

Post-Graduate Medical Journal

LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1942

Backache

The problem of backache is one which all too often besets the practitioner in his daily round and common task. Generally the immediate reaction to the term "backache" is that of an ache situated in or around the lumbar region, but it must be remembered that the back, in point of fact, extends from the atlas vertebra to the tip of the coccyx, and pain situated anywhere along this region should be included under the generic title of backache.

Furthermore, the clinical conditions causing backache may involve the spinal nerves or their roots, causing pain which may therefore be referred to any part of the body; yet the pathological lesion in the spine may manifest itself only with limitation of movement in one or other direction of the vertebral column.

It must be remembered also that pain referred from other viscera may present as a backache. This is especially seen in those cases of duodenal ulcer situated on the posterior wall of the duodenum and penetrating the substance of the pancreas. In these cases, severe paroxysmal pain may be felt in the lower dorsal region. Similarly, pain from cholecystitis may manifest itself in the back. Another common cause of pain in the loin region is from a pyelitis, either acute or chronic in type.

Therefore it will be realised that the symptoms of backache demand careful thought if correct diagnosis is required, and should not be dismissed lightly. In this number, backache caused by orthopaedic and pelvic conditions is considered in the articles by GRAY and DUFF. These articles stress the various manifestations of the many pathological processes which can affect the vertebral column, and it is hoped that the clinical knowledge here expressed will go far to clarify the varied aetiology of the symptom of backache.

Carcinoma of the Lung

Carcinoma of the lung is an extremely common condition, having the especial characteristics that it is often diagnosed too late for radical cure, and that the patient's end is usually very distressing. There are many interesting points about this condition—its increasing incidence, the very marked sex incidence and the question of early diagnosis; then the question of the various methods of treatment requires some thought, together with a consideration of the indications for each type of treatment. Finally, all these results require tabulation and assessment as to their possibilities of radical cure or the alleviation of symptoms.

In February, 1943, there will be published a special number of the JOURNAL covering the whole field as indicated above. It is hoped that the opinions to be expressed by the authors will go far to broaden the scope of both diagnosis and treatment of this condition.

Editorial Policy

Finally, we wish to stress once again that the editorial design of the JOURNAL is to give to our readers articles which we know will be of current value to them in their ordinary medical practice. It will not be the policy to publish abstruse conditions, the elucidation of which requires complex bio-chemical or other types of investigation. The teaching of medicine to the post-graduate is, as always, the aim of the Fellowship of Medicine and Post-Graduate Medical Association, and we shall attempt to foster the intelligent diagnosis of disease from as pure a clinical viewpoint as is possible in these days. Unfortunately the education of the public in medical matters by lurid advertisement in the daily press has made it necessary for us to employ ancillary methods of investigation in many cases, because without the use of such methods we are often placed in a very delicate position. But however impressive the results of these ancillary investigations may be, the practice of clinical medicine remains the joy of our calling, and must always be nurtured. This, then, is our aim. We hope to succeed, but that success is dependent upon your co-operation.

Post-Graduate News

Courses of instruction in medical and surgical subjects are arranged from time to time as the opportunity occurs, and may be attended by any medical practitioner, though a slightly higher fee is payable by those who are not Members of the Fellowship of Medicine. Detailed syllabuses of each course are prepared as soon as possible, and if post-graduates will notify the Fellowship of Medicine (1, Wimpole Street, London, W.1) of the subjects in which they are interested, their names will be entered on the appropriate mailing lists to receive copies, without charge, when published.

CARDIOLOGY

National Heart Hospital, Westmoreland Street, W.1

Out-patients clinics every Tuesday and Wednesday at 10 a.m. Tickets can be obtained from the Fellowship of Medicine, price 25s. for 10 attendances, or 2s. 6d. for single attendances.

ANAESTHETICS

OXFORD: Department of Anaesthetics, Radcliffe Infirmary

Professor R. R. MACINTOSH, D.M., F.R.C.S., D.A.; First Assistant: FRED A. BANNISTER, M.A., M.D., D.A.

Tuition is available for any period from one week upwards. No special lectures or demonstrations will be arranged, but as much teaching will be given as the ordinary hospital routine will permit. Only a limited number of post-graduates may attend at any one time. Fee, Members of the Fellowship of Medicine, £3 3s. od. for one week, and £2 2s. od. for each consecutive week after the first; to non-Members, £3 13s. 6d. for one week, and £2 2s. od. for each consecutive week after the first. Occasional Intensive Revision Courses each of two weeks' duration (fee, £10 10s. od.) will be given during the year, and while these Courses are in progress the above-mentioned tuition will be suspended. Applications must be made to the Fellowship of Medicine, *not* to the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford. No application sent direct to Oxford will be dealt with there, but will be forwarded to the Fellowship of Medicine.

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The subscription rate to the POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL JOURNAL for practitioners resident overseas is 12s. per annum, post free, and this rate is also payable during the war by any practitioner serving with H.M. Forces, whether at home or abroad. Subscribers at this rate are not entitled to pay the lower fees, quoted to Members and Associates, for attendance at Courses of instruction.

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Medical Qualification and University or Medical School

NOVEMBER, 1942.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITORIAL NOTES	188
POST-GRADUATE NEWS	189
Backache. By CHARLES GRAY, F.R.C.S.	190
Backache from Pelvic Causes. By KEITH DUFF, F.R.C.S., M.R.C.O.G.	203
Vitamins and the Milk Standards	204
PRACTICALITIES: The Clinical Study of the Cardio-Vascular System. Part III. By F. CROXON DELLER, M.D., D.A.	207
CLINICAL PAGE. Three Cases illustrating Rare Diseases of the Ileo-Caecal Region. By A. E. MORTIMER WOOLF, F.R.C.S.	213

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