EAST ANGLIAN DIVISION

Autumn (Inaugural) Meeting

The first Meeting of the new East Anglian Division of the College was held at Runwell Hospital on 14 October 1971. As the Meeting had been arranged some time previously, all Members of the old South Eastern Division of the R.M.P.A. were invited. After touring the Hospital the Members were entertained to lunch, and this was followed by a programme of scientific papers. These were:

'The Aftermath of Boxing'

Dr. J. A. N. Corsellis, Consultant Neuropathologist, Runwell Hospital.

'The Automated Recognition of E.E.G. Discharges in Epilepsy'

Dr. C. D. Binnie, Consultant Clinical Neurophysiologist, Runwell Hospital, and Consultant in Charge of the Clinical Neurophysiology Unit at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

'New Results on Abortion—A Comparative Study'

Dr. S. M. Blunden, Research Senior Registrar, Runwell and Rochford Hospitals.

'Treatment Results of a General Hospital Psychiatric Unit and a Psychiatric Hospital Compared'

Dr. A. A. Robin, Consultant Psychiatrist, Runwell and Rochford Hospitals.

All these papers provoked lively discussions.

Spring Meeting

The Spring Meeting of the East Anglian Division was held at St. Clement's Hospital, Bow Road, London, on 25 May 1972.

As an experiment a departure was made from the usual pattern of meetings in that the proceedings did not start until 3 o'clock in the afternoon and concluded with a Buffet Supper provided by the London Hospital Board of Governors.

The first part of the Meeting was a Symposium on the relationships between the Undergraduate Teaching Hospitals and the Regional Psychiatric Hospitals as regards training, research and clinical roles; the introductory speakers being Dr. T. H. Bewley speaking on 'The M.R.C.Psych.'; Professor D. A. Pond on 'The D.P.M.' and Dr. Ashley Robin on 'The Role of the Teaching Hospital in Relation to the Periphery'.

After tea, three papers on recent developments in child psychiatry and psychology at the London Hospital were given:

Dr. Kenneth Martin on 'Psychiatry and the Under-Fives'.

Dr. John Coleman on 'Psychological Assessment of Pre-school Children', and

Dr. Wolkind on 'Anti-Social Behaviour in Institutionalized Children'.

MEMORANDUM ON THE LAW COMMISSION'S FAMILY COURTS WORKING PARTY

A working group of the Public Policy Committee and the Child Psychiatry Specialist Section has examined the document issued by the Working Party set up by the Law Commission to consider what kind of court, below the level of High Court, should deal with family matters.

The philosophy behind this short report can be summarized as follows:

(1) Matters affecting the mental health and social adjustment of families are at present being dealt with by a diversity of courts.

(2) A more unified approach would be desirable. This could well lead to concentration of expertise in a more efficient manner and in the building up of a corporate feeling in this area as opposed to the present fragmentation.

(3) However such a system may be developed, it is impossible, in the light of present knowledge, to define clearly the functions of a Family Court so that there would be no possible overlap with the work of other courts.

(4) It will therefore be necessary to develop further close liaison with County and other courts, while the Family Courts should more appropriately be placed within the County Court system. It is important that there should be minimum delay in dealing with family matters.

(5) The social, welfare and therapeutic aspects of the work of the Family Court are central, and a comprehensive and broadly based training is necessary for the court officers.

The following are more detailed comments on the points raised in the document:

Scope of the Courts: A Family Court should deal with consents to marry; divorce; nullity; presumption of death and dissolution of marriage; declarations of status (legitimacy, legitimation and validity of marriage); magistrates' matrimonial orders; maintenance during marriage; alterations of maintenance agreements; family provision on death; property disputes during marriage; occupation of the matrimonial home; wardship; guardianship (including

https://doi.org/10.1192/S0007125072301613 Published online by Cambridge University Press