

Your World Organisation WONCA has been formed to co-ordinate our previous sporadic efforts in exchange and has several working parties operating on important aspects such as medical records, teacher training, morbidity classification, general research, assessment and now bibliography library.

I am sure you will agree that an international bibliography library on family/general practice is needed urgently. As mentioned above the *Index Medicus* does not recognise our discipline as an identity and refuses to accept our listing. I believe it is important that we get to know each other better and recognise each other's work and I hope the World Organisation will achieve this in the future. Success depends on support, support depends on recognised value for that support. The sixth World Conference on Family Practice held in Mexico November 4-9 this year will demonstrated that we have that support.

M. O. KENT-HUGHES
President

World Organisation of National Colleges,
Academies, and Academic Associations of
General Practitioners/Family Physicians
254 Albert Street,
East Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia 30020.

POSTGRADUATE COURSES

Sir,

I have recently attended a postgraduate course at the Cardiothoracic Institute and because this course was in my view so relevant to general practice, I wish to counter the impression which may have been left by Drs Salinsky and Stern in your August *Journal* that postgraduate teachers in our teaching hospitals are unaware of the needs of the general practitioner. At no time on this course was I made to feel like a medical student, but the whole approach was one of sharing information.

I think they should be aware that Britain has some 22,000 highly individualistic doctors who, when grouped on any course, have amazingly different needs, and the relevance of any course varies with the individual. It is perhaps of note that the course I attended is heavily oversubscribed and that there is a current waiting list of nearly two years.

We should, I think, be aware of the tremendous responsibility which lies upon course organisers to see that subject matter is both relevant and informative to the audience, and that we should make every effort to assist them with constructive comments.

R. E. TAYLOR

91 London Road,
Benfleet,
Essex SS7 57Q.

CHLOROQUINE FOR ANGINOSE GLANDULAR FEVER

Sir,

During the past few years, we have been treating these cases with a short course of chloroquine, with occasional dramatic apparent cures.

This is not a new treatment, but we feel that it has fallen into disrepute.

One such case showed not only a positive Paul Bunnell test, but also showed a positive Epstein-Barr Viral Capsid Antigen Immunofluorescence Test for specific IgM antibodies.

It is not thought that glandular fever in East Yorkshire is any different to anywhere else in the world. The phrase 'dramatic apparent cure' applies to a patient who is acutely ill in bed with a sore throat and a temperature, who on the following morning is not only quite asymptomatic, but wishes to go to work.

We would be glad to know if any other readers have observed this sort of apparent cure. Further information on references in the literature concerned with this treatment can be obtained from us.

J. G. ALEXANDER,
Consultant Bacteriologist
P. JUNE ALEXANDER

'Appledene'
6, Nunburnholme Avenue,
North Ferriby,
East Yorkshire,
HU14 3AN.

ABORTION

Sir,

In the account of the Symposium '*The Hostile Environment of Man*' (Supplement No. 1, Volume 24, 1974), Dr J. G. Howells is reported as having said that until 1860 the Catholic Church believed in the termination of pregnancy, and that except for two brief periods in the sixteenth century the Church always taught that abortion was permissible until quickening.

Professor J. Noonan, an international authority on this subject, has demonstrated the falsity of these statements in his book *The morality of Abortion* (Harvard University Press, 1970). In it he states that whatever may be the evidence of biblical texts, it is certain that ever since apostolic times Christianity has taken a very severe stand against abortion equating it with homicide. The Church's teaching against abortion has been logical and consistent in the light of the developing knowledge of embryology and fetology.

In his book *Medical Ethics* (St Paul Publications, 1972) the eminent moral theologian Bernard Haring states that since the first centuries the Church has issued grave sanctions against those Christians who would dare commit such a crime as abortion. Further on Professor Haring states that throughout the centuries theological opinions