girls before he met his wife, and he was an admirer of some film actresses who later became part of her delusions.

She tells about this prepsychotic period of their married life as follows. "From the first moment we met he believed in me and I believed in him. I told him everything about me and my former life, and so did he. We understood each other perfectly. We wanted a child, but we decided to wait until we would have saved two thousand dollars. My child should not become exposed to the same poverty under which I had to suffer in my childhood. I worked very hard to help my husband who was not very lucky with his positions. He had to change continually because national hatred

and envy followed him wherever he got a job. He rarely held a job longer than for three months. Then he would become aware that his boss or his fellow workers did not approve of his work and passed remarks about him. He would leave and become very nervous and dissatisfied."

It seems that the ambitious zeal with which they pursued their goal of saving two thousand dollars had something to do with his frequent change of job. Mrs. R. mentioned several times that he was not paid according to his skill, that he had to take jobs which were much less well paid than the ones his fellow workers got. In telling about their plight Mrs. R. revealed the same tendency to misinterpret any remark of her husband's bosses or fellow workers as she did when complaining about her relatives and friends. She insisted that they always fell short of everything. "In spite of our ambition, our efforts, our diligence, and our good will, we did not get anywhere. We were always honest people but the others were not." With painstaking efforts she continually looked for a rationalizing factor which would prove that they were unsuccessful rather through ill advice and persecution of others than through their own mistakes and failures. Just as in her delusions and hallucinations later on, she makes all the others responsible for her and her husband's failures.

During the years of their early married life she was working hard, driven by their ambitious goal. She even took two jobs, showing that she was the driving one in achieving their high aim. However, she had difficulties in adapting herself to the demands of two employers. She became extremely nervous because "the one lady would tell me in the morning to do my work in one way whereas the other lady in the afternoon would order it just the opposite way." She also became confused by the different utterances about her homeland for the political horizon darkened more and more. "I became very irritable and had to stop work in September 1941." At that time she already had developed clear-cut persecutory trends and ideas of reference. She felt that people were talking about her in the street, that they looked at her husband as a Nazi, and she was sure that this was the reason he had to change his job so frequently. "We decided to move to another part of New York and we took an apartment on a top floor to be far away from the street. It was there that I, for the first time, heard voices coming from the ceiling, the walls, the electric wires, the sink, and the heating. They said annoying things to me, and I also felt electricity going through my head to my ear. From this time on I continually heard voices. They followed me from apartment to apartment. We moved nine or ten times, but the voices would follow me and I became convinced that someone played a dirty trick on me."

She became pregnant before they had saved two thousand dollars. Here again we meet the tendency to misinterpret the remarks of others. "Someone told me I would get rid of the voices; yet during the entire nine months

the voices tortured me although a doctor had promised that pregnancy would help to overcome my nervous condition." Later on she admitted that the "voices told her so."

Delivery was normal, and she took good care of the baby. Her condition, however, became worse. "When we moved from one apartment to the other the voices followed me like a record. When we took the apartment there was no noise around. It was recommended to us as a quiet place; as soon as we moved in, the voices would start telling me different things. They said for instance, 'Move out from this apartment; you should not have taken it. There are dirty people in this house.' Or they told me, 'Move out before it is too late; somebody in this house is in love with your husband.' They also often called me a spy. I could recognize two voices distinctly. They were the ones of my last employers, Mr. and Mrs. T. Her voice seemed to be coming over a wire repeating over and over again, 'If you recognize the voices why are you not going to the police?' Then she would laugh at me. Mr. T., who was in the movie business, would tell me that Ginger Rogers and Judy Garland were in love with my husband."

She also developed visual hallucinations. She saw Robert Taylor, and a sexual feeling would run through her body. She saw film actresses laughing at her and making love to her husband. Any time she would be telling of these hallucinations she would add as a kind of attempt to cover up herself and her husband, "I never believed them because I knew he loves me very much; he never left me alone and he always did what I wanted; he always tried to please me. Of course he took it to his heart through me because he understood me perfectly. He is the only one who understands me."

