IRISH DIVISION.

THE SUMMER QUARTERLY MEETING of the Irish Division, Royal Medico-Psychological Association, was held at the Mental Hospital, Mullingar, by kind invitation of the Committee of Management and Dr. John Fitzgerald, on July 6, 1939.

The following members were present:

Dr. R. Thompson in the Chair, Drs. C. J. McCarthy, J. Kearney, N. O'Higgins, B. Lyons, Evelyn O'Brien, C. B. Moloney, J. Dunne, D. Hegarty, D. J. O'Sullivan, S. Blake, John Fitzgerald, N. M. Fitzgerald, M. F. Mulligan, Sylvia M. Fitzgerald, T. Foley, P. J. Courtney, W. J. Coyne, J. J. Delaney, P. J. Aird, H. St.George Smith, J. Glass, and P. Moran (Hon. Sec.).

The Committee's architect, Mr. J. R. Boyd-Barrett, and Dr. J. Hill, *locum tenens* A.M.O., were also present.

Apologies for unavoidable absence were received from Drs. Scroope, Brennan, Fitzgerald (Clonmel), Greene, Grace, J. Eustace, P. Cassin, P. Doherty and R. McDonnell (Inspector of Mental Hospitals).

The SECRETARY read correspondence from the General Nursing Council and from the Department of Local Government and Public Health regarding the appointment of a member of the Association to the General Nursing Council.

The Minister's letter gave no reason for the discontinuance of the Association's representation at the end of the five-year period and stated that the Council is now constituted for the five-year period ending December 31, 1943.

The Secretary was directed to find out the numbers of mental nurses who sat for the Council's examinations annually; and to write to the Minister and to the General Nursing Council pointing out the part taken by the Association's members in the training of the nurses and the conduct of the examinations. The members were more than surprised to learn that while two mental nurses sit on the Council there is no representative of the medical staffs of mental hopsitals.

A Sub-Committee consisting of the Chairman, Secretary and Drs. Dunne and Moloney was appointed to deal with the matter pending the November meeting, and was directed to consider carefully the question of instructing the Association's members not to co-operate in carrying out the Council's examinations if the matter is not dealt with to the satisfaction of the Association.

The SECRETARY then read a letter from the Sligo Mental Hospital Committee, calling the attention of the Government to the urgent need for reform of the existing "Lunacy Laws", and requesting the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to appoint a commission of experts to report on the matter.

The resolution was discussed at length and in detail by the members, and it was decided to re-constitute the Sub-Committee of the Division which had been set up to deal with this matter in 1935, and which then made representations to the Government.

The Sub-Committee was re-constituted as follows: Drs. Grace, Blake, Honan, D. L. Kelly, Dunne and Coyne, with the Chairman and Secretary as *ex officio* members.

The Secretary was directed to write to the Minister for Local Government and Public Health calling attention to previous representations and urging action in the matter.

Dr. KEARNEY suggested that T.D's. and Senators should be circularized, and the Secretary undertook to draft a circular and submit it to members of the Sub-Committee.

The following were, after ballot, declared elected ordinary members of the Association:

B. S. BLAKE, L.R.C.P.&S.I., Central Criminal Asylum, Dundrum.

MARY FRANCES MULLIGAN, L.R.C.P.&S.I., Assistant Medical Officer, Mental Hospital, Mullingar.

https://doi.org/10.1192/S0368315X40245154 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Dr. KEARNEY called the attention of the Meeting to the lack of facilities and financial aids for research in mental disease in this country, and suggested that the Division should apply to Lord Nuffield for a grant, since the authorities who dispense the Hospitals' Sweeps funds were so slow in remedying this defect. The general feeling of the meeting was against Dr. Kearney's suggestion, and it was decided to take no action.

CLINICAL MEETING.

Dr. FITZGERALD, Resident Medical Superintendent, Mullingar Mental Hospital, read a short paper giving an outline of the scheme of new construction recently finished at the mental hospital. At the close of the paper he paid a high tribute to his predecessor, the late Dr. L. Gavin, who, he said, was mainly responsible for the ideas which the architect had so ably translated into well-designed and well-constructed buildings.

Mr. BOYD-BARRETT, the architect, then read a paper which he illustrated with plans, showing the general layout and details of design.

He stated what he was asked to provide for and how he set about making the various new units fit into a workable general scheme embracing the very extensive older buildings.

The members had an opportunity, before the meeting, of inspecting the hospital, and naturally most attention was paid to the new structures. Many members spoke to Mr. Barrett's paper, and all complimented him on an achievement of which he might be justly proud.

Dr. MCCARTHY said there was one thing which he would like to criticize—and it was a defect which was not confined to Mullingar—it was that in all these extensive developments the medical staffs of the hospitals were not properly considered, and the living accommodation provided was most unsuitable.

Mr. BOYD-BARRETT, in replying, joined with Dr. Fitzgerald in paying tribute to the late Dr. Gavin, who, he said, was largely responsible for the work of modernization of the hospital. He said that he learned much in the course of the work; but that, if he were to start again to-morrow, there was very little in the design and construction that he would change.

Dr. MCCARTHY then read his "**Survey of the Results of Insulin Therapy at Grangegorman Mental Hospital**", prepared in collaboration with his colleague Dr. E. O'Brien.

He gave a note of the treatment, complications, if any, and results in each individual case treated, and a summary of the general results.

In replying to points raised by speakers to the paper he said: "I gave the worst possible picture of our results, and I have deliberately set myself to avoid having my views coloured by any undue optimism".

Before the meeting the members were entertained to luncheon presided over by the Chairman of the Committee of Management, Mr. F. McCabe. Mr. MCCABE, speaking at the luncheon, extended a hearty welcome to the members on behalf of the Committee.

The Chairman of the Division, Dr. THOMPSON, thanked Mr. McCabe for his welcome, and said that the magnificent new buildings and the general high standard in the hospital showed that it was being governed by a progressive and up-to-date Committee.

At the close of the meeting, Dr. THOMPSON proposed a vote of thanks to Dr. Fitzgerald for all the facilities and hospitality provided at what proved a most successful meeting. Dr. COYNE seconded, and Dr. FITZGERALD suitably replied.

The meeting then adjourned and the members were entertained to tea by Mrs. Fitzgerald.

https://doi.org/10.1192/S0368315X40245154 Published online by Cambridge University Press