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Students` Medical Council

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AURICLE
Published by the Students' Medical Council, University of the Witwatersrand

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VOL. 4 OCTOBER, 1938 No. 7



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1938 - REVIEW

It is customary at the end of each year to sum up in as impartial a manner as possible the activities of the Students' Medical Council. It is with mixed feeling that "The Auricle" undertakes this task.

It must be remembered that perhaps the most essential feature of a truly democratic and liberal regime is the faculty of self criticism. "The Auricle" is after all the official organ of the S.M.C., yet its columns have always been open to receive criticisms of Council. The fact that such criticisms have been received and published in almost every issue merely proves what we already realise—namely, that our organisation is not yet perfect.

One unfortunate feature of the past year's work has been the intrusion of personal animosities upon problems where no such feelings have been necessary. Any survey of the Minutes of past meetings will show that nearly every member of Council has been guilty of this on some occasion or other and has thus impeded the work of Council. It is essential that those who lead student affairs realise that they represent not their own private opinion, but the student body.

It was suggested at the last meeting of Council that the number of Societies that come under the heading of Cultural Activities is excessive. This is a point which has cropped up nearly every year, yet nothing has as yet been done. It is quite obvious that we have carried our desire for sub-committees beyond reasonable limits. There is no reason to suppose that a Cultural Activities Committee consisting, say, of ten efficient members, would not be able to carry on all the work in this section. Indeed, such an arrangement would greatly facilitate the work, and would eliminate all unnecessary overlapping and petty inter-society rivalry. We hope that the Vacation Committee will give this matter considerable thought, and that a new and efficient organisation will arise.

The Supply Association, unique in the annals of student organisation, has gone from strength to strength, and should extend its activities even further afield. As far as we know, there is no other student organisation which sells instruments, books, lecture notes, examination papers, etc., and Council should see that it maintains the lead it has thus set.

As regards Entertainments, Amenities, Curriculum, etc., these departments have with minor exceptions had a successful year. Especially is this so with Curriculum. The report presented to the Commission on Medical Education was complete in every detail, and set forth admirably **the Student's Point of View.**

A large share of the blame for the partial disorganisation of the locker system must be laid at the door of the students themselves. Their actions in this connection have resulted in such chaos that it will take many months of hard work to be resolved. This serves to emphasize the fact that Council cannot function successfully unless it has the wholehearted support of every student.

Regarding Entertainment, the prime object of this Committee must be to reduce the cost of the various functions to a practical minimum. Admittedly something has been done in this direction, but there is still much room for improvement. The fiasco of the liquor prices at the Dinner this year must never be repeated, for it is this sort of thing that makes the average student sceptical of Council's ability.

More attention should be paid to the organisation of **Informal** functions, such as class socials, theatre nights, etc., fot it is in this way only that students learn to co-operate with each other for the common benefit.

It is perhaps not inappropriate to mention in this review the fact that the S.R.C. makes an annual grant of only £100 to the S.M.C. We note that the S.R.C. fee is being raised from £2/10/0 to £5 per year. We feel quite safe in assuming that the grant to the S.M.C. will not increase proportionately. It is high time that the S.R.C. realised that the Medical School is being unfairly treated. Furthermore, we can state quite definitely that it is **not** only in this respect that the wishes and needs of this School are ignored by that august body. The Medical representatives next year must see that the interests of Medical Students are appropriately cared for.

(Continued in next column)

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DIE BIBLIOTEEK

Die studente waardeer dit dat die biblioteek nou elke dag 'n uur en 'n half langer oop bly. Dat daar wel deeglik van die ekstra kanse gebruik gemaak word, ly geen twyfel nie. Baie morens om half-nege staan party kerels al met boeke onder die arms voor die deur en wag dat dit moet oopgaan.

Die uur verlenging in die middag van vyf- tot ses-uur is ook heel welkom, want dit het al baie gebeur dat persone in die middag om vyf-uur nog wou lees en dan aangese is om te skoert.

Die middag-uur tussen een en twee kan in die biblioteek net so aangenaam deurgebring word as in die algemene ruskamer. Dit is dan die beste tyd om in die wetenskaplike tydskrifte rond te blaai, as jy jou gedurende die ander tyd van die dag miskien nie die tyd vir hierdie deel van jou opvoeding gun nie.

Die nuwe reelings is baie van pas, veral omdat die eksamens nou so naby is. Ons wil die betrokke outoriteite hartlik bedank.

Finally we come to " Journals." For the first time in the history of the Medical School three " Leeches " have been produced in one year and, in addition, **no financial loss has been sustained.** Each issue has been well up to standard, and no one will begrudge " The Leech " Committee a figurative pat on the back.

As far as " The Auricle " is concerned we leave that to the Students to judge. If we have succeeded in opening up a new forum for the free expression of Student opinion, then we have indeed fulfilled our mission. The semi-rigid censorship which has been in evidence in the past has fortunately disappeared—we hope for all time.

We must remind Students that this is their journal. As the publication of sixteen blank pages would be an unwelcome departure in journalism we hope that the all too frequent appeals for articles will meet with a better response next year.

On behalf of the Students we wish to thank the members of Council for the work they have done this year, and to wish the Vacation Committee and the 1939 Council the best of luck.

CAVE

While attending meetings of the Students' Medical Council during the last two years I have looked about me and wondered how it was that certain persons came to be members of such a body. These individuals sat round the Council table, meeting after meeting, and, apart from a few exceptional occasions, failed to make suggestions, to express criticisms, or, in fact, to take part in discussion of any sort. This dumb minority, and I am glad to say that it is still a small minority, contained members who, incredible as it may seem, occupied positions even very close to the highest one.

People of this sort are passengers; they are occupying places that could be better filled by students of a more active type, students who are not satisfied to sit passively at meetings, but who, with the object of developing the school, have ideas, plans and criticisms, and who are prepared to put them into practice.

I have said that those whom I attack constitute only a small minority of the S.M.C., but there is a possibility of their becoming a large majority with consequent stagnation of student affairs in the school. If you desire these affairs to be run properly see that the right people hold the right positions.

I advise that students take more care in choosing Class, S.R.C., or any other representatives. Remember, when voting, that these men and women are either to accelerate or retard progress in the school. To prevent the latter, then, be more selective in the choice of your councillors.

