

ANNUAL SPRING MEETING 1973

THE Annual Spring Meeting of the College in 1973 will be a very special occasion. It will be attended by many members of the Canadian College of Family Physicians and is to be held in London from 2-6 April, 1973.

It will take place during the Presidency of H.R.H. The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh who has already shown great interest in the meeting and written the welcoming letter published above. Several hundred Canadian general practitioners and their wives are expected to attend.

These two Colleges have much in common both in origin and development. Their joint meeting in Canada in 1969 was a great success. A British working party chaired by Dr B. C. S. Slater has been making preparations for over a year; members who wish to come should start their own planning now.

This joint meeting will give practitioners from varying backgrounds in both countries a chance to learn more about different methods of delivering medical care. Above all it will create an opportunity for exchanging ideas. British doctors look forward to repaying some of the generous hospitality received at the previous joint meeting in Toronto.

VISITING PROFESSORS OF GENERAL PRACTICE

VISITING professors of general practice are a new development in the academic world.

Professorial heads of university departments of general practice are themselves relatively new although nowadays they are appearing much more often (February and May *Journals*). Although the role of permanent professors is now well understood, ideas about visiting professors are less clear.

The essential feature of visiting professorships is that they are flexible. The appointment is temporary, and the tenure may vary from as little as two weeks, which is envisaged as the shortest time for a Sir Harry Jephcott Professorship, to a year as with Dr D. L. Crombie's recent appointment (*April Journal*).

In the past there were only two avenues open. The first was for a general practitioner to become so eminent that he was invited to accept one of the very few visiting professorships with terms of reference wide enough to embrace several branches of medicine including general practice. Thus Professor Byrne in 1971 was the first general practitioner for several years to achieve the honour of the Auckland Savings Bank Visiting Professorship in New Zealand.

The second avenue required a general practitioner to acquire such an outstanding reputation that a university created its own special appointment. Such posts are therefore usually personal to the individual concerned and may well be non-recurring, for example Dr D. L. Crombie's personal Chair at the University of London, Ontario, Canada.

Both these routes are extremely hard, indeed excessively so. General practice today is generating such a veritable plethora of outstanding individuals that if no other opportunities were available, their talents could not be fully stretched: moreover, the need for general practice thinking in many universities would remain unmet.

The College has now identified these needs and moved to meet them. A third group of visiting professorships has been created by the announcement in 1972 of two new developments. In each case the College has negotiated generous financial support and will itself participate in the appointing process.

The Sir Harry Jephcott Visiting Professorships are appropriately called after a great friend and honorary Fellow of the College. Their creation represents a feather in the caps of the Chairman of the Research Foundation Board, Dame Annis Gillie, and the officers of Council. These new professorships will be available to any medical school in the United Kingdom prepared to apply, and will be appointed by a committee including a representative of the university concerned, the College and its appropriate foundation boards. Finance of up to £1,000 each is already available.

The Wolfson Foundation Visiting Professorships were also announced this year. These are different, are specifically for overseas, and will normally last from four to six weeks. Appointments will be restricted to Fellows and members of the Royal College of General Practitioners in the United Kingdom and Eire who are active in general practice. The appointing committee will consist of those holding office at the time as President of the College, and the Chairmen of the Research and Education Foundation Boards. One such professorship will be available this year and another next year. Financial support of up to £5,000 is again already available.

What will these professors do? Among the topics common to both the Sir Harry Jephcott and Wolfson Foundation Professorships is the education of medical students in general practice. It is expected that they will also stimulate the postgraduate vocational training of intended general practitioners and the continuing education of those already in practice.

Visiting professorships in other branches of medicine have long been common and their introduction to general practice is greatly to be welcomed. It is likely that the first appointments of the Sir Harry Jephcott and Wolfson Foundation Professorships will be made this year. The work of these practitioners and their subsequent reports will be studied all over the world.

TWO MILLION POUNDS

THE college appeal was launched in London on 25 May, 1972 with a target of two million pounds. This month a second wave of activity is spreading throughout the country, through the network of the Faculties.

The last appeal was launched in November 1959 and had a target of one million pounds. Why another appeal? Why two million pounds? These are the critical questions and the President and the Chairman of the appeal committee seek to answer them in brochures that are now available. These have been designed to explain to lay men and women the objectives of the College and to outline the need for further money.

In summary, the aim is to improve the care the patients receive from general practitioners by increasing the quality and quantity of general practitioner research and education.