Mr. R., who was described as a socially-minded individual before his marriage, seemed to have adapted to his wife's withdrawing attitude rather quickly. He also broke up nearly all contact with his family and friends. He too developed ideas of reference of his own although they were similar to his wife's delusions. "Four years ago when we had a four room apartment every two or three weeks a light would be directed to our window from our court yard; I thought that this meant somebody wanted to have our apartment, and I told my wife we should move out so that they could get the apartment and stop annoying us. We then took an apartment on the top floor at the other side of the building. When we moved to our new apartment, I heard somebody saying in the court yard, 'Don't go to sleep.' I did not pay any attention and at first thought that it was not meant for us. When we were in bed one night, however, my wife felt an electric shock going through her body and so did I. Of course my wife felt the shock first."

At this time he was working as an elevator man, and he heard people passing remarks like these: "There is your spy coming," or "Look at the

shoes she wears," and so on. He was sure that this was referring to his wife. He also developed the idea that someone was maligning him and that it was for this reason that he had to change his job so frequently. He became convinced, as did his wife, that people played a trick on her by sending on her their voices through the wires, walls and the ceiling. At last he went to the F.B.I. telling them that they encountered lots of trouble, that they had to move from one apartment to the other because people followed them from place to place and that they did not know what to do.

Mr. R. says of his plight during the last four years of his married life, "I first tried to talk her out of her imaginations, but I could not help her that way. She continued to hear voices and to tell me about them. When I once answered her, 'Sure I hear them also' (though I had not heard them) my wife would stop talking about the voices; it seemed to help her when I told her I heard them too." It seemed, however, that he gradually started to believe in her persecutory delusions. He began to accept them and explained her hearing voices which he did not hear by saying that hers was a finer sense of hearing. He also told some of his fellow workers that neighbors were bothering his wife and that they played a dirty trick on her by talking to her through the ceilings and through the walls. One of his fellow workers suggested that there might be a microphone with fine wires attached, hidden in the walls and "that is why your wife cannot find the place from where they are coming." "I talked it over with my wife and we decided to look for this thing hidden in the walls. I took a screwdriver and opened the walls. I looked around but could not find anything. I am a mechanic and I considered it possible that someone may have put wires in the walls to fool my wife."

Mr. R.'s statements are rather vague and characterized by a certain ambivalence. At times he seems to have some insight into his wife's condition, at other times he seems to believe in her imaginations. There is no doubt that he accepted his wife's imaginations, at last, and misinterpreted some remarks just as she did.

DISCUSSION

In this case of folie imposée we encounter two individuals whose personality patterns seem to complete each other by coincidence not often met. Mrs. R. is a person of undue sensitivity and undue ambition; she is seclusive, stubborn, unyielding. She became conditioned to these character traits from earliest childhood and she also learned to hide them behind an outer facade of shyness and bashfulness. Her feelings of inferiority, deepened by a lack of social, economic and emotional security, developed into an inferiority complex in her growing years. "When I came home they called me 'the maid'; they laughed and pointed at me when they heard of my unhappy love affair with my employer. I did not go home anymore."

Mr. R. nourished feelings of inadequacy also from his earliest youth. He was the only boy among his siblings and he was and remained the baby in the family. Both sisters went to college and became teachers, he did not even finish high school and only dreamed of becoming a physician. He never was able to resume the role of the man and son in his family. Overprotected in his boyhood, he was pushed aside by his brother-in-law who succeeded his father-in-law in the latter's position, took care of Mr. R.'s parents and also took over their house. The son was unable to achieve what the son-in-law accomplished, and the former left his home town embittered to hunt success in the big city of Vienna just as did the girl who later on became his wife.

When they left their respective homes, they both expected to raise their social and economic prestige. Yet, the opposite occurred. She came home poorer and more humiliated than before. With her poor background, her insufficient schooling, her lack of creative strength, she was unable to build up any form of constructive compensation. Her undue sensitivity, and her suspicious attitude which she defended with her unyielding and stubborn manner as one defends an enforced retreat, became the manifestations of her pattern of life; mistrust, her guiding point.

