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THE AURICLE

PUBLISHED BY THE STUDENTS' MEDICAL COUNCIL

JUNE, 1935

EDITORIAL

The first issue of the *Auricle* introduces a new and, we trust, welcome innovation in the Medical School.

The Leech up till now has catered for both the light and the more serious sides of a medical school magazine, but recently it was felt that for *The Leech* to be a paper worth keeping for its academic value, the lighter material would have to be cut down. The May publication of *The Leech* emerged in a completely new form, *i.e.* as a scientific journal comparing favourably with similar productions of other medical schools. The S.M.C., realising that such a scientific journal, excellent in itself, does not cater for other activities in the Medical School, has decided to supplement this deficiency through *The Auricle*. *The Auricle* is aiming at keeping the students in touch with what is happening at the Medical School at the time of publication. The activities of medical students in all spheres will be chronicled in our columns.

To prevent *The Auricle* from becoming merely a report on activities, there will appear articles of a light and humorous nature, and we shall attempt to relieve the entison of the serious side of clinical work.

The last few years has seen a very perceptible increase in the interest shown by medical students in activities not directly connected with their medical and clinical work. Students are beginning to realise that a general education is as valuable and as indispensable astheir clinical training, and various societies, such as the Bantu Studies, the Biometrical and the Anatomical Societies, have been created to satisfy an urgent want in the Medical School. The medical man should have as wide an outlook as possible, and we hope to further foster any attempts to widen the interests of our student body.

The Auricle is in reality part of *The Leech*, but as *The Leech* is only published twice a year it tends to lose contact with the student—*The Auricle* will appear monthly and we trust that it will meet with your support. *The Auricle* is your mouthpiece and through it you will be enabled to voice your criticisms of the curriculum, institutions and organisation of the School and Hospital. The S.M.C. which is representative of the Student Body at the Medical School will not hesitate to act on any helpful suggestions in the interests of the majority at the School.

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AN ORGANIC FANTASIA.

I was comfortably seated in my swatting chair, soft music came to me from a distant wireless set, while I struggled, somewhat somnolently, and post-prandially, with the elements of cardiac arrhythmias.

Suddenly I found myself in pitch darkness, I was entirely in a watery medium. "Shades of Hysteron!" Was I still a foetus? A hurried examination reassured me—I had no funis. "Poor fish," you may mutter, but my neck was perfectly human. Then stumbling forward, I was alarmed to feel my eyeballs jerk; with the following footsteps, parts of one side of my face twitched; then my throat, my tongue and neck, and lastly my heart began to palpitate. It was then that I heard an indignant voice demand what the devil I meant by tramping all over my vital centres. Slowly it dawned on me that I had been stumbling over my own fourth ventricle; and in the darkness I could just discern a queer looking fellow who introduced himself as Chief X Cyton.

There is no need to dwell on the heated argument that ensued, how I pointed out that I would as lief be out of the place as in it; but eventually he suggested some diversion to keep me occupied and in a safe place, so that I would not stumble into the delicate workings about me. So incarcerated in t foreign-body giant cell in a silent area, I was informed that I could while away the time listening to an organic concert.

I was just in time to see the Mitral Curtain rise. A large stage came into view, surmounted with granite-red columns of Carneae, and many stalagmitic and dolomitic outgrowths adorned the place. On the stage the Moderator Band was in attendance. Mr. His's Bundle was conducting. They were playing a waltz: one, to, three; one, two, three, the conductor tapped. I felt my heart keeping time—"Pulsus trigeminus," I muttered, "Or is it merely Sinus arrhythmia?" The music ended and I breathed with relief.

Next Einthoven gave some heart-rending records on his string galvanometer. I was all a-"flutter" as transported to the Aortic Stream I heard the murmur of the waters passing the Caverns of Valsalva. I drifted on and approaching the Pulmonary Area, heard the air rustling through the Bronchial Tree. The music stopped and the last "wave" echoed and re-echoed dwindling into the distance.

David then appeared with his "psalterium" and played a dismal dirge over the Pineal Corpus. The sad music recalled the moaning of a Sylv(i)an Aqueduct.

Mr. Malleus followed with his Tympanum and ran up and down several Scalas. The Bronchial



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Pipes poured out their sweet "musical sounds" and I heard the "cooing rhonchi" of birds. (I wondered whether I was developing Influenza.)

It was interval.

