

the investigation is into the value of gammaglobulin in the amelioration of measles, into new types of insulin, drug sensitivities, therapeutic trials, or into the familial incidence or aetiology of leukæmia, the closer the liaison between the specialist and the family doctor the more useful to the community are the ultimate results likely to be. The College, through its Research Newsletter, will be able to encourage this liaison by putting general practitioners in touch with experts over problems which they may investigate together.

On the Reporting of Family Outbreaks of Epidemic Disease

Many of the minor epidemics which occur in practice have in the past received little serious attention. In response to a request from the Epidemic Observation Unit a number of reports of epidemic winter vomiting have been collected from all parts of the country. In analysing them it has been found that they vary in value with the method used in setting them out.

Some of the reports are of necessity concerned in part with second-hand accounts of illness; for the disease may have been in some cases so mild as not to have warranted medical attention, and others may have been under the care of a second practitioner. The most interesting series are those which have occurred in a doctor's family.

In reporting these outbreaks of illness, care must be taken to make the sequence of events clear to the reader—not always an easy task. These notes are intended to help the practitioner with his reports:—

1. For each family state the total number in the household at risk, giving the name or initials, age and relationship. Indicate the affected members.
2. State if more than one member shares a bedroom and indicate roughly the standard of living of the household.
3. Give a chronological history of events *by cases*.
e.g. July 2nd Janet vomited. T. 99. Was ill for 24 hours and then recovered.
July 4th James vomited, complained of abdominal pain and was very sick for three days.
July 7th John vomited, apyrexial. The whole episode lasting only 12 hours.
Gladys complained of headache, vomited next day, was well on third day.
4. Having described the events in the family, any connecting links with other families should be recorded and the cases in these families set out in the same sequence.