BAARDE.—(Vervolg van bladsy 11.)

Die mense is vriendelik en glimlag as hulle jou sien. Hulle kry lekker as hulle ongeskonde natuur bewonder.

Hoe jou uiterlik verander, hang af van jou inwendige kliere en jou skeermes, van jou vriende se estetiese gevoelens, en van jou vriende se vriende. Elkeen het 'n se. „ Ek hou van 'n Van Dyk." „ Jy moet dit aan die kante 'n bietjie meer wegneem." „ Ek hou van Bokkie se baard." „ Jy lyk net soos Oom Paul," ens. Geen man sou ooit geglo het nie dat mans soveel modes het nie. Die baarde onderskei ons van mekaar—kaal gesigte maak ons almal eners. N. K.

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● TWO RESOLUTIONS ●

The Editor, Sir,

Several years ago the medical student body decided that, because of the unsatisfactory state of student affairs at Milner Park, they would withdraw almost completely from Milner Park activities and proceed to build up their own organisation. This they did with such a will that to-day the facilities provided by the S.M.C. are probably unequalled by any other student organisation in South Africa. But because of our apathy and lack of interest in affairs down at Milner Park, we have lost sight of the fact that Milner Park is still the mouthpiece of this University, that the S.R.C. is still in supreme control of student activities and monies, and that Milner Park general meetings decide the policy of the students at this University. It is therefore a pity that medical students did not make any attempt to oppose two resolutions passed at recent general meetings, since these are detrimental in many respects to medical students.

The first resolution to which I refer is " That there shall be one S.R.C. member for every 140 students or part thereof, instead of for every 100 students." This means that a faculty with 300 students will obtain the same number of representatives as hitherto, whereas the Faculties of Medicine and Engineering, each with 700 students, stand to lose two members each. Since these two faculties are the biggest in the University, the resolution was a cleverly designed and successful attempt to diminish our representation in student affairs. It is a state of affairs that should not be tolerated, for it gives small faculties a disproportionate say in student matters.

The second resolution concerns the raising of the S.R.C. fee to £5, the extra money serving as a fund for a Students' Union. Such a fund must of necessity make less appeal to the medical student than to his brother student at Milner Park because the medical cannot hope to derive the same benefit from a Students' Union at Milner Park as the student whose lectures are in the buildings nearby. We want our facilities here at the Medical School, not to have to pant and puff to some inaccessible spot. It is up to the S.R.C. to assist us to provide these facilities just as they intend to have them at the Students' Union.

Actually the medical student does not receive a fair deal from the S.R.C., even in respect of the present fee. As an illustration, the S.R.C. pays a considerable amount to the Benefit Society. Since medical students are not members of this Society, it is clear that they are paying for something which they do not receive.

It is in the interests of medical students that they take action in this respect. They should come to general meetings with clear-cut requests. They should elect to the S.R.C. members who have proved their interest in student affairs, people who will fight every inch for the rights of the Medical School, and who will endeavour to obtain for us better common rooms, a decent tea lounge and the much wanted recreational facilities, and not the man who will be content to sit dumb in the dazzling tie and distinctive blazer that the present S.R.C. has voted itself entitled to wear.

R. E. BERNSTEIN.

Medicobserver Replies.

The Editor of " The Auricle,"

Dear Sir,—Binaural's comment on the Medical School Letter, which has been the feature of the Wu's Views medical page this year, makes a charge which cannot be admitted.

It should be fairly obvious that two different people given the *commissions* to write such features, will naturally compose letters as different in content, presentation, style, etc., as they themselves are in moral, social, scientific or any other outlook.

If Binaural cannot admit this fact he should attempt to become binocular, when no doubt he will at last begin to see—which is to believe.

Nevertheless, the fact that Binaural has seen fit to mention Medicobserver, means that at least he feels he has a competitor. In fact, Binaural has a superior, and it is not just common brag for Medicobserver to say that the Medical School Letter in Wu's Views has been far better than any attempt yet registered by Binaural in his local letter.

A perusal of the respective letters will prove this. Medicobserver has had all the scoops and has left nothing for Binaural except the " Commissions "—how sad.

Surely a person of Binaural's ability cannot be so blind as to state that the remarks made in Medical School Letter on, to take but a few examples, common room manners, treatment of chess sets, installation of the air-conditioning plant and the broadcasting apparatus in the Second Year Laboratory, the improvements made in the Third Year Clinical Laboratory, and the new mortuary, are not to be taken seriously!

(Continued in next column)

TWO EXPLANATIONS

The Editor of "The Auricle,"

Sir,—Mr. J. Thomas, chairman of the Men's Hostels Committee, has lately spoken to me regarding my article in the September "Auricle" entitled "Hostelites and Politics." I am impressed that he has been deeply offended by two points in that article:—

(a) That I attributed the disturbance to hostelites only;
(b) That I accused the hostelites of Fascist tendencies.

I want to say at once that I did not wish any reflection to be cast on Mr. Thomas, who had nothing to do with the disturbance, and whose good faith and honourable administration of office I have never doubted. I regret profoundly whatever pain I caused him.

At the same time I must remark on the two points mentioned above. I apologize for blaming the hostelites *alone*, but at any rate, they did form the nucleus and the majority of the rioters. As to the second point, I can only repeat that it is undeniably after the Fascist fashion arbitrarily and forcibly to set limits to the freedom of speech of others, and when people are so ignorant of politics that they all naively recite the same formula, for which they can give no reasons not tautological, but accept as an article of faith, they are likely to be very easily persuaded to swallow Fascist dogma.

Yours, etc.,

J.W.

* * * *

The Editor of "The Auricle,"

Dear Sir,—I have been accused of stirring up anti-semitism in the University. May I, through your paper, deny this charge.

The cause of this accusation is the letter which I read out at a General Meeting of all students which I had called to object to the biased and partial policy of "Wu's Views." I read that letter fully believing that it was true and was not anti-semitic or even anti-communistic ; I read it in good faith having previously shown it to a friend—a Jew and a staunch communist and asked him to tell me whether it was either slanderous or untrue ; although he disapproved of the letter he could not show me any point which was untrue. Unfortunately he failed to indicate to me the one serious mistake which I made, viz., that I had used the word Jew, unqualified, thereby wrongfully associating all Jews with the Communists. May I apologise to the large number of Jews who shared with me my approval of the British foreign policy and Mr. Chamberlain's efforts to maintain peace, for erroneously accusing them of siding with the Communists in "demanding war."

