

Next morning we took the train through the mountains and above the snow line to Granvin, where we appreciated the peace and quiet, and many of us would have liked to have remained to enjoy the fishing. We then took a long motor drive along a perilous-looking mountain road through magnificent snow, fjord and rock scenery to Bergen, our port of embarkation. The Bergen University Psychiatry Clinic is not yet opened, but we had the pleasure of meeting Professor Rus and hearing his plans. We enjoyed seeing the old town with its live fish market and ascending funicular, and at dinner we were able to thank Dr. Ström-Olsen for his impeccable organization and unfailing patience and good humour with us all on the tour.

Words cannot describe the friendliness, kindness and lavish hospitality with which we were everywhere received in the three Scandinavian countries, the trouble taken by the local psychiatrists and officials to show us everything of interest as far as possible in the limited time available, and to answer our questions in the frankest and fullest manner, the elaborate spreads provided by the hospitals we visited, and the societies and other bodies who entertained us, the informality and uncritical spirit which enabled even the most hesitant and unaccustomed after-dinner speakers among us to return thanks with nearly as much confidence as such practised and finished exponents of the art as Sir David Henderson, the universal ability to speak understandable English, the evidence on all sides of intellectual activity and novel approaches to familiar problems, all these combined to make this study tour a memorable, enjoyable and profitable experience.

IRISH DIVISION.

THE SPRING QUARTERLY MEETING of the Irish Division of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association was held at the Verville Retreat, Clontarf, on the kind invitation of Dr. Mary Sullivan, on Wednesday, 6 April, 1949. Thirty-six members and two guests were present.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read, approved and signed by the CHAIRMAN.

The meeting then proceeded to the clinical session, and Dr. M. O'C. DRURY read his communication, entitled, "**Report on a Series of Cases Treated by the E.C.T.-Pentothal-Curare Technique.**"

Dr. Drury commenced his paper by enumerating the exact contraindications to convulsion therapy in its unmodified form. He then described the history and pharmacology of the drug curare, and showed how it could be used to modify the severity of a therapeutic convulsion. He described the details of the technique mainly following along the lines suggested by Hobson, Prescott, though modified in certain mild details by McCormick. He followed with a statistical analysis of 86 patients in various diagnostic categories in which this technique had been used. He grouped the indications for the induction of a modified convulsion under the following headings :

- (1) Cardiovascular reasons, e.g. hypertension, arteriosclerosis, etc. (36 cases).
- (2) Skeletal reasons, e.g. old or recent fractures, bone disease, etc. (19 cases).
- (3) Pulmonary reasons, e.g. tuberculosis, convalescence from pneumonia, etc. (8 cases).
- (4) Post-operative reasons (5 cases).
- (5) Psychiatric reasons, e.g. fear of the treatment, and hysterical features in the clinical picture (17 cases).

Dr. Drury concluded his paper by posing a series of more speculative questions. He pointed out that the introduction of this new technique first widened the range of usefulness of convulsion therapy and placed fresh demands on the clinical judgement and discrimination of the psychiatrist in the selection of cases. He concluded that there were now very few contraindications to the treatment, provided the psychiatric indications were urgent. Dr. Drury suggested that from the point of view of the research worker, the new technique had provided an interesting crucial experiment. By abolishing the effect, workers could con-

concentrate on biochemical changes in the *brain* in seeking an underlying pathology for this, so far empirical, treatment.

Dr. Sullivan introduced Dr. Gilmartin, who gave a clinical demonstration of his technique. He used larger doses of curare than those suggested by Dr. Drury, and gave physostigmine as a routine procedure. The demonstration was smoothly and skilfully carried out, and showed clearly the extent to which a convulsion may be modified.

A general discussion followed, in which the following members took part: Drs. DUNNE, COYNE, THOMPSON, H. J. EUSTACE, GLASS, CONLON, McLAUGHLIN, O'BRIEN, FITZGERALD, MOORE, SHERIDAN, HILL and ANDREWS.

Dr. DRURY, Dr. GILMARTIN and Dr. SULLIVAN replied to questions, and the discussion was closed.

Dr. McCARTHY kindly invited the division to hold the summer meeting at Ballinasloe. The invitation was unanimously accepted, and it was decided to hold the meeting on Wednesday, 13 July, 1949. After some discussion it was decided to hold a golf competition on the morning of the meeting at Ballinasloe.

It was proposed by Dr. DUNNE, seconded by Drs. McCARTHY, FITZGERALD, MORAN, COYNE and MOORE, that Dr. KEARNEY be elected junior representative of the Council.

The meeting then adjourned.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION.

THE SPRING MEETING of the South-Eastern Division was held at Shenley Hospital on Wednesday, 27 April, 1949, and was attended by 75 members.

Before the meeting members visited the hospital including the newly-opened Mansion House, and were entertained to lunch by the Medical Superintendent, Dr. O. W. S. FITZGERALD and the Management Committee. On behalf of the Division, Dr. J. B. S. LEWIS gave thanks for hospitality and Dr. Fitzgerald replied.

The Minutes of the Autumn Meeting were read by Dr. J. G. HAMILTON in the absence by illness of the Secretary, Dr. T. P. Rees, and they were confirmed.

The following candidates were elected to ordinary membership:

ENGLER, MARKUS, M.D.(Vienna), Assistant Medical Officer, St. Lawrence's Hospital, Caterham, Surrey.

Proposed by Drs. T. Lindsay, A. A. W. Petrie and M. J. Brookes.

KERWOOD, LIONEL ANTHONY, M.B., B.Ch., D.P.M., Assistant Medical Officer, Heckingham Institution, Hales, near Norwich, Norfolk.

Proposed by Drs. R. G. Blake Marsh, E. O. Lewis and C. G. Millman.

MORGAN, GEORGE DOUGLAS, M.A., M.R.C.P., Physician in Psychiatric Department, Bromley Hospital; Clinical Assistant, Child Guidance Department, University College Hospital; 44, Albion Street, London, W.2.

Proposed by Drs. L. C. Cook, R. F. Tredgold and Duncan Whittaker.

TYLDEN, ELIZABETH, M.A., M.B., B.Ch., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., Physician in Psychiatric Department, Bromley Hospital; Clinical Assistant, Psychiatric Department, West London Hospital; 44, Albion Street, London, W.2.

Proposed by Drs. L. C. Cook, R. F. Tredgold and Duncan Whittaker

It was agreed that the Autumn Meeting should be held at the Three Counties Mental Hospital, Arlesey, Bedfordshire, at a date to be fixed later.

The Report of the Divisional Committee of Management, including its nominations for office bearers, was read and approved.

Nominations were as follows:

Chairman: Dr. J. B. S. LEWIS.

Secretary: Dr. T. P. REES.

Assistant Secretary: Dr. J. G. HAMILTON.

Junior Representative on Council: Dr. E. P. H. CHARLTON.

Committee of Management: Drs. J. M. CRAWFORD, J. D. SUTHERLAND, J. S. NIGHTINGALE, JOAN MACKWORTH, W. McCARTAN, R. STRÖM-OLSEN, O. W. S. FITZGERALD, N. McDIARMID, C. LAMORNA HINGSTON, E. C. DAX, D. PENELOPE FIRMIN, IAN SKOTTOWE.