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Society News

The Editor

Abstract

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One only needs to look at the list of topics chosen to appreciate that the interests of Society members are still as wide as they have ever been: "Lignocaine — its rational use in Clinical Practice", T.F. Benton: "There's nowt as queer as Folk", R. Bolas: "The Effects of Prolonged Spaceflight on Man". W. A. Branford: "Out Damned Clot", I. J. Cartledge: "Carcinoid Tumour", N. J. Douglas: "Consciousness Altering Drugs" — Man's Search for Unreality", A.R.W. Forrest: "Some Aspects of Cystic Fibrosis", Diana Girdwood: "Concerning the Function of 3' 5' Cyclic Adenosine Monophosphate in Brain", M.A.R. Knock. Happily, at the time of writing, a sneak preview of the new syllabus reveals that the 236th Session also has its full quota of Dissertations.

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SOCIETY NEWS

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Happily, at the time of writing, a sneak preview of the new syllabus reveals that the 236th Session also has its full quota of Dissertations.

This resurgence of Society talent did not, however, prevent the usual importation of guest speakers from outside the Edinburgh medical school. Dr A. M. Braverman of the Harlow Hospital Group spoke on "The Relationship between the Hospital and Community in the care of the Elderly". The importance of Geriatrics to the modern doctor is at last being recognised in Edinburgh and Dr. Williamson expresses his views elsewhere in this issue. Another fast expanding field was presented by Dr. S. Sevitt of the Birmingham Accident Hospital with his talk "Medicine in Trauma and the Role of the Physician". However, in view of the present interest in vasectomy perhaps the most topical of all was Professor J. P. Blandy's discussion of "Male Sterilisation — Snares and Delusions".

The rest of public business for the year was provided by past and present members of the Edinburgh staff. Professor McWhirter delivered the Inaugural Address and Professor A. P. M. Forrest, Dr J. S. K. Stevenson, Dr. J. H. Smith Dr. W H Price and Dr J W. Farquhar also accepted invitations to speak.

To balance the whole picture of the Session one must, however, present the other side of the coin and regret the poor attendance at some of the meetings. Public Business is, of

course, open to all, so why is it that some draw only a mere handful of students? It may be that they prefer to restrict their attendance at 'lectures' to their University timetable or perhaps our new technicolour advertisements are still not enough. Whatever the reason, one often wonders what happened to those among the 1,100 who flocked to hear Dr. Issels who have never returned.

A further downward trend has also occurred in the attendance at Private Business. This is however a different, a purely internal, matter for the Society. Surely no-one will deny that these meetings should be the core of the Society's existence, whatever fringe benefits it offers to its members. Yet year after year many pay their subscriptions and never even arrive to sign the Obligation (a convenient method of introducing a new member to his fellows), and to see for themselves what Private Business is about. It is to be hoped that the measures to be introduced for the new session will improve "communication" and result in more members contributing to these meetings.

Despite being delivered at times to a very "select" audience, these meetings went on regardless. Among them were the first reports from recipients of R.M.S. Travel Grants. Tales and pictures from such far-flung places as the Malaysian jungles, the mountains and valleys of Nepal and, on a less exotic plane, the metropolises of New England greatly impressed those present with the worth of this venture.

Although many applicants have unfortunately had to be disappointed, the second groups of recipients have already in some cases started on their travels, and as a result of their predecessors' efforts we await their reports with anticipation.

Controversy at the A.G.M. mainly centered around the Revision of the Laws, in particular the annual subscription. In this era of Society affluence it was argued that it could be reduced to a nominal level to encourage an increase in membership. In the end this view was narrowly defeated and members will pay £2.00 as from October.

On the 4th November, 1971 a short ceremony was held outside the new Midlothian County Council offices on George IV Bridge, when Fred Benton, the Senior President, unveiled a plaque commemorating the old premises at 7 Melbourne Place. With the start of demolition on the site of the new R.M.S. building all the plans are at last beginning to take on an air of reality — who knows, perhaps actual construction will have started before the next issue of "Res Medica".