

which has already begun at one of the regular Examination Workshops.

As the international role of the College assumes increasing importance, Membership is being sought by doctors working overseas. The extent to which the present examination is relevant to those working in settings outside the United Kingdom is therefore under review.

The international dimension of general practice presents it with a unique problem, for whilst examinations for Membership or Fellowship of other

Royal Colleges are based largely on aspects of clinical practice which are universal, this is only partly true for general practice. Much of the work of family doctors is culture-dependent, and for this reason methods of assessment must reflect the setting in which the doctor works. The Membership Division is therefore considering, with some urgency, the possibility that the College should either offer a Diploma in General Practice, appropriate to doctors working overseas, or alternatively that it should offer the experi-

ence which it has gained during almost fifteen years of examining in general practice to those countries who wish to develop their own methods of assessment.

The Membership Division will provide personal information from the examination, and from other methods as they are developed, to individual candidates who wish to evaluate their own performance, and statistical data to those whose responsibility it is to provide vocational and continuing education for general practice.

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## CONFERENCE REPORT

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### Violence in the Family

A three-day seminar presenting and discussing recent research on services for battered women entitled "Violence in the Family" took place at The University of Kent, Canterbury in September 1981. Dr Jan Pahl, research fellow, organized the meeting on behalf of the DHSS. Dr J. B. Chapman represented the RCGP and sent us this report of what others had to say. Full proceedings of the meeting are likely to be published in due course.

In the United Kingdom a lot of men repeatedly injure their wives or cohabitantes, often with increasing severity over the years. It is the doctor who is most frequently contacted by the battered woman. The doctor who gives pills, treats the wounds only, or tells the woman to sort her own life out was

not recommended. One who joins with the woman in attempting to acquire a much deeper grasp of the facts of the case, who listens and discusses, was thought to be most likely to be helpful to the battered wife and her family. Taking a careful and full history was in itself a response that seemed to raise

the self-esteem of the woman.

Help is difficult. Some women are not brave. Some meet uninformed or unconcerned professionals. Blame is variously apportioned and myths abound. The law is invoked, but applied with lack of uniformity by lawyers, police and housing authorities. There are widely different criteria by which individuals in the professions set the level of their response. The more that violence is regarded as an unacceptable way of solving problems by the practitioner and the better informed she/he is, the more likely is the woman to persist in using help offered. The addresses of solicitors, women's aid refuges and their telephone numbers can be given.

Some women have suffered for up to thirty years; many have made attempts to get away. The brave woman with children is likely to succeed. The timorous with no child is likely to remain the subject of repeated violence.

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## OBITUARY

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### Howard Morris Saxby, OBE, FRCGP, FRACGP

Shad Saxby, who later changed his nickname to Chad for a reason I have never discovered, was one of my best friends in Australia and certainly one of our College's stalwarts on that continent. He died on 26 November 1981.

Soon after the British College was founded, a New South Wales faculty came into being and, not long afterwards, an Australian Council of our College. Chad Saxby was Honorary Secretary to both until the members formed their own Australian College with its own faculties in February 1958. Before he joined the College he was doctor to the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in Sydney where he was doing gen-

eral practice. It was at that hospital that several meetings of the College took place; and where its records were stored prior to the new Australian College finding a home of its own. With Bill Conolly he did an enormous amount of work for the faculty and our College.

After retiring from work for the British College he went into training as a monk in a Benedictine Monastery near Perth, Western Australia. However, he married and did not complete his training. His visit to England a few years later with his wife was a very great pleasure to us all.

He had a marvellous sense of humour. Whilst at the monastery he acted as doctor to the monks and on one occasion invited a famous eye specialist, Ida Mann, to examine the eyes of one of his flock. The Abbott remonstrated with him for bringing a woman into the Monastery. "Abbott", he replied, "You only have two pictures hanging in your study and both of them are women: the Virgin Mary and Joan of Arc. Surely no one should mind if I bring a famous specialist to cure the eye trouble of one of your monks?"

He will be sadly missed by many of our Colleges, both in Australia and in Britain.

John H. Hunt