The scene then moved to the Hepatic Portal where the two cousins, Billy Rubin and Billy Verdin entertained us with some of the mathematical tit-bits of the Biliary Calculus. Vater, accompanied by Trom on his Bone, gave some melancholy spasms on his Ampulla. This was followed by Hesselbach who played that excellent ditty "You're a Cuss," on his Triangle.

Then Hilton, of the White Line, whilst sailing across the rocky Anal Canal, rendered "Fragrant Boborygmi" con moto. This item did not appeal to me, and I determined to take some calomel as soon as possible.

Miss Polar Negri-Body then obliged with a hot "sonorta" on the Horn of Amonis. This piece gave me a great shock.—Had I rabies too?

Whilst ruminating over gall-stones, calomel and rabies, I did not notice that the stage had been cleared and that a very slim young lady was dancing. I looked at my programme and—"Good Heavens!"—read:

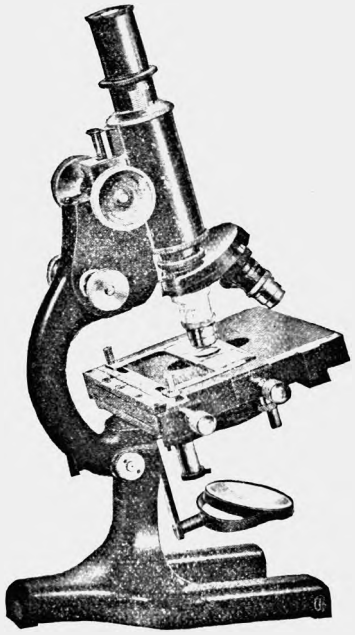
"Donna Spirochaeta Pallida, the famous Spanish danseuse, will dance the 'Souffle.' Donna Pallida is well known throughout the world and we are very fortunate and pleased to have enjoyed her company these many months. The music, 'Love Lyrics,' by Ducrey, will be played by Herr Gonococcus on the "Fallopian Tuba." My mind raced . . . Spirochaetes! Gonococcus! Souffle! Fallopian Tube! . . . when and where had I acquired all these? Who was it told me, I am an hermaphrodite! ! ! I began to shout . . . A firm hand grasped my shoulder and shook me . . . "Wake up, you fool," I heard my brother exclaim.

There is no need for further explanation; I just continued trying to master the elements of cardiac arrhythmias . . .

BIOMETRICAL CIRCLE.

This is the new name by which we choose to be known, for it has generally been recognised to be more representative of the objects of the Circle than the previous one of "Mathematical Circle." We have not received the support from the student body which our fellow societies may justly be proud of. But our significance depends entirely on the amount of biometrical work carried out in the School, and the extent to which those responsible for this work choose to use us as a medium for publishing such recorded results. Circular letters have consequently been sent to those of whose researches we are aware. Our further activities will depend entirely on the replies we receive, for we merely serve to supply a hypothetical demand. In the event of there proving to be no such demand, we automatically cease to exist.

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ON PITHING FROGS.

There are certain people who ought to be shot; not common or garden shooting, but real, earnest shooting; without even the kindness of a bandage over their eyes. I refer to those people who can pith a frog in about three and a half seconds—without any trouble, without any soliloquising, without any fuss.

I have studied the slaying of frogs in all its forms under the various masters of the art, exponents of the different schools of thought. I have followed the school which prefers a blunt needle with a distal convexity; I have, at various times, ardently supported the school of sharp, straight needles; the school of short sharp jabbing; the school which practices a prolonged wriggling action of the wrist. Yet this is what happens when I attempt to rid Xenopus of his life of bliss.

Having first fished in a bucket of water for sixteen minutes, in an attempt to catch one of the malignantly slippery little wretches, I prepare for the operation. My patient is carefully enshrouded from the coccygeal to the cervical region with a "frog-towel" bearing the stains of many a previous bloody encounter. My next act is to palpate for vertebra prominens. After finally deciding on the point of incision I introduce the point of a needle (previously purloined) into the skin of the frog. Assuring myself that the victim is still among those present, I now delve boldly through fascia, muscle and ligaments and present the point of the instrument at the foramen magnum. Now is the critical moment! I press boldly forward into the unknown, attempting simultaneously to execute the short, sharp jab and the prolonged wriggling movement.

