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SUPPLEMENT

OCTOBER, 1959

SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION

THE AUTUMN MEETING of the South-Western Division of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association was held at Knowle Hospital, Fareham, Hampshire, on Thursday, 9th October, 1958, by kind invitation of the Hospital Management Committee, and Dr. A. J. Galbraith, Physician Superintendent.

During the forenoon members visited various parts of the hospital, and were especially interested to see the development scheme in progress.

At the luncheon preceding the meeting, members and guests were welcomed by Mr. H. J. Nightingale, O.B.E., M.S., F.R.C.S., J.P., Chairman of the Hospital Management Committee, who expressed the pleasure of the Committee in entertaining the Division after a lapse of twenty-four years. Dr. Galbraith also spoke, and the Chairman of the Division, Dr. F. E. Pilkington, returned thanks in reply. Dr. Pilkington complimented the hospital on the results of the work of modernization, which he said equalled or surpassed any project of this sort he had seen elsewhere.

The Divisional Committee of Management suggested that Drs. W. Lumsden-Walker, G. O'Gorman and T. P. Riordan should be elected to the Committee. The meeting agreed to this proposal, but Dr. V. H. Tompkins suggested that, in future, nominations for election to the Committee of Management should be invited when the Agendas are circularized. The Chairman explained that the existing procedure had been found acceptable in this division, but agreed that Dr. Tompkins' suggestion would be given further consideration. The names of Dr. I. Atkin and Dr. A. J. Galbraith were submittted as nominations for the new Wessex Regional Hospital Board, and this proposal received the unanimous approval of the meeting.

The following candidates were unanimously elected to Ordinary Membership of the Association:

FIELD, MARGARET JOYCE, B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., Ph.D., Field-worker in African Ethno-Psychiatry, (M.R.C.).

WILLIAMSON, PETER JOHN, M.B., B.S., D.P.M., Senior Registrar, Warneford Hospital, Oxford.

PAPERS

"A Preliminary Investigation into the Urinary Excretion of Indols and Phenols in Schizophrenia" was presented by Drs. H. Miller, N. Gold and Mr. J. A. Durant.

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This investigation employed two-way paper chromatography, which was described and demonstrated by Mr. Durant. In his survey of the subject Dr. Miller reported that early morning specimens of urine from 69 cases of schizophrenia and 9 from normal subjects had so far been examined. It was recognized that a larger control series was necessary and Dr. Miller said that this aspect of the investigation would receive attention in due course.

No selection of cases was made, so that the series included subjects of both sexes and of varying degrees of severity and duration of illness, and no account was taken of any treatment given. This non-selection was deliberate, since it was thought that at this stage the net should be cast widely.

Of the 9 normal controls, 7 were found to have 11 or less recognizable spots, whereas 2 had more than 11. It was decided to use 11 as an arbitrary dividing line, when comparing the normal series with schizophrenic series. Of the 69 schizophrenic subjects 40 had less than 12 spots, whereas 29 had 12 or more spots. Furthermore 28 of the schizophrenic urines showed 1 or more spots which were not found in any of the controls.

It is obvious that no major conclusions could be derived from these results, in view of the small number of normals, but it seems possible to conclude that approximately one-third of the schizophrenic subjects had a disordered metabolism of protein. It is, of course, not possible to say whether this disorder is primary or secondary.

It was also found that there was no correlation between the number of the spots present and the type or severity of the disease or method of treatment.

Dr. Gold emphasized the difficulties involved in obtaining patient and staff co-operation, and suggested that a project of this order really demanded a whole-time research worker.

In discussion the problem of clinical diagnosis was raised by several speakers. Dr. W. R. Ashby voiced his appreciation of the quality of the work which had been done, but agreed with Dr. Gold that a Medical Officer with other duties to perform could not devote sufficient time to such an investigation.

"A Study of Readmissions to Hospital" was the title of the paper prepared by Drs. P. W. W. Leach and J. G. Jesson, who reported on a six months' survey of readmissions to hospital within one year of discharge. Of the 117 cases studied a quarter were schizophrenic, and a half affective states. Two-thirds had had two or more previous mental hospital admissions, the average being 2·2 for men, 3·2 for women. A quarter of the series came back yet again during the twelve months following the survey. A special study was made of those cases where Electroconvulsive therapy and Largactil were involved, but no relevant outstanding conclusions could be drawn.

