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cold and earache at the Vatican. If his ears had discharged at the Vatican or afterwards at least one of his biographers, or Reynolds himself in his diary, where he carefully recorded his eye symptoms, would have made some mention of it. Hilles quotes many of Reynolds' letters, in some of which he refers to his poor sight, but never to his poor hearing. Thus it would seem that Sir Joshua Reynolds' deafness was the sequelae of an episode of middle-ear disease, and on the available evidence of the non-suppurative type.

SUMMARY

The medical history, as far as it is known, of Sir Joshua Reynold's deafness, is discussed. From this and modern knowledge, it is concluded that it was due to middle-ear disease, probably of the chronic exudative otitis media type.

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BARRY DUNN

GERARD VAN SWIETEN AND HIS TIME

A Symposium held at the University of Vienna, 8–10 May 1972

Two hundred years ago Gerard van Swieten died in Vienna aged seventy-two. Leaving his native Holland in 1745, he went to Vienna to serve the Empress Maria Theresa as her personal physician. Had he remained a court physician all his life, the University of Vienna today would probably not have commemorated the 200th anniversary of his death. It was to van Swieten as one of the most famous pupils of Boerhaave, as organizer of medical education, the public health services and the university system in eighteenth-century Austria and to van Swieten as head of the court library and man of letters, that the University of Vienna dedicated this commemoration. It was conceived in the spirit of van Swieten at an interdisciplinary meeting of scholars in the fields of the history of medicine and general history. Professor Erna Lesky, director of the Institute of the History of Medicine, and Professor Adam Wandruszka, holding a chair of Austrian history at the University of Vienna, were responsible for the organization.

The inauguration of the symposium was held on Monday, 8 May in the festival hall of the university in the presence of Franz Jonas, President of the Federal Republic

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of Austria, Hertha Firnberg, Minister of Science and Research, and Ingrid Leodolter, Minister of Public Health. After an address of welcome by Alexander Dordett, rector of the university, and Professor Bruno Zanobio of Pavia having offered the greetings of his university to the Vienna Alma Mater Rudolphina, the President of the Republic opened the symposium with a speech in commendation of van Swieten. The opening paper was given by Erna Lesky. It was based on her latest researches in the Vienna archives and in the National Library, bringing to light aspects of van Swieten's activities so far neglected, such as a general sick fund for workers and a surgical clinic. The inauguration was closed after Professor G. A. Lindeboom of Amsterdam had placed a wreath of honour at the monument of van Swieten in the arcades of the central court of the university.

For the meetings which followed there could have been no better setting than the building of Joseph II's academy of military surgeons in nearby Währingerstrasse, now housing the Institute of the History of Medicine. The first meeting on Monday afternoon was opened by Professor Lindeboom, who dealt with van Swieten's formative years and activities in The Netherlands. Then Grete Klingenstein of the University of Vienna discussed van Swieten's achievements in the realm of books, showing the interrelations between the educational situation in the country and the necessity to reorganize censorship on the basis of a secularized public institution. In the absence of Professor Kálmán Benda of Budapest, his place on Tuesday morning was taken by Professor Ernst Wangermann of the University of Leeds, at present engaged in a study of the educational policies of van Swieten's son Gottfried. Erwin H. Ackerknecht, professor emeritus of the University of Zürich, dealt with Boerhaave's disciples, whose work in medical politics was similar to that of van Swieten. Professor Eva H. Balász, Budapest, demonstrated the influence of van Swieten on the intellectual climate in Hungary. Christian Probst was first on the list of speakers on Tuesday afternoon and presented a paper on van Swieten as practitioner and scientist. Then Professor Bruno Zanobio of Pavia went into a detailed discussion on the impact which van Swieten's Vienna model of medical studies had on the Italian university, then under the sway of Habsburg reformism. On Wednesday morning Giuseppe Ricuperati of the University of Turin put Pio Niccolò Garelli, van Swieten's predecessor as court physician and librarian, in the foreground of his paper on the intellectual climate in pre-enlightenment Austria. Professor Luigi Belloni of the University of Bologna concluded the academic part of the commemoration with an investigation into Morgagni's *De sedibus et causis morborum per anatomen indagatis*. The intimate setting provided by the reading room of Joseph II's academy was ideal for these discussions, which were presided over by Professor Adam Wandruszka, Professor Hans Wagner of the University of Salzburg (Austrian history), Professor Franco Valsecchi of the University of Rome (modern history) and Professor Karl Rothschuh of the University of Münster.

On Wednesday afternoon Erna Lesky as hostess acted also as guide to the treasures of the Institute's library and museum and at the conclusion of the symposium gave a reception to the participants from Italy, Hungary, Germany, Great Britain, Canada and Austria.

GRETE KLINGENSTEIN