

ties and aptitudes, and it is the difficult task of the senior members of a profession to seek out and encourage those who in their formative years show special potentiality or the capacity for excellence. It is more difficult to identify those who are prevented from developing their potential because of problems which are remediable. Remedies should sometimes be applied to the system as well as the individual. However, amongst overseas doctors, as amongst our British colleagues, there will be some who are insufficiently motivated or otherwise unfitted to practise psychiatry. Our reputation and future depend on our skill in recognizing these colleagues as early as possible and helping them, with as much kindness as possible, to seek another avenue for the future.

To achieve a working and training set-up, where there is a chance of individual satisfaction combined with maximum effectiveness and service, sentiments about equality and democracy are too simple; they

deny realities and, more tragically, they cloud the possibility of understanding different life experiences, training, skills and limitations. The good teacher can only be effective if stimulated by awareness of his pupil's developing knowledge. The senior experienced consultant can form an effective working team only when his experience is combined with the fresh insights which a youthful and enthusiastic junior can provide.

Increasingly we are recognizing the shortcomings in attempts to do things *for* people or *to* people. It is often only when we do things *with* people that an effective outcome ensues. I hope we can achieve this in psychiatric training in this country.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Dr J. D. Gomersall, Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychiatry, University of Sheffield for helpful comments on the presentation of this report.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### 'COLLABORATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS'

DEAR SIR,

We read, with much interest, Dr Alistair Forrest's criticism (*News and Notes*, October 1976, p 9) of the King's Fund Centre Mental Handicap Paper No. 9, entitled *Collaboration between Parents and Professionals*. We hope the damning with faint praise Dr Forrest gives the Paper will, at least, encourage many readers to have a closer look at what the Paper does in fact say.

We have been prompted to write this letter because we consider Dr Forrest has misrepresented the Paper, as it reflected both the purpose and the content of the Workshop. The failure to understand the type of workshop (which is explained in the Foreword to the Paper) has led Dr Forrest to make comparisons with other workshops of a very different kind. He particularly mentions the parent workshops associated with the Hester Adrian Research Centre. The two cannot be compared in any meaningful way; and, incidentally, the Research Centre is at Manchester University, not Cambridge.

Dr Forrest's first criticism is that 'the project seems to be entirely directed at mentally handicapped children . . .'. Scrutiny of the Paper shows that time and time again references are made to adults as well as children.

He has chosen to read into the Paper opinions about normalization without there being any reference to normalization or even to the concept of it. Furthermore, Dr Forrest lifts a phrase out of context to make a point (e.g. page 3, para 3) but to have quoted the whole of paragraph 3 would have made it clear that great care had been taken 'not to throw the baby out with the bath water'. We feel Dr Forrest has chosen a singularly inept and unhappy analogy which involves equating a handicapped child to a faulty car.

In conclusion, as Dr Forrest does not seem to have 'tuned-in' to the same wavelength as the Workshop we hope that our replay may encourage him and other readers to re-consider the Paper, including the Foreword, in the spirit in which it was intended.

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