

DR J. C. CAMERON

Dr J. C. Cameron, *C.B.E., T.D., F.R.C.G.P.*, General practitioner, Wallington, Surrey, has been awarded the Gold Medal of the British Medical Association.

Dr Cameron graduated in 1929 from the University of St. Andrews. He became a member of the General Medical Services Committee in 1956 and was elected Chairman in 1964, and re-elected during the following ten years.

Dr Cameron's citation referred to his achievement in reclaiming for general practice the residue of the Group Practice Loan Fund to endow a charity which now bears his name and refers to his work for general practice and included the words, "by no means limited to material and financial successes. Seeing clearly that its future welfare must depend upon its recognition within medicine as equal and not inferior to any other branch, you brought about a closer alliance between your Committee and the Royal College of General Practitioners, and your work was recognised by the College in the conferment upon you of its Honorary Fellowship."

In 1969 Dr Cameron was appointed *C.B.E.*

The Gold Medal is the highest honour of the British Medical Association.

HEALTH AUTHORITIES

The Secretary of State for the Social Services has announced that she is changing the

constitution of regional and area health authorities to ensure that the number of local authority members on both should be increased to one third of the total.

She is also introducing proposals that two members of the staff organisations will also be represented on these National Health Service authorities.

**DOMICILIARY
CONTRACEPTION SERVICE**

At the end of 1974 the Family Planning Association was visiting nearly 10,000 families in their homes through its domiciliary family planning service.

During the year the total number of people who received birth control advice and prescriptions from the FPA exceeded 1,000,000.

**CHILDREN UNDER THREE
AND THEIR FAMILIES**

The Winnicott Memorial Fund of the British Psycho-Analytical Society is holding a Day Conference at Bedford College, London, on 12 December 1975.

The speakers include Dr John Horder, *O.B.E., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.G.P.*, General practitioner, London, and applications should be made to Mrs Joyce Coles, 120 Corringway, Ealing, London W5.

CORRESPONDENCE**VARIABLE DIRECT DEBIT**

Sir,

At the Spring General Meeting of the College, held in Dundee this year, a resolution recommending the introduction of variable direct debit for the collection of subscriptions was passed unanimously. Why has it been necessary to introduce this new method?

(1) About 90 per cent of the income of our College comes from the annual subscriptions of fellows, members, and associates, and it is obviously important that we have an efficient method of collecting these payments. There are, unfortunately, many snags in having to rely on a good response to an annual reminder for the payment of subscriptions. If the request goes out too early, many people, not unreasonably, say to themselves that they will pay later: and then unfortunately forget to send their cheque.

(2) Each payment as it is received has, of course, to be written up in the College account books and also marked in the subscription register. Non-payers have to be sent reminders—which means sorting the register by hand. This is expensive.

(3) Our College, like other similar organisations, used to rely on bankers' orders to overcome some of these difficulties. Many of our members issued an authority to their bank for the payment to the College of a specified sum on 1 July each year. Recently, however, two difficulties have arisen. Firstly, because of inflation, the subscription rates have had to be altered at fairly frequent intervals. Some banks have failed to adjust their instructions correctly when an amended bankers' order is issued by the member. Sometimes the College even received two subscriptions from the same member's account: one at the old rate and one at the new. Sometimes the bank forgot