

EDITORIAL

As this issue of the Bulletin of the British Association of Sport and Medicine goes to press, we realise that the Olympic Games scheduled to take place in Mexico City are getting closer. Two factors are in everyone's mind; first, the intrusion of politics, not only party or international politics, but the far nastier brand of racial politics, which can only do harm to the objectives of the Olympic movement, whatever the outcome might be. It is a tragedy that the South African Government's racial policy makes some nations so suspicious of anything South African, even their promise to send a multi-racial team to the Games. It would have been interesting to see how the athletes of European descent would have treated their coloured co-competitors if left alone, without political or social pressure from either side. From our limited experience with South African and Rhodesian students, athletes and academic staff, this relationship would probably have been quite satisfactory, each team mate being judged upon his merits as a man, a colleague, a fellow member of the team. Unfortunately, racial policies as vehement as those of South Africa have prevented this situation even being tried out. The excuse given is that coloured and Bantu South Africans would be in an inferior position, which would be unfair to them. One cannot but agree with Chris Brasher (Observer, April 29th) that the one section of the potential Olympic community who shall suffer most are these same Bantu and Coloured South African athletes their fellow Africans and liberal minded countries such as the U.S.S.R. are so anxious to protect. Perhaps the Olympic ideals could best be upheld if the Games were to take place on some uninhabited island, where the athletes themselves can gather, and from which all politicians, professional and amateur, and all journalists, perhaps even spectators, are completely barred.

Our other major concern in the Olympic context is still the problem of altitude. This seems to override all other medical aspects of the Games, and might well lead to team failure from causes other than altitude sickness. Most of this rather small issue of the Bulletin is concerned with the papers presented at a symposium held at St. Mary's Hospital Medical School on April 6th. It was a pity that so few members were unable to attend, as it was an excellent meeting. The speakers were all most cooperative, and have sent in the complete drafts of their papers, so that the Proceedings of the meeting can be published very nearly as they were given. Although the theme for the meeting was "Team Medical Problems", most of the speakers had the forthcoming Olympics very much in mind, and have all offered some practical advice that is administratively possible. We have asked the printers to run off some extra copies of this Bulletin, which we shall be pleased to offer to members or non-members of B.A.S.M. at a cost of 5/6 which includes postage, (cheques made out to B.A.S.M. and sent to the Treasurer, please, with orders).

With the Annual General Meeting also imminent, and as this is the first occasion under the 1965 Constitution that there has been large scale compulsory retirement of most of the Executive Committee, it has been decided to publish the Association's Constitution, its Memorandum of aims and objectives, and a brief history of the Association, so that members can be informed as fully as possible about their society and its administration. Changes may be made at the A.G.M., or by the new Committee, but the basic administrative pattern will be retained. We are always very glad to receive offers of help in the administration, for organising regional meetings, for running the Bulletin, for acting as Medical Advisors to Governing Bodies who have none and ask our help, for presenting communications at meetings, and for writing original articles for the Bulletin. Our present Editorial policy is to publish ORIGINAL articles on all aspects of our work and interests, and only publish reprints of articles from other Journals when they are of outstanding importance and when it is impossible to obtain the material any other way. We realise that this will put our speakers to some extra trouble, but as the reputation of this journal grows, there should be more and more enthusiasm for members and others to welcome this vehicle for publication.

The full list of members was published in the last issue of the Bulletin, Vol. 3 No. 2. March 1968. This time, we are circulating a list of proposed new members, of resignations, and of changes of address. Once again, may we request members to keep the Secretariat informed of address changes, (especially the Treasurer). We try to maintain contact with even junior hospital staff who flit from one H.M.C. to another, then go back and forth across the Atlantic. Fortunately, we have a record of the Banks issuing Bankers Orders and cheques, so are usually able to trace our migrants. We also enclose an application form for membership, and a Bankers Order form to go with it. These are for NEW members, and would existing members please NOT fill them in and return them, as so many did last time we had a membership recruiting drive. Further forms, and reprints of the Aims and History of B.A.S.M. are available from the Treasurer or Secretary. We would like to see amongst our members every doctor who acts as Medical Advisor to sports clubs, a Student Health Officer from every University that takes its sport seriously, and the Lecturer in Anatomy and in Physiology from every Specialist Physical Education Department in the Training Colleges. The strength of the Association is the enthusiasm and support of its Ordinary Members; its elected officers only carry out their wishes. We hope for members' support at the A.G.M., we have been promised a good Dinner at the Royal Society of Medicine, and we should, above all, like to see maximum support for Mr. Harold Abrahams when he delivers the Memorial Lecture for his brother, our Founder President, Sir Adolphe.