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SCIENCE AND THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

The first of the two chief objects set out in the Memorandum of Association of the British Medical Association is the promotion of the medical and allied sciences, and it may fairly be said that pursuit of the second, namely the maintenance of the honour and interests of the medical profession, directly contributes to the attainment of the first. In the pursuit of its scientific activities, details of some of which are given below, the Association spends each year a considerable portion of its income.

Foremost amongst these activities is the publication of the *British Medical Journal*, with a weekly circulation of over 68,750 copies. The *Journal* serves as a comprehensive record of current developments and a forum for discussion in every field of medical science and professional organization in this country. The Association also publishes monthly *Abstracts of World Medicine*, *Abstracts of World Surgery*, *Obstetrics and Gynaecology* and quarterly the following Specialist Journals: *British Journal of Pharmacology and Chemotherapy*; *Thorax*; *British Journal of Social Medicine*; *Archives of Disease in Childhood*; *British Heart Journal*; *British Journal of Industrial Medicine*; *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*; *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry*; *British Journal of Venereal Diseases*; *Journal of Clinical Pathology*. Apart from its periodical publications, the Association from time to time undertakes investigations, whether through special Committees or by the promotion of collective research, and publishes reports on the results. Recent examples of such reports are those on psycho-analysis, tests for drunkenness, mental deficiency, nutrition, fractures, relation of alcohol to road accidents, medical education, physical education, miners' nystagmus, etc. Copies of such reports can be obtained on application to the Secretary, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1. Notices of investigations actually in progress are published from time to time in the *British Medical Journal*.

In the organization of the Scientific Sections at its Annual Meetings, the Association provides an unrivalled opportunity for discussion of new methods and old difficulties, not only within the confines of small groups of specialists but between specialists and the main body of the profession. British Medical Association Lectures in the Divisions and Branches afford another means of contact between the specialist and the general practitioner, and the regular clinical meetings and discussions arranged by many of the Divisions and Branches are an outstanding feature of the local life of the Association.

For many years the Association has offered Scholarships and Grants to the amount of £1,000 annually to enable approved workers to prosecute research in subjects of their own choice. Besides these annual grants, a number of special Prizes are awarded by the Association, e.g., the Stewart Prize for work on epidemic disease, the Middlemore Prize for work on a prescribed subject in some department of ophthalmic medicine or surgery, the Katherine Bishop Harman Prize for research in the disorders incident to maternity. These prizes are awarded periodically, and notice of pending awards is published in the *British Medical Journal* and elsewhere. In addition, the Association awards annually the Sir Charles Hastings Clinical Prize for systematic observation, research and record in general practice. Particulars of all prizes, scholarships and grants may be obtained on application to the Secretary.

Members are entitled to use the Reading Room at the House of the Association, with its files of periodical medical literature, British and foreign, the Reference Library, and the Circulating Library. The Librarian is always ready to answer enquiries by members, whether personal or postal, and to supply references.

forced movement is recommended, but it is not sufficiently stressed that if this is done in the active stage of the disease there may be a very painful reaction.

The large subject of rheumatoid arthritis is dealt with in a few pages. Gold salt therapy is suggested and the toxic manifestations are mentioned, but no advice is given as to their treatment. Osteo-arthritis is dealt with in an even more summary manner.

It is difficult to understand why the author of this well-produced book has included the term rheumatism in his title, for he dismisses most types of the rheumatic diseases briefly at the beginning and end of the book.

OSWALD SAVAGE.

The Treatment of Rheumatism in General Practice. By W. S. C. Copeman. Fourth Edition. 1947. Edward Arnold. London. Pp. 258. Price 12s. 6d.

The publication of a fourth edition of a scientific work is sufficient guarantee that it has been approved by the profession, and Dr. Copeman's book is no exception. The book has been brought up to date by alterations and additions, including the work of Copeman and Ackerman on the painful fibrositic nodule and the author's experience of infective neuritis during his war service.

There are certain refinements which might be made in future editions. The tendency to repeat descriptions and details of treatment is noticeable, and, as pentothal

anaesthesia is no longer a novelty, the detailed account of its administration could be omitted.

In the chapter on sciatica, the congenital deformity in the lumbo-sacral region described by Professor Putti is mentioned. When this condition was first noticed, it was considered to be the cause of certain cases of sciatica, but this claim has not been substantiated by experience. If it were considered advisable to mention the condition at all, it would seem to be more appropriate to place it in the section on lumbago in the chapter on fibrositis. The abnormality is noted most frequently in those patients over 40 years of age who are employed in heavy manual work and complain of low back pain.

In the chapter on gout, Harrogate is not mentioned as being a suitable Spa for the treatment of this disease, but Aix-les-Bains is mentioned. The waters of these two spas are very similar, and even the very mild magnesia water at Harrogate can be shown to stimulate the excretion of uric acid by as much as 30 per cent. when compared with plain water.

These are criticisms of minor details and only tend to accentuate the value of the book as a whole. There is no doubt that it should be read and remembered by every general practitioner in this country. If they followed this advice they would find that the treatment of rheumatism need not be a depressing process for the harassed doctor, but rather an interesting excursion into the realms of therapeutics.

W. YEOMAN.

APPOINTMENTS

Dr. J. H. Kellgren has been appointed Clinical Director of the Research Centre for Chronic Rheumatism at the University of Manchester.

Dr. Kellgren qualified M.B., B.S., in 1934 and gained the M.R.C.P. in 1935 and the F.R.C.S. the following year. After this he spent three years with Sir Thomas Lewis, doing experimental work on pain localization, and taking part in the clinical activities of the Department of Clinical Research at University College Hospital. During this period he gained special experience in the rheumatic field by working in the physiotherapy departments of St. Thomas's Hospital.

He spent the war in the R.A.M.C. as a surgical and orthopaedic specialist in the Mediterranean. On demobilization he was appointed to the scientific staff of the Medical Research Council, and up to the time of his present appointment was working at the Wingfield-Morris Hospital, Oxford.

Throughout his work Dr. Kellgren has combined clinical with experimental activities, and his published

works include papers on the localization and behaviour of deep pain sensibility and the applications of this work to the clinical problems such as abdominal pain, sciatica, causalgia, and osteo-arthritis.

Dr. G. Norman Myers has been appointed to the newly instituted post of Director of Research in Rheumatism at the University of Leeds. Dr. Myers was awarded a Beit Fellowship in 1930, and later became a research fellow and demonstrator in pharmacology at Cambridge University. He has examined for the university in pharmacology and therapeutics and has been consulting physician in aero-research at Duxford. In 1931 he revised the second edition of Cow's "Synopsis of Pharmacology", and other publications included papers on the influence of emulsions of oil upon the lethal effects of bacterial toxins, the effects of morphine upon the alimentary canal, and the pharmacological action of nikethamide.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF MEDICAL HYDROLOGY

The twenty-fifth annual meeting of the Society was held in Rheinfelden, Switzerland, from Sept. 10 to 14. Members representing nine countries were present.

At a council meeting held before the congress Dr. Barnes Burt (Bath) was elected Chairman of the Council. The Vice-Chairman were Prof. Frantistek Lenoch (Prague), Dr. G. D. Kersley (Bath), Prof. Walthard

(Geneva); the Treasurer Dr. F. Clayton (Leamington), and the Secretary Dr. Donald Wilson (Bath).

This meeting coincided with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Society, and it was unanimously agreed that in spite of the many difficulties this Society still played a useful part in the international recognition of balneotherapy.