The — (here follows short but lurid description) frog slides out of its wrappings, and with a brilliant back somersault, slithers along the table, coming to rest under the most inaccessible part of the recording apparatus. In retrieving the frog, I smudge the smoked drum. As it is my partner's turn to act as theatre-nurse and thus to re-smoke the drum, a flow of adrenaline manifests itself as a torrent of beautifully indiscriminate language. I sigh with admiration, return a few of the compliments and return to the work in hand.

After sundry jigglings, jabbings, pushing and rotation of the needle I am convinced that the soul of a pure frog has at last passed over (M.H.D.S.R.I.P.). I now lay the deceased on a cork board and proceed to display the tendo Achilles. I glance at the creature's head and see that it is leering at me with one eye half shut in the approved Parisian style. This is too much for me and I seek help from one of the ought-to-be-shot experts.

He approaches with a confident smile on his face and a battered needle in his hand. He waves the needle, mutters various incantations, and damned if the frog isn't stone-dead! Even the ultimate tests of eyeball-pricking and hind-limb-prodding cause no sign of life to be shown. The Killer walks grinningly away . . .

And that is why I dislike pithing experts.

—Disney.

THE DREAM.

Daylight at last on the shivering hills
Gingerly mops up the dew,
And slowly the valour that daylight instils
Is wiping that Dream from my view.

I dreamt that I was alone in the Hall
Where the corpses shrouded lie—
And I was doomed to labour alone
Among them, till I die.
And each was grey like cold wet clay,
With a grey and baleful eye.
Again and again I struggled in vain
And the years went slipping by.

And when I had failed a thousand times
And ten long years were told,
Dragging my weary limbs I crept
To the father bent and old;
Where he sat by corpse of the Princess Nchat,
Counting her hairs of gold,
My voice came broken and wistful and low
Though I tried to make it bold.

"Father Professor, with eyes of steel,
Steady and keen and wise—
You who've helped many a student to feel
With a faint glad thrill of surprise
That in spite of despair and failure dire
It is possible yet to rise
And struggle ahead through the mud and the mire
For the sake of a noble prize —"
I couldn't think of another word
But I pleaded there with my eyes.

And his calm voice said, "My words of fire
That have such bitter stings
Give you *my* goal to which to aspire,
Perfection in little things."
No more; and I bowed my head and went back,
Despairing and forlorn.
All eternity I laboured there . . .
And wearily awoke at dawn.

—Dallas.

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ON GOING INTO PRACTICE.

This being a subject of which I know absolutely nothing, I naturally feel qualified to write about it and so aid to dispel some of the popular misconceptions which, judging from the present influx into medical schools, seem to be prevalent.

There are then, two essentials for successful practice. These are:—

(1) A car, and

(2) a practice.

Contrary to the usual belief the latter is the more essential and will be dealt with first.

A practice consists in being woken up at some unearthly hour of the morning to attend to some little brat who has had an overdose of apricots (or fruit in season). For this service one gets paid—sometimes.

Practices are of various kinds. They may be large or small. A large practice consists in keeping awake day and night, having no holidays and struggling to keep the wolf from the door. A small practice consists in being called out once or twice weekly and having possibly seven and sixpence less to spend each month. Now-a-days, however, the former variety, the large practice, is almost extinct. One practitioner per street is the almost universal rule. Budding medicos must not however be discouraged, as I am informed on reliable authority that openings still exist in at least two places in the world, namely, Tristan da 'Cunha and Iceland. But again one reads in all the overseas papers that there is a depression over Iceland. So one more avenue for occupation will shortly be closed.

As to the method of obtaining a practice. You either spend a great deal of money and buy one and wish for the rest of your life, in and out of gaol, that you hadn't, or else you have inscribed a beautiful brass-plate bearing your name and title. This is then put up in the district of your choice and you simply "squat." This you also wish you hadn't done. Don't worry though. Your plate will not pass unnoticed. Numerous beggars, charity-collectors, and similar fungi will descend on you in the mistaken belief that since you are a healer of the sick you must necessarily be weighed down with a cross of gold. Probably, also, a few old chronics will visit you with an air of "This one can't be worse than the other one anyhow." Having successfully failed to cure these, they will advertise your imperfections in all the local bars and then even the beggars will not deign to darken your doorstep. The correct procedure in such cases is to take up some more lucrative but less respectable profession, such as a barman, and keep your medicine as a sideline for the unwary.

Once you have settled down in a district, whether you are successful or not, you are expected to possess a car. It is unthinkable that you should do without such a vehicle. Mrs. Smith wouldn't speak to Mrs. Brown if she knew her doctor walked. So, in spite of impending insolvency, you invest in a car. A word to the uninitiated here would not be amiss. By ancient decree the car purchased should be of the most opulent looking kind.

