EMPIRE RHEUMATISM COUNCIL

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

In presenting the 13th annual report of the Empire Rheumatism Council, the Chairman, Lord Horder, described the work of the Council during 1948 to 1949 under the headings of research, education, and relations abroad. In the field of research, he mentioned the investigation into the causes of rheumatoid arthritis begun in 1946 and recently ended. The data have been dealt with by the Council's statistician, Dr. Lewis-Faning, and the report is to be published as a special supplement to the Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases. Another inquiry by Dr. Maunsell into the relation of allergy to rheumatoid arthritis has revealed that there is no significant difference in allergic tendency between patients with rheumatoid arthritis and controls, but that where allergy exists in the former the incidence of infection is higher. An experimental study has shown that the permeability of arthritic joints is increased. The keen interest of the Council in developments related to cortisone treatment was stressed.

Among the educational efforts of the Council the well-attended lecture courses for practitioners held at Apothecaries' Hall, and the lecture conferences arranged for hospital staff in various parts of the country were referred to.

The Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society and the Australian Rheumatism Council are now affiliated to the Empire Rheumatism Council, and application for affiliation has also been received from the New Zealand Rheumatism Council.

THE HEBERDEN SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT, 1949-50

The Society has now completed the thirteenth year of its existence. In view of the considerable list of candidates waiting for admission to the Society it was agreed at the Annual General Meeting that Rule 20 of our Constitution shall in future be strictly adhered to. It reads as follows: "An Ordinary Member who is absent from three consecutive Annual General Meetings shall cease, ipso facto, to be a Member of the Society, unless a reason is furnished acceptable to the Executive Committee."

Seven meetings have been held during the year. On January 7 a clinical meeting was held by invitation at the Royal Free Hospital, followed by a paper by Dr. J. S. Lawrence on "Plasma viscosity." A discussion on "Is electro-therapy empirical?" was opened on March 4 by Mr. G. W. Marshall (Deputy Director of Research, National Electricity Board), who was followed by Drs. P. Bauwens and W. S. Tegner. A spirited debate followed, and the verdict remained in doubt. A demonstration case-conference session under the chairmanship of Dr. Alice Stewart, F.R.C.P., of the Department of Social