He failed in building up his own business which did not help to increase his self-confidence. He felt pushed out of his family by a stranger, his brother-in-law, who by dint of a higher education achieved what he himself was unable to reach. His indecision, his vague and ambivalent way of yielding to his wife's imaginations were his compensatory reaction to his feelings of inadequacy.

Defeated as they already were in their own country, they had to encounter even sterner competition in the United States. Most of their relatives, who had preceded them here, had settled down comfortably. Mrs. R. compared her situation with their overlooking the hardship they likewise might have encountered. "My misfortune followed me to this country. They referred to me as the alien, the intruder; they looked down on me. In the agencies they first asked for my citizenship papers; I had to work harder and could never achieve what they have achieved." In fact, she did not make any effort to adapt herself to her new environment. She acquired a fairly good knowledge of the English language, but she never learned to write. Even more she still writes German in the outmoded current letters which is rather unusual for a person of her age. She stubbornly clung to her way of dressing which made her appear at first sight as a foreigner.

In her delusions she hears the voices of her last employers. Mr. and Mrs. T. seemed to be wealthy people of social position. Their name was similar to the name of an employer in her former country. She connects this fact in her hallucinations and refers to the informations they have

gotten about her, "From these people over there." "Mr. T. is a movie owner, they both are from wealthy people. They have an expensively furnished apartment. His father owns a big farm. He wears expensive woolen suits such as my husband never could buy. Mr. T. was moody and arrogant. He did not even look at me when I was working there," are a few remarks about her last employer. Talking of her hallucinations as if they would be a continuation of her employer's description she adds, "He wanted to play movie with me and to fool around with me. He knew I get mad. He is afraid of me because he used me too long for certain things for his own good. She laughs at me; she knows that I hear her. She says, 'You are so smart, do you know the voices?' She despises me and makes fun of me; but still they both fear me and it is therefore that they talk to me through their device in the wall and in the ceiling." The most harmless utterances of others are distorted and twisted around in her hallucinations and thus seem to become a stimulus for her outpouring productions. Once she was especially provoked by a letter from her relatives in which they wrote about the patient's baby as follows, "Though she keeps us busy, she is a source of fun and great pleasure to us." She showed me the letter and added quite annoyed, "Now you can see with your own eyes; they do not keep back with their reproaches even during my stay in the hospital; we always were chased and hunted like people who have no money. But I shall pay them back, every cent even if I should have to work day and night." During the following week she was quite upset and tortured by voices who laughed at her and repeated continually, "Now you see it how it is when one has no money."

Mr. R. also misinterpreted sensations he felt and utterances of his fellow workers. He insisted that he felt the antagonism of one of his bosses when the latter asked him once why his wife did not work any more. He claimed that people in the street knew that they had saved money. "One day I heard women and children in our neighborhood repeating continually the word 'charity, charity, charity.' I became mad because I knew it was meant for us. Since I did not know what charity they meant, I said to my wife, 'go to the bank and take out two hundred fifty dollars and take this sum to the church for charity so that everybody may know that we need not any charity and we will not be bothered any more'." She did so, but it was told that he later on approached the minister of the church asking that his money be returned.

"I am one hundred percent convinced that people played a dirty trick on my wife. When we moved into our last apartment, my wife was tortured by the electric current and the voices. I opened the walls to find the wires hidden in them. When I once looked out of the window, I saw a man rushing to a car and a driver behind him putting a big trunk into the car; I was convinced that they had something to do with this nasty trick

and rushed outside but I could not get hold of them. Anytime I looked out of the window I saw men going in and out with big bags. I was sure that they were the ones who put the wires into the walls and the ceilings." He even yelled once at children playing in the court yard of the apartment house in which they were living and accused them of having hidden the wires in the walls. Yet, easily suggestible as he was, he would smilingly admit that "My wife apparently was suffering from imaginations."

Maybe Mr. R. would never have broken with reality if he had not met the woman he married. Two factors more than others may have influenced the development of his psychotic condition. Mrs. R. approved of her husband unwaveringly. He became her protector and the only one in whom she believed. What he never achieved in his family came true through his married life. For Mrs. R. he was more than her husband; he was the only human being whom she valued as honest, reliable and worthy of her confidence. No wonder that he became her knight who fought for her valiantly and accepted her delusions. In addition her paranoid trends just met his own feelings of inadequacy and his striving for compensatory rationalization. His prepsychotic personality was unable to cope with failures and to build up any kind of constructive compensation. The escape into persecutory ideas may have relieved the tension raised in him by his feelings of inadequacy in the competitive struggle associated with his family and his work.