I wrote that letter—

(1) because I thought the poster convening the Diogenes meeting most distasteful ;

(2) because I objected to seeing the British policy being criticised, without the opposite views in favour thereof being ex-expressed.

I certainly did not write it against the Jews.

The Extraordinary General Meeting was called because—

(*a*) I considered that my letter had been suppressed for reasons personal to the Editor. A private conversation of a friend of mine seemed to confirm my suspicion;

(*b*) many objected to seeing the so-called interlectuals of the "Wu's Views" staff because they had their hopes frustrated by certain students, refer to these as "Hooligans" in "Wu's Views;

(*c*) a large number of students objected to the slanderous attacks made on the Mens' Residences and also on the Engineering faculty—two very important sections in the University by these same "interlectuals" in "Wu's Views";

(*d*) a large section of University opinion considered that "Wu's Views" was partial and biased and too much influenced by the political leanings of its Editor.

The Meeting was certainly not called in any way against the Jews as those against whom it was directed apparently gave out.

In conclusion may I make two suggestions?

(1) That the medical students do all in their power next year to abolish the Diogenes Club in case it should produce anti-Britishism, anti-Afrikanerism or anti-Semitism in the University;

(2) that the medical school as a whole should co-operate in an endeavour to get more control in University affairs next year, e.g., there is not one medical student on the present S.R.C. vacation executive. Our University is being run by Arts and Law students—we have only ourselves to blame for this; let us work together and with the Engineers to put it right.

Yours, etc.,

A. V. BIRD.

Does he think the same of comments on the Supply Association, the organisation of the annual play, or the references made to examinations?

Does he wish to discredit the deserving praises meted out to the Ex-President and his fellow colleagues of the S.M.C., and the good wishes extended to their successors? Can he rightly decry any statement made by Medicobserver? No, most emphatically not!

Medicobserver is justly proud of what has been the greatest success so far in his medical career, and if for nothing else, raises his hat to Wu's Views, and thanks them for the great opportunity they have given him in providing a channel for his small and ambitious literary efforts which he hopes are but inklings of greater things to come.

Medicobserver sincerely regrets that the death of his trumpeter has forced him to blow his own.

Having put Binaural in his place, Medicobserver feels he can at last settle down to some solid swatting in order to register yet another achievement in his record book, which barring his hockey, must of necessity begin as from this year.

Yours, etc.,

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GREAT DOCTORS

5 PERCIVAL POTT, (1714-1788.)

Pott flourished in that vigorous period so curiously referred to as Johnson's England. In fact, he numbered the good literary doctor and David Garrick amongst his patients, and had his portrait painted by both Sir Joshua Reynolds and Romney. Pott's name is linked with that of St. Bartholomew's hospital which, in his own words, he served man and boy for half a century. He entered the hospital in 1730 under a leading surgeon of the time named Nourse, to whom he became personal assistant, helping him in his practice and dissecting the specimens for his lectures. In 1736 he was admitted to the "Freedom of Barber Surgeons," and given the Great diploma. In 1745 he was made Assistant Surgeon at Barts., and a few years later full Surgeon.

One wet morning in 1856 whilst riding about his business, Pott was thrown from his horse and sustained a compound fracture of the tibia (*not* as some tradition has it the famous Potts fracture dislocadion at the ankle joint which he described later). Had it not been for the timely intervention of his Chief, Edward Nourse, his leg would have been amputated. His mending proved entirely satisfactory, but necessitated a prolonged convalescence. This resulted in his producing at leisure his amazing treatise on "Hernia," which contains a thorough anatomy of the subject and the reasons for congenital origin of hernia. In 1760 there followed his classic on "Head Injuries"—the etiology of some of his cases are marked by such naivete as "The girl tossed by an ox at Smithfield," "the man playing with cudgels in the Moorfields!" In 1768 appeared his "Fractures and Dislocations," which was a standard of its time, wherein he advocated immediate reduction of all fractures and considered relaxation of muscles the most important factor for correct alignment of the fractured ends.

In 1799 he produced "Curvature of the Spine," in which he described in full for the first time, the clinical picture of what is now known as "Potts Disease."

6 THEODORE BILLROTH (1829-1894).

Billroth's name is linked inseparably in our minds to-day in connection with gastric surgery. Of all the converts and disciples to the great surgical renaissance of Listerian practice his name is the most notable.

Billroth graduated from Berlin in 1852, and shortly afterwards undertook post-graduate studies in Vienna and Paris. On return to Berlin he was offered an assistant post in Langenbeck's surgical clinic. He was fortunate to have fallen in with such a worthy preceptor, and it was mainly from him that he acquired his foundations in surgery. In 1860 he became professor of surgery at Zurich, where he had a large clinic under his care. From here he issued reports of over eight thousand surgical patients which passed through his hands. These reports are characterised by their "relentless sincerity and self-criticism," and earned him a European-wide reputation. His researches in pathological histology and the bacteriology of wound infection were definite advances in these subjects. In 1867 he became professor of surgery in Vienna, and it is usually with this city that his name is associated.

Billroth was the pioneer in visceral surgery. In 1872 he made his first resection of the oesophagus, and in the following year the first excision of the larynx. In 1881 the first resection of the pylorus for cancer, which was successful. From 1878-1883 he performed the large portion of his intestinal resection, the work on which his fame so securely rests. It is almost impossible to estimate the stimulus which these new surgical approaches had in the pathology of abdominal organs—which, as it were, "being studied in vivo."

Billroth was amazingly talented in many ways, as specimens of his verse and musical compositions testify; no doubt the latter accomplishment developed from his intimate and life-long friendship with the great North German composer, Johannes Brahms.

D. R. M.

LOCAL LETTER

HEADLINES.

After all the undue publicity which the University has been accorded in the newspapers of this city of late, a pleasing feature has arisen in the "Daily Express" which is under the heading of "Rand University News." This would appear to be written by a University student, for the "news" is of a nature only familiar to a full-time student. But it is satisfying that accuracy is its keynote, and a more pleasant view of the Alma Mater is presented to Mr. and Mrs. Johannesburg than that to which they have been accustomed in the past.

