

for entrance to general practice, either by common usage or statute.

### Organization

Future conferences can learn from Sheffield. Thursday's ceilidh and pea-and-pie supper were more fun than Wednesday's dinner and jazz band, and people would have mixed earlier had the evenings been swapped. The hall where the plenary sessions were held was an acoustical nightmare: speakers from the floor at a conference of only 250 people should not have to walk to a microphone at the front. The small groups might have been smaller: 12, rather than 20 to 30. The detailed organization, however, was exemplary, indeed astonishing: the Barnsley trainees had worked efficiently and hard for several months.

Yet some questions remain. What should be the role of such a conference? It must be primarily educational: it is approved under Section 63. But what of its brief? Until now, the choice of programme has been left to the

people organizing each particular conference. Should at least some of the topics for the following year be chosen the previous year? If the Conference is a national forum for trainees, should not a spot be available for an academic report from each region, for a planned pooling and exchange of information and opinion? Should not each national trainee representative on each particular body be invited formally to report on his or her activities during the year? And surely the Conference, as the only national gathering of trainees, is the logical time and place to elect those representatives?

There should be ample scope for conferences to remain idiosyncratic and whimsical, and yet see to such simple but important business. Some was done this year: the 1982 Conference will be in Cambridge where a group of trainees is already making plans. Mersey will host it in 1983. Now that self-propagation is assured, the Conference—once an end, now a means—can develop its confident, extrovert contribution to general practice and vocational training.

NICHOLAS BRADLEY

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## OBITUARY

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### Dr Lionel Cordery

LIONEL CORDERY, who did so much for his patients, general practice, the Medical Association and the Royal Colleges of General Practitioners in the UK and New Zealand, died on 28 February 1981.

Born in Christchurch, he was educated at Christchurch Boys High School and Otago University. He graduated in 1928, spent two years as house surgeon at Christchurch Hospital and three years in England, where he gained his postgraduate experience. When he returned to Christchurch he began his general practice, to which he devoted himself for the next 40 years, interrupted only by five years as a Medical Officer in the 2nd NZEF in the Middle East, where he served with the 25th Battalion and the 3rd New Zealand General Hospital.

Apart from his patients, his great interest was in the organization of the profession. He was Secretary and later President of the Canterbury Division of the BMA, and served for five years on the New Zealand Council of the BMA. His contribution to the Medical Association over many years was recognized when in 1976 he was elected a Fellow of the New Zealand Medical Association.

His great love, however, was the College of General Practitioners. He was a Foundation Member of the Canterbury Faculty of the RCGP when it was established in 1955 and was Honorary Secretary of the New

Zealand Council of the RCGP between 1956 and 1959. This was a very active period in the establishment and growth of the four regional Faculties of the New Zealand College: much co-ordination was required and there was considerable correspondence with the parent body in London. During this period Lionel Cordery as Secretary, assisted by Clive Sheppard as Chairman and other members of the Council, worked assiduously in promoting the College of General Practitioners in New Zealand as an institution in its own right. In recognition of his contribution, in 1960 he was elected to the rare honour of an Honorary Fellow of the RCGP.

He continued his interest in the College as Chairman of the Canterbury Faculty for two years, and contributed to the discussions that led to the foundation of the New Zealand College in 1974. Even in his retirement, forced by ill health, he never missed an Annual General Meeting of his Faculty.

Throughout his working career he was regarded in the highest esteem by his patients and colleagues. As a solo practitioner he took a wide and deep personal interest in his patients, and could with humility acknowledge treating seven generations of one family. He had a high sense of professional responsibility and showed great warmth and pleasure in assisting younger colleagues entering into general practice. His passing takes from Christchurch a good doctor and a great stalwart of general practice. Our sympathy goes to his widow, Trixie, and two children, Raymond and Margaret.