

Medical Notes in Parliament

Abolition of Identity Cards

In answer to a question in the House of Commons on February 21 the MINISTER OF HEALTH announced that it was no longer necessary for the public to possess and produce an identity card or to notify change of address for National Registration purposes, although the numbers would continue to be used in the National Health Service. Numbering was necessary in the National Health Service in order to identify patients and to avoid inflation of doctors' lists of patients. To save the labour and expense of allotting new numbers the old National Registration numbers would be retained for this purpose. Anyone using the Service would be asked, as now, for his number when applying to go on a doctor's list or for dental or ophthalmic treatment.

Connaught Military Hospital

Mr. F. F. A. BURDEN on February 21 drew attention to the conditions at the Connaught Military Hospital for tuberculous patients at Hindhead, Surrey. Mr. A. HEAD said the accommodation at this hospital was not all that he would wish. If, however, it were not used, tuberculous patients would have to wait for a bed in the limited general hospital accommodation elsewhere and would not have the advantage of early specialist treatment. Further improvements in the structure and amenities were in hand. Recent allegations about the conditions were much exaggerated.

Cost of Patients' Food

Mr. N. N. DODDS on February 21 spoke of the concern caused by the decision of the South-west Metropolitan Regional Board controlling over 300 hospitals to spend no more than 21s. a week on feeding each patient. Mr. H. F. C. CROOKSHANK replied that the board asked management committees, in preparing their estimates for the next financial year, to regard as maxima for their groups certain figures of expenditure on provisions based on averages in the region. In addition it warned committees to take account of possible price rises in framing their estimates. This was an interim measure pending a further detailed investigation into the costs of provisions. On the information at present available he saw no reason to intervene.

Sanatoria Waiting-lists.—Provisional figures show that the number of persons waiting to enter tuberculosis sanatoria in England and Wales at December 31, 1951, was about 8,200.

Surgical Boots.—It is proposed to make a fixed charge of £3 a pair for surgical boots and shoes.

Estimates.—Mr. Crookshank states that it seems probable that in 1951-2 expenditure on the general dental services as a whole will be about equal to the estimate, while that on the supplementary ophthalmic services will be about £5m. below. In Scotland expenditure on the latter is expected to be about £50,000 below the estimate.

Universities and Colleges

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Charles Joseph Singer, D.M., D.Litt., F.R.C.P., Professor Emeritus of History of Medicine in the University of London, has been elected to an Honorary Fellowship of Magdalen College, Oxford.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

The Copeman Medal for medical research of Corpus Christi College has been awarded to Dr. John Chaplin Sloper.

The following medical degrees were conferred in Congregation on February 8:

M.D.—A. A. Miles, J. Lister, H. T. H. Wilson, J. R. Robinson. M.B., B.Chir.—*D. B. Murray, *N. R. Lewis, *E. M. Sproston.

Professor B. H. C. Matthews, F.R.S., Professor of Physiology in the University, has been elected to a Professorial Fellowship of King's College.

Dr. T. S. Hele, formerly Master of Emmanuel College, has been elected into a Life Fellowship of the College.

*By proxy.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

The honorary degree of LL.D. will be conferred on Emeritus Professor R. C. Alexander, formerly Professor of Surgery, and on Emeritus Professor Adam Patrick, formerly Professor of Medicine, in the University at a graduation ceremony on July 4.

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

At a meeting on February 20 the Council of the University recorded its deep regret at the death of His Majesty King George VI, the Visitor to the University, and the Pro-Chancellor read the letter and resolution of the Senate and the Council which had been forwarded to Her Majesty the Queen by the Chancellor.

The following appointments were announced: I. M. P. Dawson, M.B., B.Chir., M.R.C.P., as Lecturer in Pathology, and C. O. Carter, B.M., B.Ch., M.R.C.P., as part-time Medical Geneticist. Professor R. D. Passey, Head of the Department of Experimental Pathology and Cancer Research in the University, has received the following letter from the trustees of the Anna Fuller Fund of New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A.:

"The trustees of the Anna Fuller Fund, at their meeting on February 8, 1952, on their own motion, voted a gift in the amount of one hundred pounds to the University of Leeds, in memory of King George VI. The trustees specifically provided that this gift needs no acknowledgment or special accounting, but may simply be used, in whole or in part, at any time or from time to time, for any purpose having to do with cancer research in your complete and unfettered discretion."

It is proposed to devote the money towards the cost of the electron microscope recently installed in the department.

The Services

Surgeon-Commanders A. F. M. Barron and D. J. N. McNab, R.N.V.R., Surgeon Commander C. A. Pittar, R.N.Z.N.V.R., and Surgeon Lieutenant-Commanders O. J. Vaughan-Jackson, F. G. Ward, and T. B. Snell, R.N.V.R., have been awarded the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Decoration.

Brigadier G. E. MacAlevey, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., late R.A.M.C., has been appointed a Deputy Director of Medical Services of the Army and has been granted the temporary rank of Major-General.

