

RES MEDICA

Journal of the Royal Medical Society



Summing Up

Sir John McMichael, F.R.S.

Abstract

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ISSN: 2051-7580 (Online) ISSN: 0482-3206 (Print)

Res Medica is published by the Royal Medical Society, 5/5 Bristo Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9AL

Res Medica, April 1967, Special Issue – Lauder Brunton Centenary Symposium on Angina Pectoris: 64

doi: [10.2218/resmedica.v5i3-4.491](https://doi.org/10.2218/resmedica.v5i3-4.491)

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Sir John McMichael, F.R.S.

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This symposium has indeed been full of interest. All the speakers have given us a great deal to think about, increased depth of understanding has emerged from the transatlantic communications of Drs. Gorlin and Friesinger. They have shown where our clinical assessment, even with electrocardiographic help, can fall short of full comprehension. Until we can sharpen up our precision in assessment of these patients, a great deal of what we have been doing up to now has contained a fraction of guesswork.

Professor Morris gave an excellent paper on the epidemiological side – the extraneous environmental factors which may be influencing the situation, and Dr. Oliver approaches the problem by study of the “milieu interieur” – the recognisable biochemical factors which may contribute to the development of this disorder. The therapeutic point of view and the mode of action of drugs by Dr. Rees added knowledge gained at Westminster. We also heard the excellent report of the studies by the Oslo group who have tried very creditably and very hard to see whether or not one can really prevent thrombosis. We go away sadder, and wiser men, realising how much there remains to be found out. I would not like to close without mentioning the excellent historical introduction so ably given by Mr. Hunter, and by Miss Leach who set us a background of knowledge about the time of Lauder Brunton whom we commemorate. We still think that the nitrites are the sheet anchor in the treatment of Angina Pectoris, so that our commemorative occasion has indeed been very appropriate. Quite apart from the scientific programme I think you will all admit that those of us who are senior graduates of this great school can feel justifiable pride in the performance of the present generation of students running this distinguished medical society. I would like particularly to mention Dr. Roger Smith who has been the organising secretary of the occa-

sion and who has indeed put in an enormous amount of work in arranging this programme and its quite spectacular success. Mr. Hunter, Mr. Irving and Miss Reid have also played a full part in the organisation. If this Royal Medical Society has contained many of the great men of the past, it contains great men and women of the future as well. We thank them all for what they have done to make it such a splendid occasion and I have been privileged indeed to play a little part in it.