

13690 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Two officers of the Biometric Society attended several of the meetings as observers: Peter Armitage, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; and Berthold Schneider, Hannover, West Germany.

The research associate for the committee was Theodore Holford, and the consultant diabetologist was Henry T. Ricketts.

The full committee met on six occasions over a two year period and has completed a report which will be published on February 10 in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The work of the U.G.D.P. is still in progress and I think it is fair to say that diabetologists in general await with interest the findings on the treatment by insulin. There has never been a study of comparable scope and thoroughness on the long-term effects of this agent in subjects with maturity-onset diabetes. In the meanwhile, however, controversy has arisen about the data concerning tolbutamide, and the committee saw as its main task the investigation of the reported excess cardiovascular mortality in the subjects receiving this drug. It is interesting to note that the U.G.D.P. presented results on phenformin which are quite comparable to those on tolbutamide: the death rate from cardiovascular causes was approximately the same in the two cases. The findings on phenformin, if one can judge from the absence of criticism, appear to have been accepted by medical scientists, even if they have not so far been translated effectively into medical practice. Yet these findings also were made by the U.G.D. using the methods that have come under heavy criticism when applied to tolbutamide.

Because of the many factors which influence survivorship in a chronic disease such as maturity-onset diabetes, careful methods of investigation