Lieutenant-Colonel (Temporary Colonel) Sir Arthur Porritt, K.C.M.G., C.B.E., R.A.M.C., T.A., has been appointed Honorary Colonel of a T.A. unit in succession to Colonel Lord Webb-Johnson, K.C.V.O., C.B.E., D.S.O., T.D., R.A.M.C., whose tenure has expired.

A Supplement to the *London Gazette* has announced the following awards:

First, Second, and Third Clasps to the Territorial Efficiency Decoration.—Major (Honorary Colonel) T. A. A. Hunter, R.A.M.C.

First and Second Clasps to the Territorial Efficiency Decoration.—Major (Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel) J. R. Wright, T.D., and Major A. D. Briscoe, T.D. (now Supplementary Reserve), R.A.M.C.

Territorial Efficiency Decoration and First Clasp.—Majors P. T. Cooper, J. C. Fletcher, J. B. Mackay, M.B.E., and C. S. Nicol, R.A.M.C.

Territorial Efficiency Decoration.—Major (Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel) A. G. Hammond and Honorary Major D. S. Macpherson, retired, R.A.M.C.

The President of the U.S.A. has conferred the Silver Star Medal upon Major D. H. R. Montgomery, M.C., R.A.M.C., and the Bronze Star Medal upon Lieutenant-Colonel A. MacLennan, O.B.E., R.A.M.C., in recognition of gallant and distinguished services during the operations by the United Nations in Korea.

The Prince Regent of Belgium has conferred the following decorations in recognition of distinguished services in the cause of the Allies during the 1939-45 war:

Commander of the Order of Leopold II.—Brigadier (Honorary) R. R. G. Atkins, O.B.E., M.C., late R.A.M.C.

Officer of the Order of Leopold.—Lieutenant-Colonel J. Smith, O.B.E., T.D., R.A.M.C.

Croix Militaire 1st Class.—Lieutenant-Colonel J. V. Bradley, T.D., and Major J. K. Willson-Pepper, R.A.M.C.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.—At Radcliffe Infirmary, Maternity Department Lecture Theatre, Oxford, March 5, 5 p.m., "*Some Old and New Views on Localization of Function in the Cerebral Cortex*," Litchfield Lecture by Dr. F. M. R. Walshe, F.R.S.

ROYAL MICROSCOPICAL SOCIETY, Tavistock House South, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.—March 5, 6 p.m., "*Some Techniques of Modern Enzyme Histochemistry and Their Application*," by Dr. A. G. Everson Pearse.

Thursday

BRITISH POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL FEDERATION.—At London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, Gower Street, W.C.—March 6, 5.30 p.m., "*Environmental Factors in Work*," by Professor G. P. Crowden.

EPSOM AND SUTTON INTER-HOSPITAL PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION.—At St. Ebba's Hospital, Epsom, March 6, 8 p.m., clinical meeting. Case demonstrations by Dr. J. C. Batt. Papers, "*Treatment of Juvenile Psychiatric Disorders*," by Dr. D. E. Sands; "*Some Aspects of the E.E.G. in Juvenile Psychiatric Cases*," by Dr. G. H. A. Chamberlain; "*Factors Contributing to the Necessity of Prolonged Psychiatric Treatment*," by Dr. W. McIlroy.

FACULTY OF HOMOEOPATHY.—At Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital, Great Ormond Street, London, W.C., March 6, 5 p.m., "*Vomiting in Infancy and Childhood*," address by Dr. D. M. Foubister.

●INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH, Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London, W.C.—March 6, 5 p.m., "*Modern Orthopaedic Principles*," by Mr. H. J. Seddon.

●INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.—March 6, 5.30 p.m., "*Histopathology of Ecto- and Mesodermal Naevi*," by Dr. H. Haber.

LIVERPOOL MEDICAL INSTITUTION, 114, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.—March 6, 4.30 p.m., joint meeting with Manchester Medical Society. "*Opportunities for Research in General Practice*," by Professor Robert Platt; "*Art in Paediatrics*," by Professor Wilfrid Gaisford.

LONDON UNIVERSITY.—At Wright-Fleming Institute Lecture Theatre, St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, Paddington, W., March 6, 5 p.m., "*The Cerebellum and its Connexions in the Light of Recent Investigations*," Special University Lecture in Human Anatomy and Morphology by Professor Jan Jansen (Oslo University).

MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—At Claridges, Brook Street, London, W., March 6, annual dinner.

●MOTHERS' CLINIC, 108, Whitfield Street, London, W.—March 6, 2.30 p.m., lecture and demonstration (on living models) on contraceptive technique by Marie C. Stopes.

ROYAL SANITARY INSTITUTE.—At Mansion House, Doncaster, March 6, 10 a.m., papers: "*Co-ordination Within the Welfare Service*," by Dr. Lilywyn Roberts; "*Recent Advances in Insecticides*," by Mr. I. A. Mackay, B.Sc. Afternoon visits.

ROYAL SOCIETY, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W.—March 6, 4.30 p.m., "*The Rowett Research Institute*," by Dr. D. P. Cuthbertson.

