CORRESPONDENCE

ADVICE FOR CHILD PSYCHIATRISTS

DEAR SIR,

The advice from the medical protection societies contained on page 13 of *News and Notes* Supplement, June 1972, to the *Journal*, is in accordance with our practice of keeping the general practitioner in the picture so far as is practicable.

There are, however, a few cases in which parents bring the children to the clinic but ask that no one outside the clinic staff should be informed. Often the psychiatrist will attempt to liaise, and to get consent for communication with the family doctor, and perhaps with the school, where this is appropriate. Nevertheless, parents should have the right to entirely confidential help where the circumstances warrant this.

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THE INSTITUT LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

DEAR SIR,

May I be allowed to apologize to you, to Dr. Ahrenfeldt, and to the staff of the Institut de Psychiatrie La Rochefoucauld for the error I made in the article on the R.M.P.A. trip to France.

The error arose, in the first instance, by my doing exactly as Dr. Ahrenheldt suggests. I asked the lady who guided me around what exactly we were visiting and she wrote down in English, 'day hospital' and added the name 'Rochefoucauld', but as I look back on it I realize I misread her French writing, and the name did not 'click' with that of the famous François de La Rochefoucauld. I wrote about the day hospital as being what we saw—much had to be left out and hence I tried to avoid what we did not see.

I apologize for not having obtained a prospectus of the Institute. However, this is my fourth trip with the R.M.P.A., and I have learned that not every place we visit has, or is prepared to hand out literature to all the visitors. I have since checked my records and have nothing from the Institute. When one is a guest one cannot press for something that isn't offered.

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SCOTTISH HOME AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Dr. John H. Henderson has succeeded Professor W. A. Cramond as the Principal Medical Officer for Mental Health Services in the Scottish Home and Health Department and Adviser in Psychiatry to the Secretary of State for Scotland. Dr. Henderson had previously held the appointment of Physician Superintendent, first to Bilbohall Hospital in Elgin and afterwards to Bangour Village Hospital in West Lothian.

The Committee under the chairmanship of Professor I. R. C. Batchelor which reported in 1970 on 'The Staffing of Mental Deficiency Hospitals' made as its sixth recommendation 'Joint appointments between mental deficiency and other specialties'. Progress along these lines has been made in the Eastern and South-Eastern Regions, so that there are now in post 9 consultant psychiatrists holding joint appointments between mental deficiency and general psychiatry. These 9 consultants are working as members of the staffs based on the mental and mental deficiency hospitals in Dundee and Edinburgh. These hospitals are the Royal Dundee Liff and Strathmartine in the Eastern Region, and the Royal Edinburgh and Gogarburn in the South-Eastern Region. One Physician Superintendent has been appointed to the two hospitals in Dundee, but Gogarburn has its own Physician Superintendent who divides his time between that hospital and the Royal Edinburgh.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN MENTAL HANDICAP

Newcastle Regional Hospital Board

The Board will be inviting the views of local interested parties on their proposed schemes to adapt a nurses' home in Darlington to create a 'half-way' hostel for about 23 carefully selected mentally-handicapped patients from Aycliffe Hospital. Residents would be chosen from adult patients in the area who no longer need special medical treatment and are relatively self-sufficient. In time it is hoped that residents will progress towards greater independence by moving to local authority hostels or private accommodation in the towns.

South East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board

Special nurse training schemes geared to the needs of small hospitals for the mentally-handicapped are being developed in the South East Metropolitan Region. Two such schemes have been launched in Sussex which will train pupils as State-Enrolled Nurses in mental subnormality. With more small

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