

THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The medical group of this society give notice of their lecture programme for 1965.

- February 4 *High Speed Cinematography in Medical and Biological Research*, by MR J. HADLAND and MR K. COOPER. Meeting to be held at the Society's House at 7 p.m.
- March 4 *Extra Mural Meeting*, at British Medical Association House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1. 6.00 p.m. *Annual General Meeting*
- April 3
(Saturday) *Spring Provincial Meeting*, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

Further details can be obtained from the Honorary Publicity Officer, Medical Group of The Royal Photographic Society, 16 Princes Gate, London, S.W.7.

THE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SOCIAL WORKERS

The Institute of Almoners has recently changed its name and will in future be known as The Institute of Medical Social Workers.

THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF GENERAL PRACTICE

This congress which is to be organized by the International College of Medical Practice, will be held from 16-19 September, 1965 at Salzburg, Austria. Further particulars can be obtained from Dr K. Engelmeier, International College of Medical Practice, Lange Strasse 21a, 4740 Oelde/Westphalia, Germany West.

THE SECOND EUROPEAN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

This seminar will be held at Oxford University from 4-10 July, 1965. The theme is *New Horizons in Rehabilitation* with special reference to cardiac surgery; cardiac medicine; the role of the day hospital; prostheses—their future; domiciliary, social, transport and building standards; industry and sheltered employment, and the employer and the handicapped.

Further information can be obtained from the General Secretary, B.C.R.D., Tavistock House (South), Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.

Correspondence

Buscopan

Sir,

Although buscopan (hyoscine N-butylbromide) has been available for use as an antispasmodic for at least 12 years, few reports of its use in general practice have appeared. Garrett and Draper (1963) concluded that buscopan was a most satisfactory drug when used in obstetrics for relieving pain, reducing anxiety and aiding relaxation of the cervix. I

would be most interested to hear from other practitioners who have found this drug of value.

Although I have not been able to conduct a controlled trial, I have formed the impression after using buscopan in more than 200 patients during labour that there is a definite shortening of labour and a marked increase in cervical dilatation. Two experienced midwives who have used buscopan routinely with my cases have noted an appreciable difference in the progress of labour in my patients as compared with others in their care. I now make a practice of staying with multipara who have had buscopan and are approaching the stage of half-dilatation because of the frequent rapidity with which full dilatation is achieved—often in less than half an hour.

In three cases in which the placenta has been retained I have had clear proof of the antispasmodic action of this drug after injecting 20 mg. intravenously. On each occasion the cervix was felt to dilate widely within one or two minutes and the placenta was easily removed. I feel that buscopan may have much to offer the obstetrician who has to deal with the problem of a prolapsed cord or foetal distress.

I have only recently begun to use this drug in other conditions; I would like to note that in the only two cases of acute renal colic treated (one of whom had before my arrival taken omnopon orally without relief) pain was almost completely relieved by injection of 20 mg. of buscopan intravenously.

Hornchurch

S. E. BROWNE

REFERENCE

Garrett, A. S., and Draper, V. S. (1963). *Practitioner*, 190, 653.

Allergic disorders among horticultural, agricultural and forestry workers

Sir,

I am investigating certain aspects of allergic disorders among horticultural, agricultural and forestry workers. Statistical information on the overall incidence, the regional and occupational incidence, the involvement of skin, respiratory and other systems, the relative importance of various allergens, the loss of working time, and the proportion of workers forced to change or give up their jobs owing to allergic disorders are difficult to obtain through official and semi-official sources.

I believe that a great deal of useful information must be on the files or in the heads of practitioners in country areas, who must see the bulk of these patients. May I, through your columns, ask any who have relevant facts and figures available to get in touch with me? Where actual statistics are not available general impressions based on considerable experience would be very welcome.

Petworth.

D. E. MARMION.