ST. ANDREWS UNIVERSITY.—At Lecture Theatre, Materia Medica Department, Medical School, Small's Wynd, Dundee, March 6, 5 p.m., "*Problems Connected with Old Age*," by Dr. A. G. Anderson.

ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL, Hyde Park Corner, London, S.W.—March 6, 4.30 p.m., lecture-demonstration in neurology by Dr. D. Williams.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, Physiology Theatre, Gower Street, London, W.C.—March 6, 4.45 p.m., "*Mitochondria and Biological Oxidations and Phosphorylations*," by Dr. A. L. Lehninger (Chicago).

Friday

●INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.—March 7, 5.30 p.m., "*Common Skin Diseases in Children*," clinical demonstration by Dr. R. T. Brain.

●INSTITUTE OF DISEASES OF THE CHEST AND INSTITUTE OF CARDIOLOGY.—At London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, Gower Street, W.C., March 7, 5.30 p.m., "*Medical Aspects of Rheumatic Heart Disease*," by Dr. Graham Hayward.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.—At Magdalen College, Oxford, March 7, 5 p.m., "*The Neurophysiological Basis of Mind*," Waynefleete Lecture by Professor J. C. Eccles, F.R.S.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, Physiology Theatre, Gower Street, London, W.C.—March 7, 5.30 p.m., "*Cell Physiology and Pharmacology—The Distinct Nuclear and Cytoplasmic Actions of Drugs*," by Professor J. F. Danielli, D.Sc.

Saturday

BIRMINGHAM MEDICAL INSTITUTE: SECTION OF ODONTOLOGY.—At Medical School, Hospitals Centre, Selly Oak, Birmingham, March 8, clinical meeting.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS

BIRTHS

Brown.—On February 4, 1952, at the British Military Hospital, Singapore, to Marguerite, wife of Squadron Leader T. C. Brown, G.M., a son—Christopher.

Edwards.—On February 7, 1952, at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, London, W., to Hetty, wife of Dr. Errol M. Edwards a son—Jonathan.

Any Questions ?

Correspondents should give their names and addresses (not for publication) and include all relevant details in their questions, which should be typed. We publish here a selection of those questions and answers which seem to be of general interest.

Pregnancy Tests

Q.—Have there been any recent improvements in laboratory tests for pregnancy? Which is the earliest to give a reliable answer? Is anything known about a test in which serum expressed from the breast is injected subcutaneously into the forearm?

A.—The original Aschheim-Zondek test, which uses ovulation in the immature female mouse as its end point, is still one of the most accurate pregnancy diagnosis tests and probably is the earliest to give a reliable answer. All "improvements," therefore, have been intended to simplify the technique, reduce the time required to perform the test, or dispense with animals.

The Friedman test uses a single intravenous injection into a mature female rabbit (in place of several injections into several mice) and requires 24 to 48 hours as compared with five days. The Hogben test uses external ovulation in the South African clawed toad (*Xenopus laevis*) and requires about 24 hours. The male South American toad (*Bufo arenarum* Hensel), North American leopard frog (*Rana pipiens*), and edible frog (*Rana esculenta*) respond to injection of pregnancy urine within three hours by expelling spermatozoa into the cloacal urine, whence they are easily removed and observed beneath the microscope. Chemical tests (such as pregnanediol assay) on the patient's urine are less reliable than animal tests. Properly recorded basal temperatures taken first thing every morning also give reliable answers very early in pregnancy (within three weeks of ovulation—ordinarily one week after the expected onset of the "missed" period).

The colostrum test was described by Falls, Freda, and Cohen (1941); it was claimed that the intradermal injection of 0.02 ml. of a solution consisting of equal parts of human colostrum and physiological saline produced no reaction in pregnant women, but a typical allergic response (flare and wheal) within half an hour in non-pregnant women. In the original publication there were 98% correct answers in 265 pregnant women and 96% correct answers in 113 non-pregnant women. Few subsequent reports have confirmed these findings and most—for example, Pulver and Posner, 1942; Allen and Donaldson, 1943—indicate the test to be quite unreliable. There do not seem to have been any reports since 1945, and it may therefore be concluded that no further interest in the test remains.

REFERENCES

Allen, E., and Donaldson, L. B. (1943). *Amer. J. Obstet. Gynec.*, **45**, 208.
Falls, F. H., Freda, V. C., and Cohen, H. H. (1941). *Ibid.*, **41**, 431.
Pulver, M., and Posner, L. B. (1942). *Ibid.*, **44**, 690.

Insulin-resistance and Schizophrenia

Q.—What determines the size of the dose of insulin in insulin coma therapy? Does the dose bear any relationship to the severity of the mental illness?

A.—The dose of insulin required to produce coma varies very much from case to case. In schizophrenics it is generally higher than in normal persons or patients suffering from other conditions, 300 units or more being quite commonly required. Insulin-resistance is thought to be aetiologically related to the disease, and many clinicians are convinced that patients with a high resistance to insulin have a worse prognosis. Little is known for sure on this subject, which is theoretically important.