

COLLEGE ACCOMMODATION

I have been interested in the correspondence regarding the letter I wrote in the November *Journal* (p.701) about the extra costs of hiring rooms at the College which were not mentioned in the advertisement for College accommodation. Not one of the letters takes up my main point about these extra costs, which Mr D. Lloyd-Williams mentioned in his reply to my letter in November saying that "the point about service charge is a good one" and "future advertisements for College accommodation will mention this".

I fully support the kindness and devotion of the College staff mentioned in the correspondence and I am pleased to see that the new advertisement in the *Journal* for College accommodation mentions the points that I raised in my original letter, i.e. that a surcharge may be made for weekend bookings, that children over six years may use the public rooms when accompanied by their parents, and that accompanied children aged between six and 12 may be accommodated upon a trial basis.

I hope that this letter will clear any misunderstanding that may have arisen in my previous letter when I was in no way criticizing the warden and staff, who I appreciate perform their work with courtesy and kindness.

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DIAGNOSING THRUSH

Sir,

I read the letter from Dr Pickworth (April *Journal*, P.248) with much interest.

The correct name of the causative organism of thrush is *Candida albicans* and not *Monilia albicans*. The disease should be described as 'Candidiasis' instead of the term 'Moniliasis' used in certain outdated textbooks, as the name *Monilia* is now given to a completely different fungus, which is not a yeast and does not produce thrush (Emmons *et al.* 1977). The causative agent of thrush (*Candida albicans*) is a yeast-forming fungus and not a 'mould' as Dr Pickworth suggests.

It is true to say the *Candida* would grow in the acid medium of lemon juice.

However, it is not correct to suggest that bacteria would not grow in an acid medium. Urine, which is normally acidic in reaction, will support the growth of pathogens or contaminating bacteria and produce cloudiness in clear urine if kept at room temperature for a few hours, and many bacteria can grow in such a medium, for example lactobacilli, enterococci and mycobacteria (Wilson and Miles, 1975). The former two species can be found as part of the normal flora in the mouth and vagina (which are also the common sites of thrush).

I might add that even to find budding yeast cells would not be enough, as not all yeasts are pathogenic; although they can produce thrush, they can also be grown as part of normal flora. One has to determine the significance of the growth by other means, in the laboratory. *Candida albicans* is neither difficult to grow and identify in the laboratory nor is it a very delicate organism likely to die during transport to far away laboratories. Reliable results would be expected from the laboratory earlier than the unreliable observation of cloudiness in lemon juice after three to four days in the surgery.

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References

- Emmons, C.W., Binford, C.H., Utz, P.J. *et al.* (1977). *Medical Mycology*, 3rd edition, pp.185-201, 521. Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger.
- Wilson, G.S. & Miles, A. (1975). *Topley and Wilson's Principles of Bacteriology, Virology and Immunity*, 6th edition, P.109. London: Edward Arnold.

Dr Pickworth was asked to comment on Dr Rahman's letter. He writes:

I am horrified that anyone might think I was proposing that doctors should give up the use of the laboratory, and use instead fresh lemon juice. I am quite sure that the proper place for the proper confirmation of thrush is the laboratory. He is quite right also about the modern nomenclature; my old book under *Monilia albicans* reads: "*Ce champignon, qui est l'agent de l'affection connue sous le nom de MUGUET. . .*"

Having said that, what I described does actually occur, and the microscopic view is dramatic. I have no doubt that what I saw were yeast cells, and this I found of some occasional help. But the

thing remains a curiosity—even the reference I gave is almost antique—and although microbiologists will find it valueless, I thought readers might think it had some intrinsic interest.

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PRACTICE NURSES, SCOTLAND

Sir,

The Practice Nurses Forum of the Royal College of Nursing has made significant progress in its efforts to gain recognition for nurses employed in general practice and are now endeavouring to set up some training schemes. Groups have also been formed in areas of England to meet for study days and exchange of views, but efforts to contact practice nurses in Scotland via the RCN Journal—the *Nursing Standard*—have met with poor response. We therefore assume that few nurses employed by general practitioners in Scotland are RCN members (and if not, one wonders what arrangements they make for indemnity insurance).

Practice nurses in Scotland, RCN or not, who are interested in meeting for a study day, hopefully in the autumn, are asked to make contact with the undersigned giving suggestions for topics they would like to discuss.

Currently the RCN Society of Primary Health Care Nursing are working on a syllabus for practice training and invite all practice nurses to send a copy of their job description to Mrs Aina Fawcett-Henesy, RCN South-Eastern Area Office, 85 East Street, Epsom, Surrey, as soon as possible.

Applications for membership of the RCN can be made to Henrietta Place, London (annual fee £40.00).

Applications for membership of the RCN Practice Nurses Forum (with newsletters) should be made to the Secretary, Mrs Maureen Williams RGN, Devonshire House Surgery, 60 Station Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey (annual fee £2.00).

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