

CORRESPONDENCE

College Newsletters

Sir,

To get the record right, so far as your admirable tribute to Dr R. M. S. McConaghey in your January issue is concerned, may I draw your attention to the fact that Newsletter No. 1 of the College was published in *The Practitioner* of September, 1953, as was each subsequent Newsletter up to No. 7, which was published in *The Practitioner* of July, 1955.

In addition, the report of the Steering Committee of the College was published in full as a special supplement to the issue of *The Practitioner* of January, 1953, and every Annual Report of the College since the first one was issued in 1953 has been published as a supplement to the December issue of *The Practitioner* every year.

WILLIAM A. R. THOMSON,
Editor, *The Practitioner*.

5 Bentinck Street,
London, W1M 5RN.

REFERENCE

Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners (1972). Editorial, 1-4.

Chewing gum prophylaxis

Sir,

While appreciating the idea of Dr Ripley's paper (January *Journal*) on the use of chewing gum in preventing infections in children, I am amazed that he has fallen into the classic trap of not accepting his own results. He goes to the length of getting the services of a statistician to show that his results are not significant, and then concludes: "The fact remains, however, that an appreciable improvement was shown in this small series of chewers over the controls".

He cannot have his gum and chew it.

T. PAINE

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Bristol 6.

REFERENCE

Ripley, Godfrey D. (1972). *Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, 22, 61-62.

Headache and giddiness

Sir,

The otherwise excellent study *Headache and giddiness of cervical origin* (January *Journal*) was marred by his overbrief and somewhat horrific account of cervical manipulation. A sure way to have his neurotics rush shrieking from the room, more tense than before, is to twist anyone's head 'sharply' in any direction. I agree with his traction, but prefer to have the patient in the supine position for greater relaxation. A gentle rotation to its extreme position is carried out and this is then followed by a sharp hyperrotation in the same direction. This is repeated to the other side.

The seventh cervical and first thoracics are notoriously difficult to manipulate, and the above

description is only a 'non-specific' manipulation. As a general rule, I also manipulate the upper thoracics by hyperextension on the same occasion, with this type of patient, as I find that this also helps those muscle groups that arise in this area.

For more specific manipulations I would refer readers to the British Association of Manipulative Medicine (Secretary, Dr Andrew D. Boag, 62 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 7DE) of which I have the honour of being a member.

BERNARD A. JUBY

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Yardley,
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REFERENCE

Newill, R. G. D. (1972). *Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, 22, 51-53.

Foster report

Sir,

Sir John Foster in the report of his enquiry into the practice of scientology has recommended that Parliament should control the practice of psychotherapy for fee or reward. His recommendation is that Parliament create a new controlled profession of psychotherapy and set up a Council having authority over those who practice psychotherapy. The Council would work out minimum standards of expertise for admission to the profession of psychotherapy, a code of ethics, and exercise disciplinary powers to enforce it. The law would place restraints of one sort or another upon the practice for reward of psychotherapy to those recognised by the council.

Sir John Foster clearly envisages a completely new profession with its own Council and that it should be a profession in its own right, independent of the medical profession. This will provide the opportunity for the establishment of a strong profession to fulfil on its own many wearisome tasks at present foisted on to an unwilling medical profession.

Many writers have commented on the decline in status of the doctor in our society. One of the reasons for this decline is that politicians and courts have unloaded on to the medical profession bureaucratic functions that have nothing to do with the purpose of a doctor. Doctors become the custodians of the politician's conscience. There are many examples.

The political answer to pollution—the conservation of life on this planet becomes birth control and we are given by parliament as a gift, legalised abortion. And the person who reaps the whirlwind in the ensuing controversy is the medical practitioner.

Judicial terminology of insanity and criminal responsibility pitchforks the psychiatrist into the field of law as an 'expert' with neither the legal or psychological training to qualify him for such a