While the prevailing high readmission rate (50 per cent) had been a matter of concern, the authors of this paper finally concluded that it was not necessarily a bad sign. They showed that recent advances in treatment and rehabilitation reduced the total time spent in hospital by a process which has been described as "fragmentation" of the illness.

In the discussion which followed, Dr. Atkin paid tribute to the authors of the paper, for dealing with a subject which was of universal interest. He also referred to the "social problem" cases and wondered if the mental hospitals provided a too ready means of escape for such patients, particularly for the "wandering psychopaths", whose admission should be opposed.

The Chairman (Dr. Pilkington) criticized the Board of Control's statistics on readmissions, as they gave no indication of the interval since discharge. With further reference to this point he quoted from an analysis of readmissions to Moorhaven Hospital which indicated that some 68 per cent took place within one year of discharge.

Dr. Doris Odlum spoke of the vital importance of early follow-up appointments for discharged patients, and Dr. A. G. Hucker agreed that 3 weeks should be the maximum interval. Dr. J. Hadfield also emphasized the need for an adequate

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follow-up system, and believed that patients were more likely to survive outside hospital, if they knew they were going to be seen as out-patients.

Dr. Pilkington described an interesting innovation at his hospital, whereby members of the nursing staff make domiciliary visits to discharged patients.

Finally Dr. Walk proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers and to the hospital authorities for a most enjoyable and instructive meeting.

SCOTTISH DIVISION

THE SPRING MEETING of the Scottish Division was held at Dykebar Mental Hospital on Friday 6 March, 1959. 59 members were present and apologies for absence were received from 16 members.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were approved.

The following were elected Ordinary Members of the Association:

EDMOND, CATHERINE RUSSELL, M.B., Ch.B., Registrar, Stratheden Hospital, Cupar, Fife.

Proposed by Drs. David Ross, A. M. Cook, J. D. Haldane.

IMLAH, NORMAN WILLIAM, M.B., Ch.B., Dip.Psych.(Edin.), Registrar, Bangour Village Hospital, West Lothian.

Proposed by Drs. A. K. M. Macrae, B. E. A. Magill, D. E. H. Beattie.

JOHNSTON, JAMES MCLAUGHLAN, M.B., Ch.B., Physician Superintendent, State Mental Hospital and State Institution, Carstairs.

Proposed by Drs. H. B. Craigie, E. J. C. Hewitt, L. M. D. Mill.

MCGOVERN, GERALD PATRICK, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.P.E., Registrar, Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Morningside.

Proposed by Drs. T. A. Munro, J. W. Affleck, M. M. Whittet.

MALEY, WILLIAM ANDREW, M.B., Ch.B., Junior Medical Officer, Hawkhead Hospital, Crookston Road, Glasgow.

Proposed by Drs. J. Milne, R. H. Park, W. S. Thomson.

ROBERTSON, ALAN ROXBURGH, M.B., Ch.B., Registrar, Bellsdyke Hospital, Larbert.

Proposed by Prof. T. Ferguson Rodger, Drs. A. P. Russell, M. Devlin.

TODD, NORMAN ALEXANDER, M.B., Ch.B., Junior Medical Officer, Psychiatric Unit, Stobhill Hospital, Glasgow.

Proposed by Drs. Hunter Gillies, A. F. McLean, T. Freeman.

Professor W. M. Millar was elected Chairman, Dr. M. M. Whittet Divisional Secretary, Dr. A. C. Tait Assistant Divisional Secretary, and Dr. J. H. Harper Representative on Council.

Drs. E. J. C. Hewitt, A. P. Russell and K. R. H. Wardrop were elected to the Committee of Management.

The following were elected Office Bearers of Sections (to be *ex-officio* members of the Committee of Management):

Dr. P. K. McCowan	Chairman, Forensic Psychiatry Section.
Dr. H. Stalker	Secretary, Forensic Psychiatry Section.
Prof. T. Ferguson Rodger	Chairman, Papers and Discussions Section.
Dr. I. R. C. Batchelor	Secretary, Papers and Discussions Section.
Dr. W. A. Cramond	Chairman, Research and Clinical Section.
Dr. J. F. McHarg	Secretary, Research and Clinical Section.

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