

Editorials

THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Of the developments following the founding of the College of General Practitioners, one which gave the greatest pleasure and encouragement to the Foundation Council was the rapid recruitment of members overseas. Members and associates of the College at home have always been pleased to work with their colleagues in other parts of the Commonwealth, and the unity and harmony which has grown up between family doctors in Britain and in many far and isolated places has been a source of pride to us.

An Australian Council was formed two years ago, and there are now enough faculties to cover the whole continent, so it is not unnatural that their members should wish to become an independent college. A leading article in the *Annals of General Practice* published by the Australian Council, part of which we reprint here, gives some of the reasons:

“ While appreciating the tremendous amount of thought and work that has been put into the founding of the College in Great Britain, and the opportunity given to the Australian Faculties to share in the planning and activities of the parent College, members have pointed out that the conditions and problems of general practice in Australia are vastly different from those obtaining in Great Britain. Most of us would like to retain our link with the College of Great Britain but many nevertheless feel that we must be free to plan and legislate for our own special needs. The general practitioner in Australia renders a wider scope of service and has to accept greater responsibility for the many emergencies that occur from day to day. He carries on his practice without any obligation to a government-controlled national health service. Many country general practitioners have not the facilities of a base hospital, or of specialist advice, for patients requiring immediate attention. They are not able to attend regular postgraduate lectures or courses, or to meet their fellow practitioners with reasonable frequency. The vast distances separating general practitioners in Australia create their own special problems.

“ The administration of College activities must of necessity be carried out mainly by correspondence from a central secretariat. This requires adequate finance, which at present is not available since a proportion of all fees must be sent to London. The College in Great Britain has been very generous to the Australian Faculties

in the past, and they appreciate very much the assistance given and interest taken in all their affairs. But consideration of closer central administration, finance, and above all of moulding the College in Australia to suit local conditions, indicate that there is an immediate need for discussing the possible formation of an Australian College.”

To determine the wishes of members and associates in Australia, a plebiscite has been held, and on 8th March the decision was taken at a special meeting of the faculties of the College in Australia to form an independant Australian College of General Practitioners. The transfer will take effect from the 1st July 1958.

The bonds which have in the past united the members and associates of the College in this country and in Australia will not be broken by this action. (Many have already expressed the desire to continue to receive the Journal.) We in this country are proud of this our first offspring, and, as Dr F. M. ROSE (chairman of Council) said at the last annual general meeting, “ we wish them well in what we believe is an essential step in their development.”

41 CADOGAN GARDENS

The College headquarters have now moved into these premises and the first committees were held there on the 19th March. The premises are spacious and have been tastefully decorated and furnished under the personal guidance of Mrs Glyn Hughes, wife of the Honorary Treasurer. The postal address is 41 Cadogan Gardens, Sloane Square, London, S.W.3. (Telephone: Sloane 8333).

Sloane Square is served by District and Inner Circle Underground, and by Nos. 11, 19, 22, 46 and 137 buses.

