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EDITOR'S CHOICE

BMJ

"What exactly is the point of this conference?" Tony Delamothe asked a delegate to a conference on medical education in London. "Well it is August," the delegate answered. Dr Delamothe, nevertheless, manages to detect some purpose to the London conference (p 580), whereas Colin Currie is scathing about a world conference on medical education in Edinburgh, timed to allow easy progression to the festival (p 630). Grand statements are just not enough, as our editorial on ways of reducing caesarean sections makes clear (p 569). Currie quotes Blake's famous maxim of the need to do

good in minute particulars, and an example is a study (p 590) showing that prepuces can be saved in most boys referred for circumcision because of adhesions. What a pity that the pragmatic Archie Cochrane could not have been at the conference in Edinburgh. His self written obituary continues to produce responses, and now we have Cochrane's law (p 614): "Before you request a test you should first ask yourself what you are going to do if the result is positive, then ask yourself what you are going to do if the test is negative, and if the answers are the same do not do it."