

them. Such a home might occasionally be serviceable as a haven of refuge to persons, formerly asylum patients, who were in danger of a relapse.

The mainspring of the association would be some devoted pioneer, who would gather round her a band of like-minded women among whom would be distributed various departments of service. A Council of gentlemen would supervise financial and general business.'

'At the conclusion of Mr Hawkins' paper an interesting discussion took place.

'It was moved by Dr Lockhart Robertson and seconded by Dr Hack Tuke that this meeting do form itself into an Association. The names of Dr J. Duckworth Williams and Dr Savage were added to those already given.

'Dr Bucknill was invited to take the office of President and the Rev. H. Hawkins was asked to be Secretary.

'The Secretary was instructed to communicate with members and others likely to take an interest in the subject and subsequently to communicate with the President with the view of calling another meeting.'

On 29 July a meeting of ladies to consider the same subject was held at 86 Portland Place by kind permission of Mrs Miller. About 15 ladies were present, and Miss Cons consented to accept temporarily the office of Secretary.'

*Journal, January 1880.* 'Another meeting of the Association for assisting insane convalescents was held on the 27 November. Lord Shaftesbury has kindly consented to become the Patron. A Committee of ladies was appointed, who enter heartily into the work. The question of providing a Distinct Home was discussed. It was decided not to proceed with this at present, but to be content with endeavouring to provide temporary homes in cottages and other houses and finding suitable places for those willing to go out to service.'

## NEWS ITEMS

### THE NEW DHSS

In the new Government Mr Patrick Jenkin is Secretary for the Social Services; Dr Gerard Vaughan is a Minister of State and Minister of Health within the Department; and Mrs Lynda Chalker and Sir George Young are the Under-Secretaries.

Dr Gerard Vaughan is a Foundation Fellow of the College. Born in 1923, he qualified from Guy's Hospital in 1947 and took the M.R.C.P. in 1949. He trained in psychiatry at the Bethlem and Maudsley Hospitals, obtaining the Academic D.P.M. in 1953. He was elected F.R.C.P. in 1966. He holds the position of Consultant Physician to Guy's, in the specialty of child psychiatry. Until his appointment to the Ministry he was a member of the Medical Research Council.

Dr Vaughan was first elected to Parliament in 1970, when he won the Reading constituency for the Conservatives. He has since been re-elected three times for

the revised constituency of Reading South, each time with an increased majority.

Mrs Lynda Chalker has represented Wallasey since 1974. She has throughout taken a special interest in mental health matters, as shown by her questions to Ministers and contributions to debates.

Sir George Young, an economist, initiated a debate on Alcoholism towards the end of the last Parliament. A summary of this debate appears in this issue (p 118).

Dr Vaughan and Mrs Chalker took part in the recent debate on the proposed revision of the Mental Health Act; summaries of their speeches will be found on pp 79 and 80 of the May issue of the *Bulletin*. (It is regretted that Dr Vaughan's first name was then mistakenly printed as 'Gerald'.)

### LEICESTER PSYCHOTHERAPY COURSE

An Introductory Course in Psychotherapy was held at the Towers Hospital, Leicester during June and July 1978.\*

The course was organized locally by the Leicester Postgraduate Training Committee and myself, but advice on content and outside speakers was given by the Executive Committee of the Psychotherapy Section of the College. The intention was to provide an intro-

duction to the range of psychotherapies, and to stimulate the interest of trainees by providing an atmosphere in which they could meet, discuss ideas and cases and identify future training needs. The Course received financial support from the Section and the Midlands Division of the College, who both donated their grant from Wyeth Laboratories to this purpose. A similar venture had been organized by Dr

William Brough in Newcastle in 1974/5.

To keep expenses to the minimum, a series of single days on different topics was devised. For psychiatric trainees the Course in part superseded the regular teaching, thus ensuring a good attendance. On each day an outside speaker was paired with a local expert. Both made a formal presentation, led small group discussions and when appropriate, demonstrated special techniques. Intentionally the speakers, though predominantly medical, were drawn from various professions.

The first two days were devoted to Individual Therapy. Dr Robert Gosling considered basic concepts in psychotherapy and Dr Isobel Brown analysed in detail a first session which she had conducted, Dr Jonathon Pedder advised on how to choose the appropriate depth of therapy and Dr Mark Aveline presented some suggestions on how and when to end therapy. Family Therapy was the focus on the third day. Dr Arno Bentovim's topic was 'The Family as Patient' and Mrs Rhoda Oppenheimer's 'Children, Parents and Family'. Day four had Group Psychotherapy as its theme with Dr Colin James setting out some basic concepts and Dr George Spaul speaking on the balance between group process and individual dynamics in leading a group. The final day was on Marital and Sexual Therapy. Mrs Gill Gorrell Barnes and Miss Christine Cordle illustrated through their

discussion and case examples a wide and overlapping approach to these problems. Dr Bob Palmer and Dr George Spaul were Course tutors and Dr Surya Bhate looked after the administrative details.

The Course was advertised in Leicester and nearby centres. Preference was given to psychiatric trainees with a few places being reserved for other disciplines. Twenty-nine people attended, each paying a fee of £20 which included refreshments. To begin with some trainees expected more didactic teaching but soon adjusted to the seminar/discussion format. Overall the Course was a success and was visibly appreciated by those with a pre-existing interest in the subject. For Areas without specialist psychotherapists, such courses answer the need for information but cannot provide ongoing supervision which is essential.

There have been three consequences of the Course. Attendance at a weekly psychotherapy seminar in Leicester was reinforced, a brief experiential group for trainees was set up, and the need for a Consultant Psychotherapist in Leicester emphasized and carried through to the point where the post has now been established.

MARK AVELINE

\* Although this conference was held a year ago, it was felt that members, particularly those in the provinces, would be interested in reading about the organization of such a course.

## IMPROVING MENTAL HANDICAP SERVICES

The Institute of Mental Subnormality changed its name to the *British Institute of Mental Handicap* from 1 June.

The Institute will continue to aim to raise the standards of treatment, care and management of mentally handicapped people wherever they may be, but plans

to expand its activities. Details about its educational programme, information services for professionals, and publications are available from the British Institute of Mental Handicap, Information and Resource Centre, Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY10 3PP. Telephone: 0562 850251.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### SENIOR REGISTRAR TRAINING IN THE PSYCHIATRY OF OLD AGE

DEAR SIR,

It is common knowledge that the numbers of elderly people, and especially the very old, in our population are steadily rising. In consequence the management of the psychiatric disorders of later life will take an increasingly prominent place in the practice of general adult psychiatry. In the last decade the Health Departments have created many new consultant posts devoted exclusively or partly to the psychiatry of old age and it seems likely that in future, even where consultant posts do not carry any

designated responsibility for the elderly, most general psychiatrists will need to be thoroughly familiar with the disorders of old age and the facilities available for dealing with them.

Training programmes in general psychiatry have not yet adjusted to this change. The College's Section for the Psychiatry of Old Age is very concerned by the fact that few of the applicants for psychogeriatric consultant posts have had adequate experience of the psychiatry of old age, particularly of the organization of an area service, and the General Psychiatry Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Higher Psychiatric Training has been struck by how few of the