FINERY.

So at last the "powers-that-be" have awakened to the short-comings of our University ornamentation and the Tie is to be "investigated." A great failing with the University blazer at the present would seem to be the entire lack of durability of which the garment is made. This would indicate an improvement of the material as an immediate essential, which, however, should not necessitate an increase in the price of an already too-expensive article. The deploring of the indiscriminate wearing of the University colours was to my mind a pleasing feature of the last publication of this journal, and is worthy of greater stress.

THEATRICAL.

When I allow my memory to wander into the dim past, I recall a happy function which was graced by the name of a "Theatre Evening." This type of function is worthy of revival both as a social event and as a means of obtaining more adequate charges for student admission at our local theatres. If I remember correctly, the last show attended was "Varsity Show"; the title is suitable enough, but I am afraid that that was as far as it went—which is possibly the reason for the sudden demise of these functions. Possibly a successful revival will occur among the vacation activities.

SYNONYMOUS.

I see that an effort is to be made to make the examinations of the two Medical Schools of this country correspond to the letter. This is an admirable scheme for affording qualification on an equal basis and thus affording a true comparison between the merits and demerits of the two institutions. This state of affairs has already been in progress for some time as regards the Gynaecology and Obstetrics papers . . . . Medicine and Surgery please copy!

OVAL.

Inter-faculty sports come and go, but the Medicals seem to go on for ever. The inter-faculty rugby has proved no exception, and this faculty has been declared champions of playing-the-oval for yet another year. To the members of the victorious team we extend our heartiest congratulations, and may we express the hope that their achievements may be extended in a like manner to the scholastic fields.

EDITIONS.

It is rather surprising that so many books, in editions so long out of date should still grace the lists of "Books Recommended." I have Thomson and Miles' work on Surgery in mind when I mention this matter, though I am afraid that the standard medicine text-book, edited by R. J. Conybeare, runs it a close second. In future the authorities should recommend text-books whose publishers and authors are sufficiently enterprising to promote the modernising of their works.

AUTHORITY.

The old order changeth . . . and a new S.M.C. is in being. May we hope that it will continue in the same capable manner as the old so ably led by Mr. J. F. Davidson, whose keen endeavour has been in no small way responsible for the righting of the many wrongs which have beset the Medical School throughout the year 1938. So "Good Luck" to the New, and "Thank You" to the Old.

Yours sincerely,

BINAURAL.

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Dr. BRADLEY REMEMBERS.

By Francis Brett Young.

No reader needs any introduction to Mr. Young, whose "My Brother Jonathan" continues to rank as a classic among the many novels which have the medical practitioner as the hero.

Himself a qualified medical man who knew some years of general practice before the war, he has poured into this book much of the observations and memories of his youth, which have matured in his mind during the intervening years. Mr. Young, too, has remembered.

Dr. Bradley lies dreaming of the past before putting out his surgery light for the last time; to-morrow he will say good-bye to his little practice in the West Midland mining town, whose people he had tended for nearly half a century. It is a moment for dreams.

He remembers his youth in Shropshire, and the inspired old quack who made the abandoned boy his assistant and left him enough money for his studies in North Bromwich. He recalls the birth of his life-long friendship with the youth who was to become a great surgeon, and would have carried him in his successful wake, had not Bradley fallen in love and married.

It seemed but yesterday that he had settled with his wife in this very house, where their son Matthew was born, and she all too soon died of a fever in her second childbirth.

Then followed the colliery disaster, which sweeps away the livelihood of a whole town and his own small fortune as well . . . But there had always been work, and plenty of it . . . under ever-changing conditions, with new rivals and fresh problems.

His work had begun before Lister's recognition: he had seen the coming of the Panel, and the strain of the war upon doctors. Mr. Brett Young's story is primarily a character study of a man whose

(Continued at foot of next column.)

courage and sanity will endear him to all.

Be it sufficient to say—Read it!

(Review copies from Vanity Fair, Smal Street, Johannesburg).

BEHIND THE NIGHT BELL.

By F. G. Layton.

In the epidemic of "Medical" authorship there is always prone to be chaff among the corn, and I am afraid that this book falls in the latter category. It would seem that Dr. Layton has been inspired by the public accord with which several previous publications of a like nature have been received. But this novel falls far below the standard of the "Medical" best-sellers.

While the subject material of this publication has possibilities, it has not been presented in a manner which holds the interest of the reader to any slight extent and in consequence the reading of this book presents itself as a real effort. One particularly irritating feature is the constant mis-spelling of the word "judgment," which fact one would like to presume a printer's error.

The one portion of this work which I think may bear repetition is the following story: "Two small boys were overheard by a nurse in a children's ward discussing their hospital experiences. Said one to the other, 'Are you medical or surgical?' The other shook his head. 'Dunno, what you mean?' he replied. The first little boy looked scornful. He had been a patient in the ward for many weeks. 'Was you bad when you come,' he persisted, 'or did they make you bad after you come?' It was a logical question, and those of my surgical acquaintances whose sense of humour is not acute do not like it much."

Dr. Layton is a general practitioner, who has spent most of his working life in the slums of a big provincial city, but nevertheless, I feel it is a happy fate that prevented his adopting journalism from the outset.

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BEHANDEL DIE OORSAAK.

Sy was my nuwe pasiënt in die Snykundeafdeling. Niklaas en ek het vol verwagting by die rye beddens verby gestap om haar te gaan ondersoek. Dit is natuurlik streng verbode om eerst op die bedkaart te loer: ondersoek, self 'n diagnose maak en dan vergelyk met die inwonende dokter se bevinding, is die reëls van die interessante spel.

Maar dit was nie so danig maklik nie. Sy was besonder skaam en het gedurig haar kop weggedraai om dit in die kussing weg te steek. Pyn laag af in die buikholte; skielik begin die middag vantevore; pols 110°; temperatuur 102°, sardiens gehad vir middagete . . . . ha! kosvergiftiging! Maar die pyn is so laag af en daar is twee kolle wat besonder teer is aan weerskante van die middellyn. Skielik kry ons byna gelyk die selfde idee. Maar hoe nou gevra? Ek waag dit so takvol moontlik. Nee sy ontken dit heftig—ampter te heftig. 'n Vaginale afskeiding? Soiets het sy nog nooit aan gely nie.

