BRITISH BRANCH OF THE EUROPEAN LEAGUE AGAINST RHEUMATISM

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1951

The Annual General Meeting of the British Branch of the Ligue Européenne contre le Rhumatisme was held at the Arthur Stanley Institute (Middlesex Hospital) on July 6, with the President, Dr. W. S. C. Copeman, in the Chair. The Hon. Treasurer presented the accounts; these showed a small credit balance, but he pointed out the need for more members.

The Chairman then presented his annual report and drew attention to the link with the Ligue Européenne, to which they subscribed, the hospitality received from the Heberden Society, and the invitation to members to visit clinics and partake of the facilities of the Empire Rheumatism Council's autumn tour of British rheumatic centres.

The following officers were re-elected for the next two years:

Dr. W. S. C. Copeman (*President*)
Dr. G. D. Kersley (*Hon. Treasurer*)
Dr. Oswald Savage (*Hon. Secretary*).

After the general meeting, five clinical papers were given, followed by discussions.

DR. BERNARD SCHLESINGER gave the opening paper on Still's disease with special reference to the haemopoietic system. He stressed the pre-arthritic stage with fever, leucocytosis, and sometimes a macular rash as prominent features, followed later, especially in severe cases, by a leucopenic phase. Bone-marrow examination did not reflect the circulating blood picture. This paper will be published in a future issue of this Journal.

DR. L. J. BARFORD gave an account of the use of " Collosol " Manganese 2·5 per cent. solution injected intramuscularly in a series of " rheumatic " cases. Favourable results were often seen within a few days in cases of osteo-arthritic knees and in capsulitis of the shoulder.

DR. H. WARREN CROWE described the use of Trafuril (Ciba), a nicotinic acid derivative, which on inunction as a cream or being painted on as a tincture had a good rubefacient and anaesthetic action, somewhat similar to histamine ionization. Given by injection at the same time as gold, it had, he thought, prevented the stiffness reaction so often felt on the second day after aurotherapy.

DR. LOUIS MOSS spoke of the beneficial effects of adrenaline cream on trigger spots in fibrositis. He repeated the claims he has published elsewhere, but these were not substantiated by members of the audience, in the subsequent discussion.

DR. G. D. KERSLEY, in a provocative paper on the practical uses of cortisone and ACTH, said that as a research tool these hormones were of outstanding importance. In certain ophthalmic diseases they might save sight, and in other non-rheumatic conditions, such as burns and status asthmaticus, they might be invaluable. In rheumatic fever the condition was controlled but not cured, their effect being not unlike that of salicylates. In systemic lupus they might prolong life, in scleroderma they were often disappointing, in acute gout they might be of value. In treatment of pain in osteo-arthritis he had found them to produce no benefit. In cup arthroplasty they were worthy of trial.

It was, however, in rheumatoid arthritis that their value was in most debate, and he suggested the following uses:

(1) to cover some temporary or removable cause in acute cases.
(2) to cover episodes such as influenza, shock, etc., in quiescent and slight rheumatoid arthritis.
(3) to cover manipulation of joints in a 3-day course of 100-200 mg. cortisone/24 hrs.
(4) to treat cases that flare up with surgery.
(5) to assist mild cases that can be got back to work and can be kept on the active list with care and encouragement.

Dangers were listed as:

(1) severe relapse or adrenal failure on sudden cessation of treatment;
(2) psychological effect of relapse;
(3) temporary manic effect in those of unsound mental background;
(4) possible spread of infection (not yet decided);
(5) delayed healing of wounds;
(6) temporary Cushing's syndrome;
(7) tendency to thrombosis;
(8) deterioration of a diabetic state.

A knowledge of the clinical effects of cortisone and ACTH was more important for their successful use than were extensive laboratory facilities. In conclusion three pleas were made:

(*a*) that cortisone should never take the place of any other form of treatment that might be indicated on general grounds, but should be used in addition to these measures;
(*b*) that while on cortisone the patient's activities should still be controlled—he must recharge his batteries, but not turn on the headlights till they were completely charged;
(*c*) that dosage should be very gradually decreased when treatment is to be discontinued.

URUGUAYAN LEAGUE AGAINST RHEUMATISM

OFFICERS, 1951-2

The following officers have been re-elected for the year 1951-52:

President:	Dr. Pedro M. Gaudiano
Vice-President:	Dr. Pedro Rivero Arrate
Secretary:	Dr. Benito Barrós
Assistant Secretary:	Dr. Luis P. Gómez
Treasurer:	Dr. Felipe Barrabino
Committee Members:	Dr. Antonio Fisano
	Dr. Washington Ayala
	Dr. Pablo Scremini
	Dr. Raúl Cioli

SOCIETÀ ITALIANA PER LO STUDIO DEL REUMATISMO

ACQUI PRIZE FOR RHEUMATOLOGY

An international competition for unpublished work on the rheumatic diseases was held at Acqui in June under the patronage of the Italian Society for the Study of Rheumatism.

The judges were Dr. W. S. C. Copeman, President of the European League against Rheumatism, Professor Martin (Geneva), Dr. F. Françon, Vice-President of the French Branch of the League, and Professors Villa (Milan), Sabatini (Genoa), and Quaglia (Acqui). The prize of one and a half million lire was divided amongst three groups of workers: the first award was to Professor T. Lucherini and Drs Cecchi, Cervini, Via, Mattoli, and Volpicelli of Rome, for a volume on the semiology of articular diseases; the second was to Professor A. Robecchi of Turin, for his work on periarthritis of the shoulder joint; the third was to Drs Ballabio, Cavallero, and Sala of Milan, who wrote on the biological and clinical effects of the adrenal corticoids and their effects in the rheumatic diseases.

At the meeting it was decided that the Society should apply for affiliation to the European League as representing the Italian Branch, and Professor Sabatini of Genoa was elected President.