

## News, Notes and Queries

John Forbes, Mr. Keate, Sir Mathew Tierney and Mr. Liston were some of the members of the medical profession who referred patients to him. Durlacher held the appointment as Surgeon-Chiropodist to the Medical Department of the Royal Household of King George IV, King William IV and Queen Victoria. On one occasion he demonstrated his operation for ingrowing toe-nail at the Hospital of Surgery in Panton Square, London. He wrote *A Treatise on Corns, Bunions, the Diseases of Nails and the General Management of the Feet*, London, Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1845. The book was a notable contribution to the literature and was well received by medical critics. It contained a fine description of Morton's metatarsalgia—35 years before Morton described it. Durlacher was well aware that the lower classes, and especially servants, suffered severely from minor disorders of the feet. In the preface, dated January 1st, 1845, he wrote: 'I am preparing proposals for the establishment of a dispensary for the diseases incidental to the feet, which I hope will soon be in actual operation. . . .' The dispensary was never founded and I would be very grateful if anyone could give me any information as to where Durlacher lodged his proposals, how they were dealt with and by whom.

### THE KEDERMINSTER PHARMACOPOLIUM

AMONG recent accessions to the Wellcome Historical Medical Library is a transcript of an important source-book for information on English domestic medicine in the early seventeenth century. The *Kederminster Pharmacopolium* is a manuscript volume of over 500 pages, containing recipes and prescriptions collected by Sir John and Lady Kederminster, and no doubt used by them in attempting to ease the sufferings and cure the ills of their family, servants and tenants. Sir John Kederminster was the owner of Langley Park in Buckinghamshire. In 1623 he founded the Kederminster Library, a collection of theological books for the use of the clergy of the district. More books were added to the library under his will in 1631. This library, under the control of a body of Trustees, is kept in a panelled room adjoining the ancient parish church of St. Mary, Langley Marish, near Slough. In the time of its founder the clergy often had to assist in the cure of bodies as well as of souls, especially those of the poorer parishioners, and the *Pharmacopolium* was probably placed in the library as a guide for their use. On the title-page it is dated 1630, but the writing is in several hands, and pages are left blank for additional entries, so it is reasonable to assume that it was compiled over a period of years and probably during the married life of Sir John and Lady Kederminster.

The present vicar of St. Mary's, the Reverend F. C. Heward, and his wife Elizabeth, have made the transcript in the most scholarly fashion and they have deposited it in the Wellcome Library (MS. 5497), where it may be consulted by all who are interested in the subject or the period. The typescript is illustrated by photographs of the original illuminated title-page, of several pages of the text, and of the illuminated pedigree showing Sir John's relationship to Queen Elizabeth I.

### THE ANATOMICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF FABRICIUS AB AQUAPENDENTE

The importance of the work of Fabricius in both human and comparative anatomy is summarized by Singer and Cole, and it is strange that the wonderful series of coloured illustrations which he bequeathed to the Bibliotheca Marciana at his death in May 1619 has never been reproduced. Indeed, little notice has been taken of these important documents in the history of science and medicine, although a detailed account of them was published by G. Sterzi in 1909 ('Le "tabulae anatomicae" ed

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i codici Marciani con note autografe di Hieronymus Fabricius ab Aquapendente', *Anat. Anz.*, Jena, 1909, xxxv, 338-48). A renewed interest in them has now been awakened by Dr. Ugo Stefanutti, of Venice, who has reproduced eighteen hitherto unpublished specimens in the current *Rassegna Medica*. There they are reproduced in full colour from the originals, which are oil paintings done by some of the finest Venetian painters of the day under the direction of Fabricius and from his own dissections. They total 167 and are bound in nine folio volumes and Dr. Stefanutti intends to publish the complete series.

### THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF SURGERY, 1937-52

The American Board of Surgery has played an important part in raising the status and qualification of the surgeon-specialist in the United States, and its history is a part of the history of surgery in that country. An interesting account of the first fifteen years of its existence, written by Dr. J. Stewart Redman, the Secretary-treasurer, has just been published by Lippincott.

### MEDICAL WRITING

*The International Record of Medicine*, published by MD Publications Inc. and edited by Professor Félix Martí-Ibáñez, has for some time been publishing occasional symposia on special topics, and two of the more recent are on medical writing. The first of these (1955, CLXVIII, 609-75) had as contributors Henry Sigerist, Hans Selye, Hugh Clegg, Walter C. Alvarez and the editor himself, and in the second, published in November 1956, the editor was joined by Russell L. Cecil, Morris Fishbein, John F. Fulton, Joseph Garland and Douglas Guthrie. Some of these distinguished men have kept strictly to the technical points to be observed in preparing and presenting papers on medical topics. Others offer us wise comments on clear thinking, literature and the arts. Very occasionally the discussion is marred by the implied assumption—too often met with—that the doctor is a kind of mechanical marvel which has to be humanized by adding as 'artificial trimmings' the attributes which are assumed to be natural in other educated persons. Sigerist, who was a 'whole man' if ever there was one, hit the nail on the head when he began his very illuminating essay (which deserves a place in any anthology), 'I am not quite sure that there is such a thing as medical, chemical, physical or agricultural writing. There is good writing and bad writing, no matter what you write about. . . .' For the reader who is groping towards this undoubted truth and for the 'medical writer' who is properly concerned with the technicalities of his task these essays will be stimulating and rewarding in many ways.

### INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

The first volume of the proceedings of the 14th Congress of the History of Medicine, which was held at Rome and Salerno in September 1954 under the presidency of Professor A. Pazzini, has now been published. The number of papers included in the 534 pages of this first volume are too numerous to mention in detail, but the three main themes of the congress, which was one of the best attended since the war, were (i) Medicine as a means of international understanding; (ii) The contribution of medicine towards the advance of civilization; (iii) The School of Salerno.