

Medical News

The next meeting of the Biochemical Society will be held in the Department of Medical Chemistry, Edinburgh University, on Saturday, June 5, at 2.30 p.m. Tea at 4.30 p.m.

A one-day conference on casualty service has been arranged by the Citizens Guild for Civil Defence for Thursday, June 10, at Victory House, Leicester Square, W. The address of the Guild is 20, Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C.2, and tickets for the conference may be had from the secretary.

The next meeting of the Liverpool Medical Institution on June 3 at 4.30 p.m. will be devoted to surgery of the chest. Dr. Robert Coope and Mr. Morriston Davies will read papers upon the early recognition and diagnosis of and possibilities of intervention in diseases of the lungs, with special reference to bronchiectasis and carcinoma. Between 4 and 4.30 a number of specimens collected and presented by Dr. Joy Cronin Lowe and Mr. Ronald Edwards will be displayed. Tea at 4.15 p.m. At the conclusion of the meeting Mr. Hugh Reid will show a colour film illustrating an operation for lobectomy.

At a meeting of the Physical Society on Friday, June 4, at 5 p.m. in the Lecture Theatre of the Science Museum, Exhibition Road, S.W.7, Prof. F. C. Bartlett, F.R.S., will give the Thomas Young Oration on "Some Current Problems in Visual Functions and Visual Perception."

A sessional meeting of the Royal Sanitary Institute will be held in the National Museum of Wales, Park Place, Cardiff, on Saturday, June 5, at 10.30 a.m.

The Medical Research Council of Ireland (address: 85, Merrion Square, Dublin) has awarded grants to Dr. Stephanie Whelan, Dr. H. E. Counihan, Dr. S. J. Boland, Dr. N. Falkiner, Drs. F. Geoghegan and E. de Valera, Dr. P. L. Brennan, and Prof. W. J. E. Jessop; and seven earlier grants have been renewed for further periods.

Dr. T. A. Divine, Malayan Medical Service, has been officially reported prisoner at Singapore, and Dr. R. S. Hardie of Kuala Lumpur, F.M.S., prisoner of war in Thailand. Dr. O. E. Fisher of Fryston, Castleford, and of the Malayan Medical Service, is safe and in Japanese hands on Singapore Island.

Local authorities are required by the Ministry of Health (Circular 2818) to make a return of their public health and school medical staffs, to notify the Minister of vacancies, and to get his approval before they fill a vacancy and of the candidate proposed. It is pointed out that doctors engaged whole-time in public health and school medical work who are of military age are reserved in the posts they now hold, and if they wish to apply for other posts they must first obtain the Ministry's permission. Similar permission is necessary in the case of married women who, if they were not married, would be liable for military service. Written application for permission should be sent through the Regional Medical Officer of the civil defence area in which the doctor is working. Local authorities advertising vacancies in the *Journal* are asked to indicate that the appointment advertised has been approved by the Ministry.

A cancer centre is to be developed at the London Hospital, White-chapel, from the deep therapy department.

Universities and Colleges

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH

At a meeting of the College held on May 18, with Mr. J. W. Struthers, President, in the chair, the following, having passed the requisite examinations, were admitted Fellows:

R. C. Baird, D. B. E. Foster, R. C. J. Hill, R. C. Howard, R. V. Liddell, A. R. Murray, G. N. MacFarlane, C. B. O'Carroll, T. E. Rutter, R. A. Smith, D. C. Wiseman.

The Henry Arthur Dalziel Ferns Bursary was, after a competitive examination in organic chemistry in its application to medicine, awarded to Thomas Dale.

The Bathgate Memorial Prize was, after a competitive examination in materia medica and therapeutics, awarded to A. M. Kinghorn.

Correction.—In our announcement of the conferring of the honorary degree of D.Sc. by the University of Oxford on Dr. Joseph Trueta, the Wingfield-Morris Orthopaedic Hospital at Headington, near Oxford, was wrongly described.

The Services

CASUALTIES IN THE MEDICAL SERVICES

Capt. WILLIAM RICHARD CYRLAS-WILLIAMS, who is reported as killed in action in North Africa, was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Cyrlas-Williams of Porthcawl. He studied medicine at Cambridge and at University College Hospital and qualified M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. in 1941, soon afterwards receiving a commission in the R.A.M.C. His widow is Dr. Ruth Cyrlas-Williams.

Reported Missing.—Capt. G. S. Hodge, R.A.M.C.

Missing, Singapore, now Officially Reported Prisoner of War, Thailand.—Capt. V. W. J. Hetreed, R.A.M.C.

Killed in Action in Tunisia.—Lieut. G. F. Barnes, R.A.M.C.

Missing, Presumed Killed.—Temp. Surg. Lieut. T. P. Storey, D.S.C., R.N.V.R.

Letters, Notes, and Answers

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to THE EDITOR, BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, B.M.A. HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES AND LETTERS forwarded for publication are understood to be offered to the *British Medical Journal* alone unless the contrary be stated.

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ANY QUESTIONS?

Normal Temperature Range

Q.—A patient continually records a temperature of 99.4° to 99.6° F. taken in the late afternoon or early evening (4.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.). Can this be looked upon as being a normal temperature for this patient? Below what level is a temperature considered as being pathologically subnormal?

A.—The limits of the daily rhythm of body temperature were set by Gessler in 1928 at 36.5° to 37.5° C., which is equivalent to 97.7° to 99.5° F., and since then these values have been pretty well established. These values were obtained with a deep rectal thermometer, and they are approximately one degree higher than those obtained by placing a thermometer in the mouth. The lowest temperature is found between 2 and 4 a.m., and the highest in the early afternoon. The latter persists from about 1 to 7 p.m. and is usually found again at 11 p.m. Two groups of people appear to be exceptions to this rule: first, newborn babies, who have a much smaller diurnal range; and, secondly, the very aged, whose mean value is lower and in whom the daily rhythm may be reversed. The variations appear to depend more on the absolute time than the occupation, and are obtained even when more sleep is taken by day than by night. Strenuous exercise causes a temporary rise in body temperature of from 1° to 4° F. If the temperature of the patient in question was taken by mouth, it must be regarded as abnormal and must be attributed to some degree of toxæmia, even though this may not easily be detected by other means.

Signs of Spinal-cord Constriction

Q.—If a constriction, such as an organizing blood clot, were applied to the spinal cord, which cells or tracts would be likely to be affected first?

A.—This is a most important question. Clinical misdiagnoses in cases of compression of the spinal cord may occur in the early stages, just when operation is most required and radical cure most possible. Many medical men assume that a sharp "sensory level" is always an early and constant sign of spinal-cord compression and do not think of this diagnosis unless they find such a level. Sensory loss below the level of compression is a constant sign only at a