

NEWS AND NOTES

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THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

Resignation of Dr. Monro

Members of the College and many others will learn with regret that Dr. A. B. Monro has resigned from the office of Registrar of the College.

The following letters have been exchanged between Dr. Monro and the President:

4 August 1972

DEAR MARTIN,

I have recently been giving thought to the question of retirement from the Health Service. Until a very short time ago, the most propitious date seemed to be late 1973 or early 1974. Now, however, I have been offered and have accepted a whole-time post in the psychiatric sphere outside the Service, from the end of January 1973.

For many reasons I do not think it wise for a position as important as that of Registrar of the College to be held by someone totally outside the Health Service, and especially by someone who has retired from it. So far as I am concerned there is the remote but definite possibility of a conflict of interests arising. Therefore I do not feel that I should remain as Registrar after January 1973.

This raises the question whether I should serve for a few more months, or go now. After careful reflection I am convinced that it is in the interests of the College that I should go now. This would put my successor in a position to tackle from their very beginnings a number of important projects, which he could see well on their way. I, on the other hand, working amid other preoccupations, would only have got them started, when there would have to be a swapping of horses, if not in mid-stream, at least some way from the bank.

I therefore think it right to tender my resignation now, although I realize that this may cause some inconvenience to you and your Officer colleagues. I hope, and indeed believe that I will be forgiven, as we have all worked together smoothly and have taken remarkably similar views of College policies and problems.

Yours sincerely,
BEN.

Contents

The Royal College of Psychiatrists:	
Resignation of Dr. Monro	1
Quarterly Meeting	2
Other College News	2
Memorandum on the Registration of Doctors	
Suffering from Mental Disorder	2
Scottish Division	3
Reviews:	
'Alcohol and Drug Dependence Treatment and Rehabilitation'; by <i>D. L. Davies</i>	3
'A Duty to Care'; by <i>R. Barton</i>	4
Psychiatry in the 1870s	5
University and Teaching Hospital Departments:	
King's College Hospital	6
St. Bartholomew's Hospital	6
Regional Developments:	
North East Hospital Board, Scotland	6
North East Metropolitan Hospital Board	7
North West Metropolitan Hospital Board	7
Society of Biological Psychiatry	7
Forthcoming Events	8
A Correction	8

MY DEAR BEN,

I know I speak for our entire College when I say that the news of your resignation will be received with deep regret and disappointment. Yours will be a place difficult to fill, for the contributions you have made over many years of loyal and dedicated effort have given you an experience that is unique of College affairs and of the problems with which we will be continuing to grapple for many years to come. The work you have done has placed the Royal College of Psychiatrists lastingly in your debt, and I should like to send you on behalf of the College our gratitude and good wishes for the future.

I know that when Council meets it will wish to give formal expression of its gratitude, but I felt that I should not let this occasion pass without making some personal response to the step you have had to take at relatively short notice.

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN.

Dr. M. Markowe has been appointed to be Acting Registrar until the election of a successor to Dr. Monro.

Quarterly Meeting

The next Quarterly Meeting will take place on 16 and 17 November at the Institute of Psychiatry, London. On the 16th the theme will be *Crisis and Crisis Intervention* and on the 17th there will be miscellaneous papers. The Maudsley Lecture will be given by Sir Denis Hill with the title *Non-verbal Behaviour in Mental Illness* at 2.15 p.m. on 17 November.

Memorandum on the Registration of Doctors Suffering from Mental Disorder

The General Medical Council's Interim Report on the registration of doctors suffering from mental disorder has been fully considered by the College's Public Policy Committee and Council.

1. The College wishes to state that it regards this whole subject as raising many complex social/professional problems which it is impossible to resolve in the short time available but which ought to be the subject of on-going discussion between the General Medical Council and the College.

As an interim statement of its position, the College makes the following observations:

(1) Where a doctor is suffering from mental disorder an alternative procedure from that offered by the Disciplinary Committee is desirable, giving power to suspend registration and yet offering a humani-

Other College News

Besides the unexpected vacancy caused by Dr. Monro's resignation there remain a number of elections still to be made. That for the Editorship of the *British Journal of Psychiatry* is in progress, and there are also elections for the Committees and Officers of some of the Divisions and Sections to come. It is hoped that all those entitled to vote will exercise their right at these elections.

The first meeting of the Joint Working Party set up to discuss the problems of trainee psychiatrists was held on 8 August. Under special consideration was the question of how trainees could be most appropriately represented on the various Standing and Divisional Committees.

The Appeals and Building Committee is continuing to look for suitable premises on which a permanent London home for the College may be established. The problem is not only formidable in itself but is of some urgency in that the lease of our present home at Chandos House is of limited duration. Because of this situation estate agents have been engaged to prospect on behalf of the College. Nevertheless, if anyone knows of a benevolent landlord anxious to lease a vacant space in Central London, the Committee would be grateful to have this brought to their attention.

tarian as well as constructive approach to the problem.

- (2) Such a possibility is not currently available to the General Medical Council unless the doctor's behaviour has led to a criminal offence or to serious professional misconduct; that is, the sanction is retrospective and punitive instead of preventive and therapeutic.
- (3) It is noted that the Penal Cases Committee estimates that one in every six cases considered by it is associated with or due to psychiatric illness, and that this is almost certainly an under-estimate. Thus, on both therapeutic grounds and on the basis of public policy, a new form of special procedure is indicated with which the Royal College of Psychiatrists would be in accord.