

## Society Reports

trade was controlled mainly by Italian merchants, but with the maritime expansion of England in the sixteenth century it was rapidly passing into the hands of English merchants. Between 1567 and 1670 the value of drugs imported increased from £600 to £60,000 and London was fast becoming an entrepôt not only for Great Britain but also for Scandinavia and the American colonies. Mr. Roberts went on to show how this monopoly had important effects on the retail organization of pharmacy.

In a paper on 'Herbals and Formularies', Mr. L. G. Matthews sketched their development from the Greek Herbal of Dioscorides (first century A.D.) to the modern pharmacopoeias.

Among the guests at the Congress Dinner, which was attended by over 100 members and guests, were the Lord Mayor of Nottingham, the President of the Pharmaceutical Society, and the Chairman of the Boots Company. At the close of the dinner Dr. Copeman, the Chairman of the Faculty of the History of Medicine and Pharmacy, awarded the Honorary Fellowship of the Faculty to Dr. Douglas Guthrie in recognition of his outstanding services to the history of medicine.

The papers given at this Congress are to be published in one volume by the Pitman Medical Publishing Company Limited. The next Congress, on the theme of 'Medical Education in Britain', will be held in London in September 1964.

### SECTION OF MEDICAL HISTORY IN THE AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (VICTORIAN BRANCH)

ON 24 June 1963, at a meeting of the Section held at the Medical Society Hall, East Melbourne, Dr. Edward Ryan presented a paper entitled 'John Pearson Rowe'. Rowe was born at Aintree near Liverpool in 1810. He came from an old Catholic legal family and was descended through Jane Barker from Thomas More, Chancellor to Henry VIII. He received his education at Stonyhurst and his professional training at the Liverpool Infirmary. He sailed for Hobart Town as ship's doctor to the *Marianne* in 1831.

In Van Diemen's Land he was apprenticed to the well-known practitioner Dr. Crowther, and in 1834 married Mary Lowe, by whom he had thirteen children. In 1840 the Colonial Medical Department granted him by Letters Testimonial the right to practise medicine, surgery and pharmacy in Van Diemen's Land.

As well as practising medicine he engaged in land and mercantile speculation, and after making a fortune in this way he moved to the mainland and took up the Delatite Station near Mansfield in the north-eastern portion of what was then the Port Phillip District of the Colony of New South Wales and is now the State of Victoria. During the next thirty years he became one of Victoria's leading pastoralists. One of the most dramatic episodes in his life was a gun battle he fought with the two bushrangers, Power and Ned Kelly.

In 1856 Rowe became one of the original members of the Council of the University of Melbourne and in 1860 was one of the first six members of the original Medical Committee responsible for the founding of the Melbourne Medical School. He died in 1878.

### INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

THIS new International Academy has been founded with the object of ensuring high standards of scholarly and scientific research in the subject, and of promoting wider

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academic study and closer co-operation between existing national bodies and societies. The Council is composed of the President, Professor Marcel Florkin, of Liège; the Secretary-General, Dr. Noël Poynter, of the Wellcome Historical Medical Library in London; the Treasurer, Dr. Jean Théodoridès, of Paris; and three Vice-Presidents: Professor P. Huard, of Rennes; Professor C. D. O'Malley, of the University of California (Los Angeles); and Professor J. Steudel, of Bonn. Membership is strictly limited, by election only, to 50 Fellows (*Membres Effectifs*) including members of council, and 50 Associates (*Membres Correspondants*). The list of Fellows has now been completed and includes the world's leading medical historians; 23 Associates have already been elected.

The Academy is to have its own journal, which is entitled *CLIO MEDICA: Acta Academiae Internationalis Historiae Medicinae*, and its own monograph series, *Analecta Historiae Medicinae*. Both will be published by The Pergamon Press of Oxford. The first formal meeting of the Academy will be held on 6–7 September, 1964, at the University of Basle, with a Symposium on 'Materia Medica in the XVIth Century', the proceedings of which will be published in full. The first of many useful projects which the Academy hopes to undertake is a World Survey of Resources and Facilities for Research in the History of Medicine. It is hoped that universities and societies will co-operate in making this survey as comprehensive as possible.

## Book Reviews

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*The Salernitan Questions. An Introduction to the History of Medieval and Renaissance Problem Literature*, by BRIAN LAWN, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963, pp. xiv + 240, frontis., 63s.

A clever question is half the knowledge. Sir Francis Bacon's adage (*prudens interrogatio est quasi dimidium scientiae*) seems to epitomize much of the didactic practice of the Middle Ages and to some extent of the Renaissance. Perhaps it was more the ingenuity of the master in answering the question than the acumen of the pupil in posing it that made this form of didactic literature so popular. For it was said of Urso of Calabria—one of the great 'question-masters' of Salerno at the close of the twelfth century—that 'never had any question stood up to his ingenium unanswered' (*Cuius ab ingenio nulla indecisa recedit, Quaestio . . .*).

At all events a large *corpus* of Questions and Answers has survived to which we owe much of our knowledge of ancient tradition in natural science and medicine. Although many specimens of this *corpus* are still unpublished, others have been well known for a long time. Yet neither the literary history nor the contents of the latter have so far been assessed and elucidated properly. The book under notice provides for the first time authoritative guidance through the tangle of uncertain and often contradictory data and dates and, what is much more, a complete history of this literature as a whole from its origins in antiquity to its unexpected ramifications in the pre-Renaissance period. Of the ancient sources—the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*, Seneca's *Natural Questions*, the *Hermetic Corpus* and Macrobius—in other words exponents of neo-Platonism and Aristotelianism—stand out as the great landmarks. In the discussion of Salerno which forms the mediaeval centre of problem literature with its prose and poetical versions of *Questions* much light is thrown on the life,