Ons stelselmatige ondersoek lewer verder niks abnormaals nie. Oë, mond, tong en keel, hart en longe. Die arm reflekse is in orde, die knie-reflekse normaal en . . . .

„ Waar kom die brand merk op jou been vandaan, Juffrou? "

„ Dis, die , exhaust ' van die , motorbike ' wat my daar gebrand het."

„ Wanneer was dit? "

„ Voorverlede Saterdag."

Net mooi tien dae gelede. Weer kyk ons mekaar betekenisvol aan. Dit lyk besonder agterdagtig. Net toe kom suster verby:

„ Wel, wat dink julle van die geval? "

„ Maar moeilik om te sê, suster. Dit lyk sover of sy iets geëet het . . . ."

„ Glad nie so moeilik nie. Dink weer. Sy het 'n groengeel afskeiding! "

Natuurlik! Dit pas pragtig. Saterdag; motorfiets; tien dae later—lae buikpyne afskeiding. So helder as glas. Die agtienjarige meisie is dood benoud om ons te laat agterkom dat sy aan akute gonnorree ly. 'n Mens kon verstaan. Onskuldig grootgemaak–heel waarskynlik op die plattland met 'n sterk konservatiewe morele agtergrond. Half onkundig, maar met 'n verterende suspiesie . . . sy het iets wat nie sosiale goedkeuring wegdra nie!

„ Waar kom jy vandaan, Juffrou? "

„ Buffelskloof, dokter. Maar ek werk nou al twee maande hier in die fabriek."

„ Hoe hou jy van die werk—betaal hulle darem goed? "

„ As hulle al die siekte fooie en goed afgetrek het kry ons een pond per week."

„ Dis maar min nê? En waar is u huis? "

„ By die ‚Residensie,' in Newtown, dokter."

„ En wat kos losies nogal daar? "

„ Ons betaal seventien-en-ses per week."

„ Nou ja juffrou, hou maar moed. Ons sien jou later. Totsiens."

Ons sê nie een iets nie, maar ons dink baie. Sy het maar 'n halfkroon per week oor om die dinge te koop wat 'n meisie se hart begeer. So hopeloos onvoldoende. Klere is uit die kwessie. Een maal bioskoop, bietjie laventel—miskien lekkers . . .

„ Wel," sê Niklaas eindelik, „ wat van die behandeling? "

„ Ek weet presies wat jy wil hê: rus in bed; yspak op die maag; Heeron ens . . . maar ek sê vir jou selfs dit is maar simptomaties. Hulle preek heeldag vir ons: behandel die oorsaak. Hier beteken dit om 'n sekere werkgewer met een hou morsdood te slaan."

„ Dit klink besonder noorddadig, maar ek dink ek verstaan."

„ Gerugtig, Niklaas. Die hospitaal kan daardie meisie se liggaam gesond maak, maar haar siel is verskroei—daaraan kan hulle niks doen nie. Hulle kan ook niks doen nie aan haar baie maats wat noodgedwonge die selfde kwaal gaan opdoen. Behandel die oorsaak—mooi en reg, maar hier lê dit so hopeloos buite die bestek van mediese kennis dat dit belaglik klink. Dit lyk vir my of ons taak groter is as toegepaste pathologie en fisiologie. 'n Mens word moedeloos as jy dink aan die werklike toon van die eeuwel: ekonomiese omstandighede-oneweredige verdeling van kapitaal-foutiewe wetgewing. Dan dink jy aan die siele-angs van daardie fris jong nooi en strafbare manslag lyk glad nie so 'n groot sonde nie! "

„ Hoor-hoor. Dowerende applaus. Maar dis elfuur. Kom ons drink 'n koppie tee net voor jy jou slag slaan. Miskien help dit."

P. D. W.

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OF MR. J. F. DAVIDSON.

If it be granted that the work of the Students' Medical Council of any given year should be assessed according to the degree to which it has fulfilled its duties to the students rather than to the number of innovations it has introduced, then the present Council has never had an equal. It owes its laudable position very largely to the great merit of a single individual—its President, Mr. Davidson.

I shall not concern myself with discussing Mr. Davidson's intellectual qualities. His quick eye for the essentials of a situation, his extraordinary knowledge of procedure in its widest sense, his tact, and his shrewd understanding of the psychology of those with whom he has had to deal are not very surprising in an acute mind long fed with experience. I cannot eulogise Mr. Davidson for these qualities, since he is scarcely more responsible for them than he is for the shape of his nose. No doubt, they promote the success of his enterprises; but because they would be effective even if used for evil ends they have no moral value.

Moral virtue is the only kind of virtue that is ever worthy of praise. A morally virtuous man is one who does everything in his power to bring about what seems to him to be good, even though it would be easy for him to direct his efforts to furthering his own interests or those of the group to which he belongs. This is the point of view from which Mr. Davidson must be regarded if it is desired to estimate him rightly.

Now, I have no doubt that Mr. Davidson's affections and his inner loyalties are (like anyone else's) mainly with the people from whom he has sprung, and among whom he has always lived. But while he has been President there has never been any suspicion that he has done more, or less, for anybody because of that person's race or creed. He has consistently worked to serve the happiness of the students, and even when time has been very precious to him he has not stunted it in his efforts to rectify injustice. I know of no other student leader in the University, past or present, who has so steadfastly held an idea of duty before his eyes and so constantly acted upon it. In a word, Mr. Davidson has displayed all the essential attributes of the ancient "good king."

I have as yet made no mention of Mr. Davidson's faults. Those that I know are trivial; and as I have not troubled to detail minor virtues, why should I cavil at little faults? It is better to follow the counsel of the sage, and not be like the fly, "who is always seeking sick and wounded places." I am aware that there are some who consider Mr. Davidson undemocratic because he once permitted discussion on an illiberal motion regarding a certain newspaper. That opinion is absurd, because if he had dictatorially banned that motion he would also have been considered undemocratic, possibly by the same people.