This has two advantages:—

(1) It enables you to look prosperous and capable. This is a great advantage.

(2) It conveys you to your patient. This is not such a great advantage as it frequently implies some pecuniary loss.

However, once you have bought such a car you will be a splendid doctor.

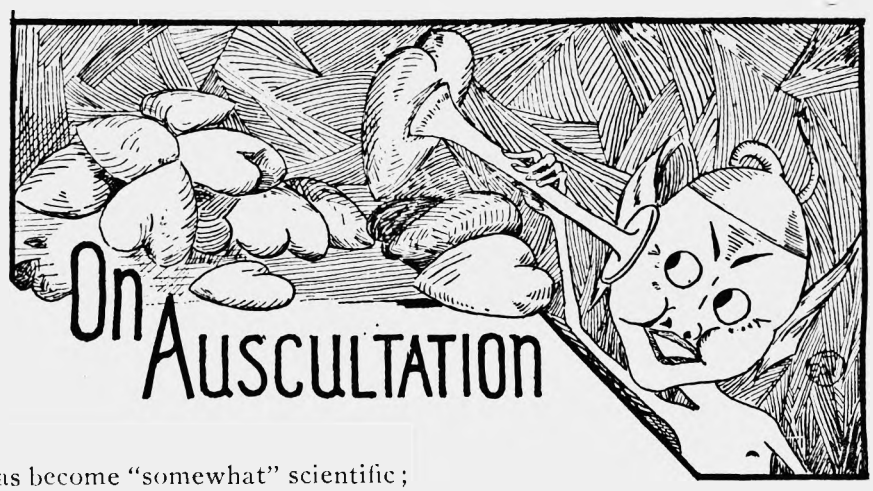
In addition to the above obstacles to a carefree life, several commandments have been evolved by the doctor-going public. These are as follows:

1. Thou shalt take unto thyself a spouse.
2. Thou shalt not imbibe of the products of Bacchus.
3. Thou shalt not cast eyes at thy neighbour's wife, nor indulge in promiscuous flirtation with his young and beautiful daughter.
4. Thou shalt be ready and willing at all times, regardless of your own convenience, health or wishes, to attend whosoever calleth immediately.
5. Thou shalt not expect reward for thine services.

So who would be a doctor? The life is hard, the pleasure slight, but the service great. You and I. —B.J.P.

THE PATIENT'S POINT OF VIEW.

I feel so ill to-night. What does the doctor
Want to know? What kind of pain it is?
A sudden, stabbing agony (with care,
I beg you, touch the part) which God knows
how
I'll bear it out; and paralysed by fear
Of movement, lest the pain gets worse, I lie
Here stiff and sweat . . . What does he mean,
acute
Abdomen? Must these people crowd around
And each in turn palpate my tummy? Gently,
Gently, stay your hands! Have none of you
Some understanding? Why do you chatter
amongst
Yourselves, and not a word of sympathy
For me, or promise of some relief? Relief
I pray you! Differential diagnosis . . .
Have you decided now? Does't matter what
You think the cause if only you can stop
The pain!
Ah, doctor, you are kind at last.
I shall not mind the operation, but then,
Be careful how you move me up into
That awesome theatre.
Deep breaths . . . My head begins
To sing and blackness swims, around.
I'm suffocating . . . blackness . . . blackness
. . . Black. —A.K.



We find:

THAT *The Leech* has become "somewhat" scientific; we hope that science students will benefit by this change.

THAT Prof. Stammers is close runner-up to Prof. Dart as regards the number of scientific publications.

THAT a more satisfactory way of estimating the intelligence of individuals is by determining the gonad-cranial capacity ratio.

THAT according to a certain article in *The Leech* the more interesting aspects of the sexual function is somewhat irrelevant to the sexual cycle.

THAT chess in the Medical School is being classed among the dangerous sports, and

THAT the temper of a red-headed individual needs to be tempered and

THAT a chess piece has been proved capable of producing a lacerated scalp wound.

THAT the music concert was a brilliant success and it appears that students will readily support such functions at the School.

THAT the Dean has lots of pluck.

THAT The "Four Pills Brothers" were a tonic.

THAT The appointment of 4th year students as assistant housemen is a very welcome innovation.

THAT a certain member of the swimming team returned from Cape Town humming a popular tune from that musical revue *Rose Marie*.

