

that the deductions in the report were fallacious. Information from all over the world regarding the side effects of the pill, she said, was now reaching the medical journals. In reply, Lord ABERDARE said that the Secretary of State for Social Services was satisfied that the deductions of the Committee on Safety of Medicines in its report "Carcinogenicity Tests of Oral Contraceptives" were sound. The committee had carried out some very careful testing over several years, and in the report it had come to the conclusion that there were no risks of carcinogenicity in the pill. There had been criticisms elsewhere in the world of various aspects of the pill but the tests, he said, had been correct, properly carried out, and sound.

Questions in the Commons

School Meals and Milk

In written answers on 13 December Mrs MARGARET THATCHER said that the October census of school meals showed that 5,078,000 or 64% of pupils present at maintained schools in England and Wales took the school dinner compared with 4,658,000 or 59.8% in October 1971. Free dinners served in October numbered 850,000 or 16.8% of the total compared with 805,000 or 17.3% last year. Pupils buying snack meals in school and those bringing their own food to eat at midday numbered 19,000 and 526,000 respectively as compared with 11,300 and 594,300 last year. All but a few of the snack meals were being taken in secondary schools and one in ten secondary pupils brought sandwiches as compared with one in 25 primary pupils.

The October census of school milk showed that 1,938,000 pupils in England and Wales, being pupils in special schools or pupils in other schools entitled to it on age grounds, were receiving free milk. In addition 85,000 primary school pupils over the age of 7 were receiving free school milk on health grounds. The figures represented 95% and 3% of the respective age groups present on the day of the census. On that day 59 local education authorities had made arrangements for the sale of milk in a total of 1,149 primary and 45 secondary schools.

Abortion

In a written answer on 12 December Sir KEITH JOSEPH said that women known to have died in England and Wales within one month of an operation under the Abortion Act numbered three in 1968, 17 in 1969, 13 in 1970, 14 in 1971, and so far 12 had been recorded in 1972.

MEDICAL NEWS

Doman-Delacato Treatment

The Spastics Society and the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children said in a statement last week that they felt "bound to comment upon publicity which is appearing currently both in the press and on television regarding the American Doman-Delacato system of treating 'brain damaged' children."

It had been well established for many years, said the societies, that children with either physical or mental handicap benefited from stimulation and, in the great majority of cases, from treatment. There were many schools of physiotherapy but certainly no independent documented evidence to support a contention that the Doman-Delacato system was in any way superior to any other. For residents of the U.K. embarking on the treatment this involved costly travel to Philadelphia and a programme of therapy which was very demanding on parents, family, friends, and neighbours. In many cases eight periods of this therapy were prescribed for every day of the month throughout the year.

It was difficult to obtain complete data on the results achieved with all the British children who had visited America. However the general picture that emerged was that children who had received virtually no treatment here did make some progress but this progress was no better than that which could be achieved under other systems and medical regimes practised in Britain.

Parents of handicapped children should consult a paediatrician before embarking on the Doman-Delacato treatment, the statement advised. Re-assessment of a child could be arranged through either the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children or The Spastics Society.

Doctors Leave Uganda

Three mission hospitals in Uganda, at Amudat, at Kabarole, and at Tororo, have been abandoned by their doctors who have left the country. This is only one example of the difficulties created by the recent exodus of Asian doctors from Uganda, according to its chief medical officer, Dr. U. Rwakihembo. A report in *The Times* last week said that Dr. Rwakihembo was pessimistic about the prospects of recruiting doctors from other African countries because of a shortage of money to pay them.

General Medical Council

The first batch of doctors whose names were erased from the *Medical Register* for failure to pay the annual retention fee were taken off it on 15 December. A total of 53 names were removed: of these only 15 had addresses in the United Kingdom and qualifications obtained at medical schools in Britain.

Seminars at B.M.A. House

A seminar on "Asthma" will be held at B.M.A. House, London, on Friday, 19 January, from 9.30 to 5 p.m. For details see advertisement on page vi.

COMING EVENTS

Bone and Tooth Society.—Scientific and annual general meeting, 5 January, 3.15 p.m., Royal Dental Hospital, London W.C.2. Details from Professor R. L. Hartles, Liverpool University.

Nuffield Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Oxford University.—Series of lectures, the second half of a postgraduate course, "Basic Sciences of the Musculoskeletal System," Friday evenings, 6.30 p.m., and Saturday mornings, 8.30 a.m., 5 January-17 March inclusive, at Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Oxford. All members of the medical and allied professions are invited.

"Medicine in the Common Market."—Meeting, 7 January, 9.30 a.m., Middlesex Hospital Medical School, organized by the North London Faculty of the Royal College of General Practitioners. Speakers include Dr. Derek Stevenson (Secretary, B.M.A.). Applications to Dr. L. T. Newman, Abbey Medical Centre, 87-89 Abbey Road, St. Johns Wood, London NW8 OAG. (Tel. 01-624 9383.)

Institute of Orthopaedics.—Instructional course, "Growth and Metabolic Disorders," Wednesdays, 10 January-28 March. Details of this and other courses including some at Stanmore are obtainable from the secretary for postgraduate studies, Institute of Orthopaedics, Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, 234 Great Portland Street, London WIN 6AD. (Tel. 01-389 507.)

Newcastle upon Tyne Regional Neurological Centre.—Details and copies of the spring term, January-April, programme of the Neurological Research Discussion Group are obtainable from Dr. W. G. Bradley at the centre, Newcastle General Hospital, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6BE. (Tel. 0632 3-8811.)

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.

Friday, 29 December

ROYAL POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL.—11 a.m., Mr. D. P. Burkitt: Some Common Surgical Diseases Related to Fibre-depleted Diet.

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

SHEFFIELD

Appointments.—Mr. K. J. Anderton (lecturer in obstetrics and gynaecology); Dr. Dorothy F. M. Black (lecturer in psychiatry); Dr. S. Jacob (lecturer in human biology and anatomy).

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Ph.D.—In the Faculty of Medicine: C. M. Singh, M. Suzangar, G. R. Gilpin, M. J. Landon, T. Lind, M. A. K. Yousufi.

M.Sc.—In the Faculty of Medicine: Annabel K. Broome, A. MacI. Coupar, A. Macmillan, Linda Walker.

Corrections

Haemostatic Changes during Dialysis Associated with Thrombus Formation on Dialysis Membranes

In the article by Dr. R. M. Lindsay and his colleagues (25 November, p. 454) the entries in the table giving the numbers of platelets retained on Gambro-Alwall membranes should in each case have read $\times 10^9$ rather than $\times 10^8$.

Notice to Authors

When original articles and letters for publication are not submitted exclusively to the *British Medical Journal* this must be stated. Accepted articles may subsequently be selected for publication in the North American monthly edition.

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