The truth is that Mr. Davidson has shown himself to be more thoroughly a democrat than most "representatives of the people" in democratic parliaments, in that, unlike them, he has always acted in the interests of *all*, and never for a group or sect to the detriment of the rest. That, indeed, is part and parcel of Mr. Davidson's irreproachable code of conduct, which all who have a part in administering student affairs should take as a model and endeavour to emulate.

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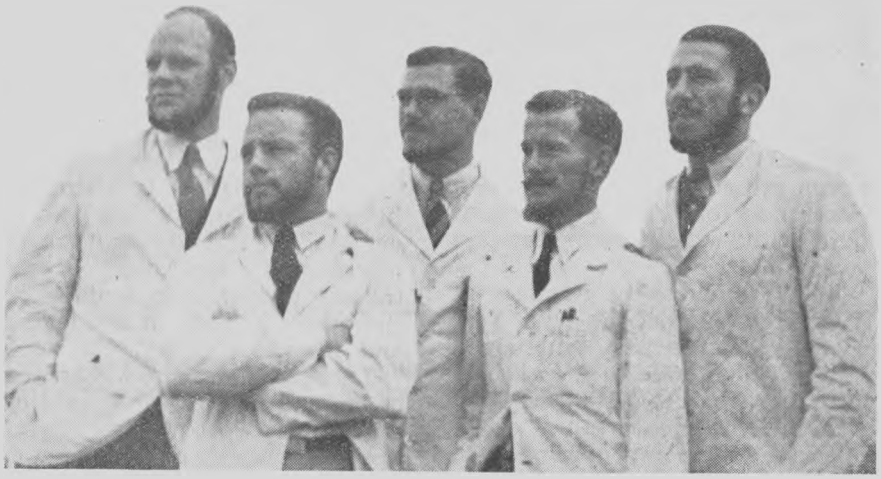
BAARDE.

As 'n mens jou baard laat groei, dan verander jy op twee plekke: dit is jou buitekant en jou binnekant; jou uiterlik en jou innerlik; jou eie gesig en jou uitsig op sake rondom jou; of liewers, dit is jou facies en jou cortex wat verander.

Die innerlik verander baie viniger as die uiterlik. Jou baardjies is nog maar in die stoppel-stadium, dan het jy al baie psigiatriese verskynsels getoon soos konflikte, repressies, depressies, illusies en idees van referensie. Gedurende die eerste week is jy 'n introvert. Jy is jou eie toeskouer. Jy kyk baie in die spieel, en hou jou gesig dop en hou jouself dop as jy by ander mense kom. Gedurende die tweede week is jy 'n ekstrovert. Jy loer vir ander mense deur jou bebaarde gesig en sien wat se effek die metamorphose op hulle het.

Vervolg op bladsy 3

BAARDE



WINTER. VAN STADEN. SWANEPOEL.
PIENAAR. ROUSSOUW.

Oktobermaand.

(Met apologie aan Leipoldt).

Daar's boeke in die voorhuis,
Daar's boeke orals rond;
Daar's boeke op die tafels,
Ja selfs ook op die grond.

Dit is die maand Oktober,
Die mooiste maand, se hul,
Maar ag, ons kon nie saamstem,
Met werk is hul te gul.

So vol van sorg en pligte
Elke student se dag!
Selfs slaap kan hul nie meer nie,
Maar werk tot laat die nag.

Dit is die maand Oktober
'n Ander maand, O wee,
Moet hul eksamen skrywe,
—Dis wat hul rillings gee.

Studente kort gelede
So vrolik en vol pret
Merk nou hoe kort die tyd is
'n Maandjie nou nog vet.

Ons is nog in Oktober,
Die werk word al hoe meer;
Studente, in hul slaap selfs
Lê steeds nog hard en leer.

Ons is nou in Oktober,
Die swaarste, swaarste maand
Met elke dag vol sorge,
Studeerwerk elke aand.

Daar's boeke in die voorhuis,
Daar's boeke orals rond;
Daar's boeke op die tafels,
Ja selfs ook op die grond.

P. J. K.

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WOMEN'S COMMON ROOM 1937-'38

When I attempt to review the activities of the Women's Common Room for the past year I find I keep turning back to the inordinate untidiness of a crowded Common Room and the casual inconsequence of eighty-two students.

I keep remembering eight o'clock in the morning and some twenty women in a swaying, chattering mass, around one mirror; another thirty burrowing in and out of lockers; and the other thirty, either with less conscience or more time on their hands, clustered in little groups around the dismembered "Daily Mail." And then at 8.15 a.m., the crowd melts away, leaving in glorious peace a common room littered with cases, books, papers, coats; its peace only disturbed by the periodic avalanche of jumble from one of the many wide-open lockers.

Or else the day is wearing on and the common room is strangely deserted. A couple of students sit, propped up with cushions, their feet on the heater, ostensibly swotting; another, with careless grace, is rattling a wild, wild tune out of the piano; and above the din a couple more, standing yards apart, are successfully carrying on a conversation; while at frequent intervals some wandering soul patters in and out of the common room, never failing to let the door bang at each entrance and exit. I fervently wish those who use the common room for swotting every success.

Then the "Outspan" arrives—oh! what a queue for reading the serial. Then the flowers come—some five hours later they are noticed and eventually find a vase and water.

And the friendly give and take. If you want something, just ask and everything in the common room is yours, to borrow.

Of course, the chaos and disorder can't go on. The Committee tried all year to correct it; every woman student in all sincerity agreed "something" should be done about it, and yet—if anything, it got worse.

I wondered—and still I wonder—if this were changed and order reigned supreme, would not the very spirit that is the Women's Common Room go—the trust and the honesty, the irresponsibility and the friendliness, the laughter and the loyalty? I wonder would it be lost? The answer I failed to find—to abler hands I commend the task. JOAN HENDERSON.

* * * *

The Editor of "The Auricle,"

Dear Sir,—On behalf of the Students of the Women's Common Room I wish to thank Miss Joan Henderson for her fine services to our common room during the past year.

In 1937, under the auspices of Mrs. Pratt-Nickels, the First Year Medical Women were entertained to tea at Sunnyside and were there introduced to Professor and Mrs. Dart and Miss Henderson.

Owing to the encouragement of Professor Dart, the first year Students formed a Society for the furthering of general knowledge and public speaking amongst the women students of their year. This club held several successful meetings during the year 1938, and as a result they hope to get all other years interested in their club in the future.