THAT one of our intending Parliamentarians was somewhat annoyed at being "done out" of a holiday at Cape Town.

THAT we are sure our elected "Parliamentarians" will enjoy theirs.

THAT it is about time our playing at Parliaments was abolished and that some intelligent person devised some more valuable substitute for the expenditure of superfluous energy.

THAT the vice-presidential address was a very popular meeting.

THAT we welcome our long-delayed crest, but that most students do not understand what it symbolises.

A RHAPSODY IN BILE.

There's a feeling positive,
  Rife throughout the School,
That a feeling negative
  Is a useful tool
For taking holidays,
  Weeks before the vac;
Just say: "I'm a little negative,"
  If energy you lack.

If like certain cells,
  Your power fluctuates,
Negative plus periods
  With minus negative states,
All in one great cycle,
  Like a rhapsody in bile,
Positively negative,
  Just like oestrus; there's the guile.

—J.S.W.S.J.L.

THE NUCLEUS OF THE MED. SCHOOL
MRS. MAGEE'S LOUNGE

BOARD-ROOM CHATTER.

Finance—

Unfortunately we have been forced to realise that £ s. d. is the backbone of a comfortable existence.

As a result the Finance Committee have become what several students have termed "a conservative, dictatorial, autocratic and pig-headed" group of intolerant wizards.

We hear that these same wizards came off second best with the wizards of the S.R.C.

But even they have been stunned by the recent uncontrollable burst of *The Leech* whose activities have been just too . . . too . . . !

Supply Association—

We think that it is high time that every medical student took advantage of this new birth in our midst. That microscopes are a touchy point with members of this Committee, but students must realise the difficulties in our way.

That £1,400 turnover is an indication of the need of such an Association.

Common Rooms—

For the first time in many years this Committee has had regular meetings. That the women students, after many years of pestering, are to be blessed(?) with the addition of a 6ft. reflector. We trust that this innovation will assist them in pulling up their socks.

We hope, on the other hand, that our men students are finding sufficient grazing in their stable, and that the women are fortunate in having a partition between the two stalls. That the Principal's munificence will probably result in our corridors being decorated with olive green lockers.

Entertainments—

That some bumptious individuals in the School have levelled criticism at this Committee without having the slightest knowledge of its function, nor attending its functions.

The Musical and Social Club will, we hope, shortly be incorporated within the scope of the Entertainments Committee.

The Medical Ball, always a loose affair, will be coming off on 27th June.

All are expected to be present.

We hope nobody will be bawd.

Firm Representatives—

This Committee is running very smoothly, probably owing to lack of interest of members.

The Leech—

Severe criticism has recently been levelled at *The Leech*. The Council has requested criticisms, for such are wasted in corridors, common-rooms, and other student quarters.

General—

Thanks are due to "The Grand Old Man of the Medical School" for presenting us with his Buchner Grand.

Dr. Duthie, Post-Graduate and an Honorary Vice-President of our Council, has been kind enough to offer a prize of books for the best essay submitted by a student on a subject of medical interest. For further details keep your eye on your notice boards.

In conclusion, we wish this new venture *bon voyage*.

Here endeth your first sermon.

BORBORYGMI.

Heard at the Queen Vic.

Nurse: They found a newly-born babe in one of the bioscopes, abandoned by its mother.

Student: Was it before or after the "show"?

Student: Did you hear of the baby that was born with two broken wrists?

Nurse: No.

Student: Yes. It was trying to hang on until after the wedding.

Winter Showers
Summer vest;
No flowers
By request.

Heard at O.P.D.

"How many children have you?"

"Nine, but four died.'

"What did they die of?"

"One died of flu, another died of fits; one's blood turned to water, and one had no back passage."

A completed "Kids" outpatient's card read as follows:—

Complaint: Blood and mucus in stools.
Diarrhoea.

Treatment: Send to W.C.

(On making anxious enquiries into this highly original line of treatment, we learn, with relief to our wounded professional dignity, that W.C. = Welfare Clinic.)

COMING EVENTS.

June 17th, Tuesday, 5 p.m.—Society for the Study of Conditions among the Bantu will hold a Symposium on "Diet on the Mines," by Bernstein and White.

June 27th, Thursday, 8.30 p.m.—**Student's Medical Ball,** Wanderers Hall.

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AND YOU WILL WIN THROUGH | EN JY SAL DEURBREEK

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