

W. W. Francis

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Society Reports

THE SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

THE Report of Proceedings of the Session 1958-9 reveals that the Society pursues its active existence with excellent attendances at its meetings when papers of high quality are given. At the Annual General Meeting held in October 1958 at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the second meeting of the Society to be held there, Dr. W. S. Mitchell was unanimously re-elected President for a second session. This meeting was noteworthy in that for the first time in the Society's eleven years of life a lady member delivered a paper. Mrs. Mitchell, wife of the President, gave a charming account of the recipes and household remedies of a Northumberland lady, Jane Loraine, dated 1685. Dr. Ian Porter also gave a sketch of the life and writings of Dr. Thomas Trotter, Physician to the Fleet, who, born in Melrose in 1760, spent some years of his life in Newcastle.

At the ordinary meeting held in February, Dr. John Ritchie spoke on the influence of folk-medicine on the early use of digitalis. This important contribution appears in full in the Report which also contains a synopsis of the paper by Mr. A. L. Goodall on Granville Sharp Pattison, the distinguished but argumentative Glasgow anatomist. The summer meeting was held in Paisley when homage was paid to the memory of Dr. Robert Watt compiler of the great *Bibliotheca Britannica*, the original MS. of which is in the keeping of Paisley Public Library.

The usual medico-historical notes and book notices with two appendices complete the Report. The appendices give the contents of the exhibitions shown at the Paisley meeting and at the Royal Medical Society, Edinburgh, on the occasion of the Joint Meeting of the British and Canadian Medical Associations in Edinburgh in July 1959, when the Section of Medical History met in the historic Hall of that Society.

FACULTY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE AND PHARMACY
OF
THE WORSHIPFUL SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES OF LONDON

Progress Report

SINCE the foundation of the new Faculty, in September last, developments have been rapid. It is already clear that the Faculty has widespread support from the Royal Colleges, medical schools and societies throughout the United Kingdom, who, as corporate members, will aid the Faculty in its task of co-ordinating and strengthening present activities and interests in the historical aspects of medicine and pharmacy.

Among its immediate contributions to this end the Faculty is organizing the First British Congress on the History of Medicine, to be held in London on 29 to 30 September 1960. A number of official bodies have already promised support for this meeting and further details will be published early in 1960. The theme of the Congress, the proceedings of which will probably be published as a volume, will be *The Evolution of British Medical Practice*.

In addition to the Gideon de Laune Oration, which will next be delivered by Sir John Charles on 20 April 1960, the Faculty has an endowment for two additional lectures which may be delivered in London or elsewhere. Money has also been received for an annual historical essay by a young graduate or student.

A research Fellowship, generously endowed by the Wellcome Trustees, has been awarded to Mr. R. S. Roberts, a professional historian, who is working upon the early history of the drug trade.

The panel of lecturers, which is rapidly increasing, already has 20 members offering lectures on more than 50 different subjects. The number of personal members of the Faculty now totals 200.

Ordinary membership of the Faculty is by election, the life membership fee being £2 2s. 0d. Applications for affiliation from student, historical, medical or pharmaceutical societies or similar bodies, who should nominate a representative, can also be accepted. Correspondence should be addressed to The Hon. Secretary, Dr. F. N. L. Poynter, Wellcome Historical Medical Library, The Wellcome Building, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

Inaugural lecture

The first official meeting of the Faculty was held in the Hall of the Society of Apothecaries on 2 December 1959, when Canon C. E. Raven, D.D., delivered the Inaugural Lecture on 'Medicine—Mother of the Sciences'.

Dr. W. S. C. Copeman, the Chairman of the Faculty, said that it was appropriate that the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, which received its royal charter in 1617, should be the first of the licensing bodies to organize a department of the history of medicine and pharmacy. The Faculty, said Dr. Copeman, was not just another society and it was not the intention that it should supersede or compete with any existing society devoted to the history of medicine. Its chief aims were to bind together all existing societies and groups in their common interest, to ensure that they shall meet together in an annual congress, and to expand the facilities in the medical schools for introducing students to the historical background of their chosen profession. If these aims were seriously pursued it was believed that the level of historical studies would be raised sufficiently to attract the notice of professional historians and

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with their support the history of medicine would be given more adequate treatment in general history.

In introducing Canon Raven, Dr. Copeman referred to the close links that had existed between Medicine and the Church from early times. Canon Raven was a Doctor of Science as well as a Doctor of Divinity and had won for himself a great reputation as a historian of the natural sciences.

Canon Raven's lecture is printed in this issue of *Medical History* (p. 85).

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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RENBOURN, E. T., B.SC., M.D., M.R.C.P., Director, Physiological Research Establishment, Ministry of Supply. (St. Catherines, St. Catherines Road, Frimley, Surrey.)

YOUNG, JOHN H., M.D., D.R.C.O.G., of Glazebury, near Manchester, is the author of *Caesarian Section: the History and Development of the Operation from Earliest Times* (1944), and other works. (Speakman House, 357 Warrington Road, Glazebury, Nr. Manchester.)