On the other hand Mrs. R. took over the role of the mother, the leader and guide to whom Mr. R. could yield without losing prestige as a man because of her imperturbable belief in him. "I sincerely hope," she wrote to him when they both were hospitalized, "that you will be a good boy. Do not forget to say a prayer every day; do not care what the others are saying about you; as soon as we shall be discharged we shall again live for ourselves and not mingle with these nasty and dirty people."

In studying the childhood memories of the inducer we are able to link the actual events as she perceived them with the material of her delusions; for it is not the actual happening, but the attitude which the individual takes toward the event which counts. Mrs. R. suffered from frustration and want all her life. She became conditioned to a hostile attitude from earliest childhood which made her look at others as opponents rather than as fellowmen. No wonder that she became oversensitive and suspicious toward everybody. Since she lacked strength to counteract constructively, she withdrew, became seclusive, shy and bashful. She fortified her well-fixed pattern of life by stubbornness and unyielding sternness. The latent energy which accumulated because of a lack of constructive activity at last became manifest in her delusional hallucinations. The break with reality occurred apparently when she felt unable to achieve her goal of social and economic security even to a modest extent. "My wife's jealousy is aroused by a fear

of losing her home rather than of losing me to another woman," stated Mr. R.

His responses to the challenge of life's situations were inadequate also. He was unable to meet the sterner competition in the United States. His escape into a psychotic condition might never have occurred if he had not been subjected to his wife's delusional manifestations. In her he found the expression of his own latent wish for rationalizing his shortcomings. Interdependence may have been the social and psychological influence in this case of folie à deux, environmental influence the conditioning factor.

The misinterpretation of happenings and utterances in their surroundings are remarkably similar with both the inducer and the acceptor. Since they are not of blood relationship we can only assume that a similar conditioning process has helped to bring about the psychosis in the acceptor. We might as well say that Mr. R. became conditioned to the constant misinterpretations of stimuli by his wife because of a receptive attitude explainable by an individual psychological analysis of his pre-psychotic attitude.

Since any educational process is due to conditioning of individuals of less resistance than that of their educators, cases of communicative psychoses might provide some clues to the development of psychotic conditions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ¹ADLER, A.: Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology, transl. by P. Radin, London, Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner & Co., 1924.
- ²ANDERSON, C.: Report of Cases of Induced Insanity, Ill. Med. J., April 1934.
- ³COLEMAN, S. M. and LAST, S. L.: Folie à Deux; a review of the literature since 1900 and a case report, Psych. Quarterly, April 1938.
- ⁴DREIKURS, R.: Psychological Differentiation of Psychopathological Disorders. Indiv. Psych. Bull., 1944-1945, Vol. IV, Second Quarter.
- ⁵GRALNICK, A.: Folie à Deux, The Psychosis of Association. A review of ten cases and the entire English Literature. Psych. Quart., April 1942, July 1942.
- ⁶GROVER, M.: A Study of Cases of Folie à Deux, Am. J. Psych., March 1937.
- ⁷HAYES, R. R.: Folie à Deux, Med. Rec., August 1938.
——— Folie à Trois, Med. Rec., September 1939.
- ⁸HORNEY, K.: The Neurotic Personality of Our Time, W. W. Norton, N.Y., 1937.
- ⁹POLLACK, S. K.: Folie à Deux, American J. Psych., March 1937.
- ¹⁰POSTLE, B.: Folie à Deux, Arch. Neur. and Psych., February 1940.
- ¹¹STRECKER, E.: Beyond the Clinical Frontiers, W. W. Norton & Co., 1940.
- ¹²SONIAT, T., and SMITH, B.: Communicated Insanity, an instance of Folie à Cinque. Minnesota Med., September 1940.
- ¹³WEBSTER, W. R.: A report of several cases of Folie à Deux., Psych. Quart., April 1934.