

MEDICAL NEWS

Tests for Overseas Doctors

In March 1975, the General Medical Council announced that from 1 June 1975 it would not normally be prepared to grant temporary registration for the first time to any doctor from overseas unless he had passed in the United Kingdom a test of proficiency in the English language and of professional knowledge and competence. Temporary registration enables overseas doctors to undertake appointments in hospitals or institutions approved by the G.M.C.

The first test of this kind was held at Edinburgh in the week commencing 23 June, and afterwards the G.M.C. said:

"The test was conducted, on behalf of the General Medical Council, by the Temporary Registration Assessment Board, a body established for the purpose by the Examining Board in England, the Scottish Triple Qualification Board, and the Society of Apothecaries of London. Sixty-eight candidates presented themselves at the test. The Board has notified the Council that 27 candidates passed and 41 failed. Further tests of this kind will be conducted by the Board, at intervals of approximately one month, at Edinburgh, Glasgow, or London."

The Secretary of the B.M.A. has commented: "For many years the N.H.S. has depended upon overseas doctors to meet the day-to-day service needs as opposed to training, which is what the majority of them are seeking. If today's announcement by the G.M.C. of only 40% pass rate is an indication for the future the outlook for the N.H.S. is bleak indeed."

"It also comes at a time when the emigration of U.K. graduates is causing concern and the whole problem of manning our Health Service needs careful reappraisal. There is only one solution. The N.H.S. must be given a larger slice of the national cake and medicine in this country made sufficiently attractive for doctors to remain here and to be allowed full professional independence to practise their profession as they would wish."

Lister Institute

The closing of the Chelsea Bridge laboratories of the Lister Institute, the result of insuperable economic problems, has not affected the work of other branches of the institute, says its annual report. Manufacture of vaccines at the Elstree laboratory increased from 2.8m. doses in 1972 to over 4m. in 1974; the products include vaccines against rabies, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus. Nor has the closure affected the Blood Products Laboratory and Plasma Fractionation Laboratory at Oxford which the institute runs on behalf of the Medical Research Council and the Department of Health and Social Security.

Drug Exports Up

In 1974 the pharmaceutical industry's positive balance of trade exceeded £200m., with exports of over £300m. for the first time, according to Mr. R. G. Hoare, immediate past president of the A.B.P.I. and chairman of I.C.I. Pharmaceuticals Division. The annual report states that the industry's ex-

penditure on research had more than trebled since 1967. During the year there had been increases in the prices of N.H.S. medicines, agreed under the procedures of the voluntary price regulation scheme, but the percentage increases were well below the general level of inflation. U.K. medicine prices remained among the lowest in the world, and the serious implications of this situation in terms of earnings from abroad continued to receive attention and had been discussed with the Department of Health. In 1974 the export sales of the U.K. industry, at £301m., were in excess of sales to the N.H.S. (estimated £280m.) for the first time.

Society for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of Medical Men

The Society's A.G.M. was held on 12 June under the presidency of Dr. R. P. K. Coe. The secretary, Dr. J. Leahy Taylor, reported that an Order of the Privy Council would now permit the society to use part of its income as might not be required for the relief of necessitous widows and orphans of deceased members for the relief of other dependants or of necessitous members. Further details from Dr. Leahy Taylor, Medical Protection Society, 50 Hallam Street, London W1.

Editor Resigns

Dr. R. H. Moser has resigned as editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, after a disagreement with Dr. H. J. Sammons, executive vice-president of the A.M.A., about the allocation of the association's resources during the current period of retrenchment. Dr. Moser objected to the continuing reduction in the size of *J.A.M.A.* and the specialty journals published by the A.M.A.

Dr. W. R. Barclay will serve as interim editor until a successor is appointed.

Cumulative Index

The cumulative index for the four issues of the *B.M.J.* published in 1974 is now available, bound in hard covers as in previous years. The price is £4.50 but B.M.A. members have a reduced rate of £3.

COMING EVENTS

Fourth British Academic Conference in Otolaryngology.—20-25 July, London. Details from Mrs. Carol Wengraf, F.R.C.S., Lewisham Hospital, Lewisham High Street, London SE13 6LH. (Tel. 01-690 4311.)

"Rhythmic Functions in Biological Systems".—International congress, 8-12 September, Vienna. Details from Dr. G. Lassmann, c/o Wiener Medizinische Akademie, Alser Strasse 4, 1090 Vienna, Austria.

SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

For attending lectures marked * a fee is charged or a ticket is required. Applications should be made first to the institution concerned.

Wednesday, 16 July

ROYAL POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL.—2 p.m., Dr. J. D. Davies: Disappearing Ducts of the Breast.

Friday, 18 July

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—3 p.m., Charles Tomes lecture by Professor David Mason: Salivary Glands and Disease.

B.M.A. NOTICES

Special Groups of Members of the Association

Nominations are hereby invited for the undermentioned vacancies on the Consultant Pathologists Group Committee. The vacancies are caused by the retirement every other year of one half of the members.

Nomination forms are obtainable from the undersigned and must be returned not later than Monday, 1 September. In the event of contests arising voting papers will be issued at a later date to members of the group.

Group Committee	Number of vacancies	Period of office	Hospital region or area for which nomination is desired
Pathologists	4	1975-9	United Kingdom (as a whole)

A candidate for election must be a member of the group and the person making the nomination must fulfil the same criteria.

DEREK STEVENSON,
Secretary

Diary of Central Meetings

	JULY
17 Thurs.	General Medical Services Committee, 10 a.m.
22 Tues.	Joint Consultants Committee (at Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, London N.W.1).
30 Wed.	Liaison Committee between General Medical Services Committee and Royal College of General Practitioners, 2.30 p.m.

Branch and Division Meetings to be Held

Members proposing to attend meetings marked* are asked to notify in advance the honorary secretary concerned.

North-west Essex Division.—At Old Mill Restaurant, Harlow, Friday, 18 July, 8 for 8.30 p.m., annual dinner dance.* Guests are invited.

Wandsworth and East Merton Division.—At St. James's Hospital, 8 for 8.30 p.m., meeting to hear report of representatives to A.R.M.

Corrections

Better Medical Writing

We regret that a printing error occurred in the letter from Dr. J. A. Farfor (14 June, p. 614). In the third sentence of the second paragraph the last two lines should read "... because the world's research workers do not all read English with ease."—Ed., *B.M.J.*

Little and Big Bellyachers

We regret that a printing error occurred in the letter from Mr. J. P. Childs (28 June, p. 752). The reference should read Childs, P., *British Journal of Surgery*, 1972, 59, 669.

Notice to Authors

When original articles and letters for publication are not submitted exclusively to the *British Medical Journal* this must be stated.

Correspondence on editorial business should be addressed to the Editor, *British Medical Journal*, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR. Telephone: 01-387 4499. Telegrams: Aitology, London, W.C.1.

Authors wanting reprints of their articles should notify the Publishing Manager, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, WC1H 9JR, on receipt of proofs.

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