

of anencephaly in one of the twins, and of the cause of the miscarriage are discussed.

Acknowledgements

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NEWS FROM ABROAD

REPORT ON THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR GENERAL PRACTICE

held in Salzburg from 15 to 22 September 1963

THIS CONGRESS WAS ATTENDED by about 150 practitioners, seven-eighths from Austria and Germany, the remainder from Switzerland, Hungary, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Canada, U.S.A., Australia and the United Kingdom.

The programme was varied, having several excellent papers, such as on (1) the part played by psychology in general medicine, (2) the scope and educational need of the general practitioner, (3) head injuries, (4) early diagnosis.

Six to eight papers were read and discussed each day. Here the organization of the Congress was not strict enough as almost every speaker over-

shot his time by at least a quarter, some by as much as double. What was fascinating for a visitor from a N.H.S. country was that except perhaps in the U.S.A., the problems of the general practitioners in the countries represented are much the same at this moment.

The isolation of the general practitioner, his scientific and academic isolation in particular, was apparent from many countries, certainly in those countries where the medical governing bodies frown upon group practice to a very large extent (Germany), or where the insurance element of the national medical service is such that it encourages competition to such an extent that doctors will not go into group practice.

In many areas of the world today the specialists or consultants of the medical profession appear to consider that they can do without the general practitioner.

The universities are concerned about the young doctor whom they produce, indoctrinated against general practice, and yet a large number of general practitioners are required. Many universities appear to be more far-sighted than the profession and are studying actively, the problems of general practice, its content, its scope and the training for it. It might well be that if our College of General Practitioners could prepare the ground for an international conference on this theme, with the help of WHO and ASME and postgraduate deans, it could make an outstanding contribution to the future of medical care the world over. It could help to strengthen the struggling factions certainly on the Continent, and it would give our College a tremendous boost and experience. To hear of the problems of the general practitioner from other countries, makes one realize that we are in the midst of a development of the western world, which is groping to find answers where previous experience does not exist.

All over the world the need to establish adequate community medical care is a primary problem looming large in medical thinking, yet the remedies proposed and plans contemplated do not seem to consider the need for a general practitioner at all. On his part the general practitioner does nothing to encourage this by making himself more adaptable or shedding much of what makes him too busy to deal with the larger numbers, which he will have to do, as the overall production of doctors is barely keeping pace with the present needs as measured by past standards.

A whole-day seminar on medical record keeping preceded the congress. Here it must be said that the College could help and lead through this veritable jungle of medical records. Nobody seems to have solved the problem. A variety of experiments was described. The linear recording of medical events to achieve a graphic demonstration of medical facts related to time has much interest and many attractions. By picking the best from various systems we could move a vital step forward.

I was invited to sit in on some committee sessions of this organization, which showed that a large number of their problems are identical with difficulties within our own experience.

The meeting was greeted by a recorded message from the Yorkshire

Moors, Dr Pickles speaking a few pungent sentences to start this congress on its way.

In conclusion, I would say that we should help our general-practitioner colleagues in Europe as we are doing with our sister College in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, for we would profit and they would find themselves strengthened in their stand for good or better general practice. We should make certain of including the Dutch general practitioners.

E. V. KUENSSBERG

Annals of General Practice. The Australian College of General Practitioners. Part 3, Volume 8. 1963.

This edition of our daughter college's journal runs to nearly 200 pages, and is clear evidence that the Australian College is thriving. A long account of the new building in Princes Gate is published, with photographs, and there are articles on the functions of the family doctor by Dr S. Btेश and by Dr John Hunt, both of these being derived from the Medical World Conference which was held in London in October 1962. There is also reproduced a newspaper article from the *Brisbane Courier-Mail* which defends the position of the general practitioner. Dr J. G. Radford gives an account of his experience with the "E" book method of recording practice morbidity, and promises a more detailed analysis of his figures at a later date. Dr J. E. Gault discusses the indications for penicillin treatment for sore throat.

Sir Austin Bradford Hill's article on clinical trials from *The Practitioner* of January 1963 is reproduced; it is followed by an original article by John Tomkins on the treatment of bee stings. There are some tips on the recognition of various circulatory states by consideration of the pulse and temperature of the hands, a clinical account of a case of bowel rupture with a definite latent period free from symptoms, some notes on research in the Australian faculties, and an amusing article on "Fellowship-manship" by Ian Rose.

Other articles include an account of safety cupboards for drugs, the library being formed at Bligh House, something on the first aid treatment for burns, and the usual notices about various college activities. In all the journal contains a wealth of interest for family doctors, and it is a credit to its editor.