It is hoped that the hockey matches played during this year will be the foundation of regular inter-year and inter-faculty matches of a more organised nature.

We all wish the Final Years success in their present examinations and future careers.

Yours sincerely, K. B. MEAKER.

Medical Graduate Association.

The Post-Graduate Association intends to extend the range of facilities that it provides at present for students. In addition to fifth and sixth year students receiving a permanent invitation to the Association's monthly clinical meetings, they will in future receive copies of clinical lectures given to the Association, as well as clinical articles and recent advances notes that may be collected from time to time. Further, the members of the Association are enthusiastic about the prospects of holding joint-clinical meetings with student speakers, after the success of the first joint meeting held this year. It is an opportunity that we cannot afford to let slip, and one that we should exploit to the utmost.

The Association is starting an Information Bureau, and here students will be able to obtain valuable information regarding overseas training, post-graduate facilities, and the prospects both in this country and overseas.

Those students who will graduate at the end of the year should find much in the Post-graduate Association to attract them. The graduate who does not regard his six years at the School merely as a grind, but as part of his personal experience, will be interested because of the publications that the Association publishes, the meetings that it holds, and the post-graduate courses that it organises. To others the Association will appeal as a body that is always trying to help and obtain better facilities for the younger doctor. For students—and here I limit myself particularly to senior students—there is much benefit to be obtained, both in the present and for the future, by co-operation with past students of this school.

R. E. BERNSTEIN.

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THE TEAROOM COMMISSION.

I feel the time is now ripe for disclosing to the Students of the Medical School the results of the investigations of the Tearoom Commission. Contrary to the suggestions voiced by "Binaural" in last month's "Auricle," the Commission has not been dormant, nor has it allowed Time to March On unheeded.

After a preliminary investigation the Principal of the University was approached, but he was reluctant to take any action without having a precise account of the state of affairs.

With a view to securing exact data, therefore, it was decided to issue a questionaire to all students on this subject. The response was excellent. There were about three hundred replies, and we were able to get a fairly good idea of how much students spend, what complaints they have to make, etc., etc.

These results proved surprising even to the most optimistic. 80% **of the students are in favour of the S.M.C. taking over the Tearoom.** 14% are against this, and though the remaining 6% are also against this scheme, they have numerous complaints to make regarding the present system (especially the prices charged).

The average amount spent per Student per week is approximately 5/1. Of this amount 58% is spent on tea and cake, and 21% on lunches, the remainder being devoted to cigarettes, sweets, etc. If the total amount is worked out it reaches an amazing figure. (There are 485 students in the Medical School.)

In reaching an estimated profit, allowances for overestimation were made wherever the slightest chance of overestimation occurred. Expenditure was calculated on the basis of Milner Park figures.

In addition, the complaints and suggestions received were carefully considered and incorporated into the final memorandum of the Commission. This memorandum was submitted to the S.M.C., who unanimously approved it.

This memorandum has now been submitted to the Principal, Mr. H. R. Raikes, in whose hands the final decision now lies. As soon as Mr. Raikes notifies the S.M.C. of his decision, students will be informed.

A few interesting facts emerging from the questionaire are:—

The longer a student stays at the Medical School the more he spends in the tearoom. Some final years spend over £1 per week whereas the average figure for the Second Year Students is less than 2/-.

The older students are almost 95% in favour of the S.M.C. taking over the tearoom; the Second Years voted about 50% for and 50% against.

The turnover in teas alone is about 600% greater than that of Milner Park.

A system of coupons at reduced prices is almost unanimously advocated.

The following reply received is illuminating:—

Q.—"How much do you spend per week?"

A.—"Sixpence."

Q.—"Are you satisfied with the food?" "No."

"Prices?" "No."

"Service?" "No."

"Lunches?" "No."

Q.—"Have you any suggestions for improvement?"

A.—"The quality and quantity of the food should be improved, the price lowered, etc."

D. L. OVEDOFF,
Chairman Tearoom Commission.

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Copies of notes on a large variety of subjects are obtainable at the S.M.C. office, as well as copies of past examination papers which have been bound together for each year.

ABOVE ALL REMEMBER that the Supply Association has been instituted solely for your benefit, and is not a profit-making concern.

HERALDRY

(At a recent meeting of the S.R.C. it was agreed to create a special badge for Council members in token of services rendered. The S.R.C. must pride itself on its continence, for it has not followed the precedent set by a former President of the S.R.C., who awarded himself a Full Blue!)

1.

My name is A. S. D'Arcy,
Numbah one of the Uppah Three!
I've slaved like a Turk
To accomplish the work,—
The work of the S.R.C.!

2.

I'm a downright upright lad;
I've never yet stooped, by Gad!
I'm like that old geyser,
Julius Caesar,
And I always play the game, you cad!

3.

I've done all my work gratis, free!
Yet I still wear the same Battersby;
When you hear someone bellow:
"He's a jolly fine fellow!"
The jolly fine fellow is me!

4.

It really ain't the least bit true
That I'd like to wear a jolly full blue.
But my noble tradition
Demands an addition
To my nondescript *surtout*.

5.

A badge is all I need
To satisfy my greed.
Like many a chappy
I'd be most unhappy
Were the plebs to mistake my breed.

6.

For I'm Algernon S. D'Arcy,
Numbah One of the Uppah Three!
I need hardly say more
To distinguish me—for
I'm a membah of the S.R.C.

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S.M.C. Sub - Committee Reports.

1. Minutes of the S.P.C.M.

(Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to the Micro-Organism.)

Mr. Hepplethwaite Boodle, in the chair, opened the proceedings of the Society with a short introductory speech, in which he stressed the importance of re-organisation in the society. "This year," he said, "has taxed our resources to the utmost. The Pathogenic Micro-organism has suffered untold cruelties, and in many cases we have had to stand aghast and helpless. To mention only one instance, the recent outbreak of smallpox resulted in a relentless destruction of the organisms responsible. Vaccination"—the speaker was seen to shudder—"gave no chance to the organism; the minute being, attacked on every side, turned away from all possible means of refuge, hapless and alone—died. Gentlemen, this terrible state of affairs strikes at the very heart of our dearest principles. We must exert ourselves trebly to prevent the recurrence of such a disastrous state of affairs. Who is there among you"—the speaker's voice trembled, the pathos in his tones was exemplary— "who was not prostrated with grief at the terrible persecution meted out to the diphtheria bacillus, the tetanus bacillus, and many others? They were mown down in millions—I repeat, in millions. The position, gentlemen, is extremely grave; re-organisation is essential." (Loud applause.)

The Treasurer, Mr. Abcudnezzer Doodle, then read out the Financial Report. Among other items, the sum of £1,000/10/4 expended on combating vaccination, aroused much astonishment. Mr. Doodle explained that the 4d. was a tip made by one of the members to a Nature Curer's son, to express his gratitude for the latter's encouraging assistance. Ninety pounds and ten shillings represented the expenditure of stamps for letters to the "Reader's Column" in several newspapers.

Mr. Momsias Foodle, speaking from the floor, declared himself wholly in favour of a more efficient organisation. The virus of the common cold, he said with emphasis, which for so long had remained unmolested, was in great danger of being discovered and ill-treated. This information he had directly from several individuals who were not aware of his connection with the Society. The position, continued Mr. Foodle, was bad enough when larger pathogenic micro-organisms were attacked wantonly and unprovacatively, but the horrible persecution of the ultra-microscopic virus which he envisualised, must be stopped, and for this purpose the entire resources of the Society must be put into immediate action. (Loud applause.) It was agreed that a strong note be sent to the Medicine Department.

Deploring the unsympathetic attitude of a large proportion of the community to the Society's ideals, Mr. Horatio Poodle suggested that the only means by which their long-established society could gain impetus and a permanent foundation was recognition by the Government and, if possible, a Member in Parliament. In this way, declared Mr. Foodle, their high and praiseworthy aims would strike at the heart of every sympathetic man and woman in the country. No one, he felt sure, could deny the claims of each micro-organism to life and safe refuge. (Two dissenters.)

General Fitz-Noodle, seconded by the Hon. Ritz-Toodle, proposed that a deputation be sent to the Minister of Health and the Medical Staff of the Fever Hospital, requesting an immediate suspension of the vaccination campaign against smallpox and the immunisation against diphtheria respectively, pending further detailed inquiries. The General stated that he himself had been neither vaccinated, nor immunised against diphtheria; even as an infant it had been obvious to his parents that his moral code would not allow him to be associated with the terrible (and primitive) practice of refusing harbour and refuge to any micro-organism which pathetically knocked at his door. The General insisted upon making it clear that he had been one of the greatest benefactors to the dumb and helpless pathogenic micro-organism. In proof of this

(Coninued at foot of next column.)

INSPIRED BY THE RECENT CLINICAL ANATOMY EXAMINATIONS.

They say that the mind is a complex, inexplicable instrument, attuned, adjusted, balanced; they tell you the body is a beautifully harmonious machine, and that the tremendous forces of the Universe blend body and mind into a co-ordination unknown and unappreciated by men of science. But, by all the gods, there is no balance and no harmony in the few minutes before you go in for a viva. If you stop to think while you are waiting thus, you must be thunderstruck by the chaos of your being. Your mind is thrust into a narrow channel, panting, exhausted, like a highly-strung stag facing the hunter's gun, alert to the most trivial sound and thought, but completely blank of necessary and vital ideas; the lower brain controls your stock movements, you can see, hear, taste, feel, reflexes are perfect, but the cortex is a sluggish stream, thick and sticky, mere organic matter. You can almost feel adrenalin circulating in your blood, increasing muscle-tonicity, raising blood-pressure, accelerating your heart. You are, so to speak, blind to all extraneous influences; your focus of vision is on that door which opens periodically and admits a figure which says with horrible inscrutability, "Mr. S—— next, please, Mr. F—— next, please."

And when, finally, you are called in, and the examiner confronts you, completely unperturbed, while you own heart is fluttering like a wounded bird's and you begin to see black spots in front of your eyes, a sudden fatalistic attitude envelops you, and you become calm, well aware that the next few minutes might spell success or failure. You accompany the examiner to the first specimen; he says indifferently, "Show me the ilio-femoral ligament"; you promptly place your finger on the pubo-capsular ligament; he says, "What is the importance of the ilio-femoral ligament?"; you reply "Prevents over-flexion"; he says, "Are you sure?" you hesitate and all is lost. You pass on to the next specimen, once again with a fluttering heart, a lump in your throat, and a consciousness of having made some awful mistake, which now is beyond remedying. And so that heartbreaking procession continues from specimen to specimen, and for every one correct answer, you make ten mistakes—mistakes which, a few days ago, you would have thought beyond the inanity of any average medical student. You realise in a dim way that the examiner is looking at you queerly; all is tragedy, the world is covered in a curtain of mourning.

At last all is over; the examiner pats you on the back and says, with obviously forced cheerfulness, "All right, my boy," and in a haze of self-pity and self-condemnation, you make your exit from that fatal room. Failure! It stares you in the face, mocking you, grinning at you; every cell in your body shrieks "Failure!" The questions of your fellow-students fall on deaf ears. Your brain has room only for the one devastating thought, failure.

Can you understand now what I meant when I said, "thunderstruck by the chaos of your being?" You cannot think logically and reasonably in a viva when five minutes before your mind and body were passing through a most complex series of chemical changes and interchanges; you cannot answer questions when you are in a sort of psychic state of encephalitis lethargica; you cannot concentrate with all your powers when your body has ony time to cope with the suddenly-only time to cope with the suddenly-arisen problems of alkalosis, increased blood-pressure, and kidney-excretory functions.

This article contains a heart-felt appeal which it is needless to put into so many words.

M. GOLDBERG.

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statement, he produced certificates demonstrating that beneath his banner the Diphtheria Bacillus, the despised Neisseria family, the Anthrax Bacillus, and the Treponema pallidum, to mention only a few, had found for a time, at least, a safe and happy home. He was still carrying on the good work by registering himself as a carrier, a tradition which few people had the courage to admit in this world of apathy and superstition. The meeting was much moved by these words of the General, and the Chairman called for a vote of confidence, which was granted.

The meeting concluded with a rendering of the Society's anthem, "God Help the Micro-organism."

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