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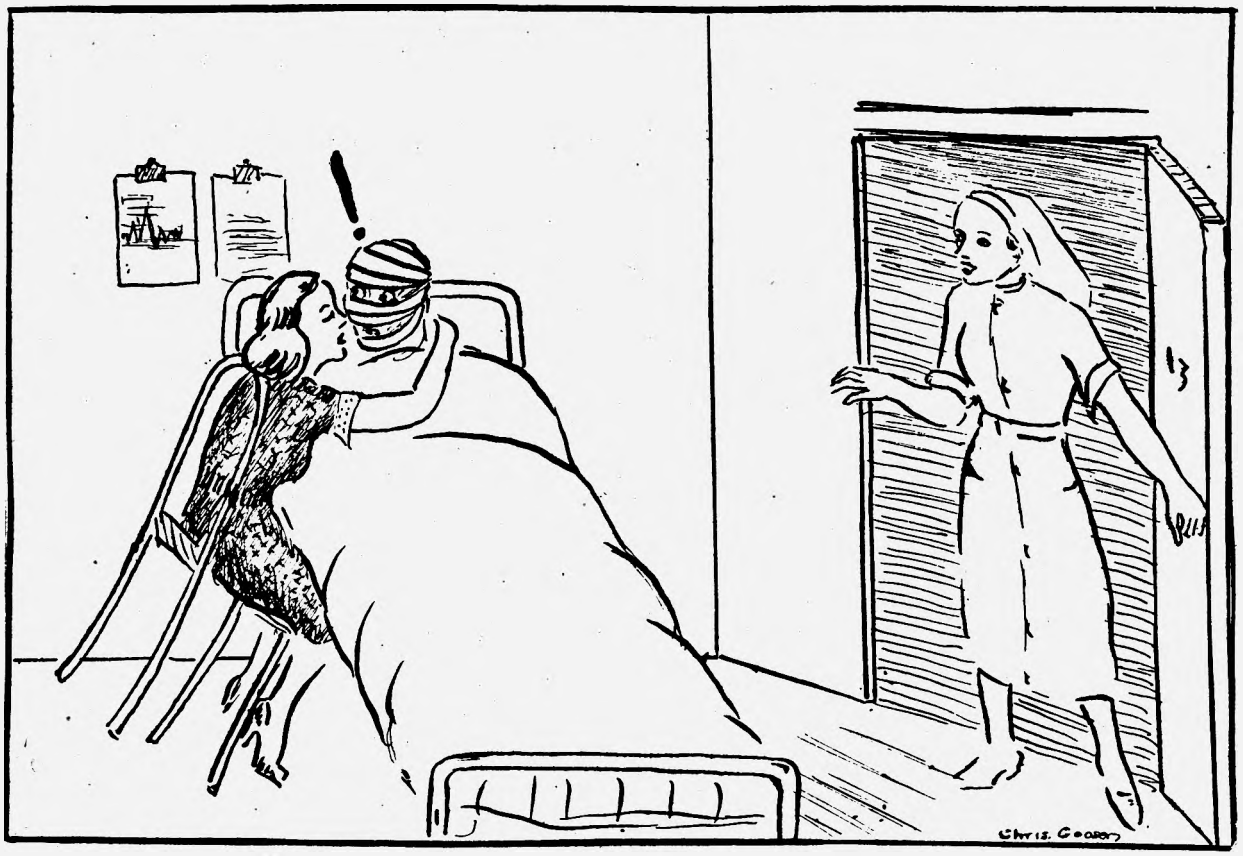
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The AURICLE

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

VOL. 5 August, 1939 No. 6



Sister: "Excuse me madam — but your husband is in ward number 12"

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EDITORIAL OPINION—

THOUGHTS AFTER N.U.S.A.S.

The conference held at Pietermaritzburg during the first week of the winter vacation was a success —from certain points of view.

Those students who were present learned much from all papers presented, and the discussions that followed them. They did not, as certain newspapers would have it, "attempt to set the world to rights," but successfully tried to learn something of the application of their various subjects to present-day affairs. **In a world such as we live in, indisputably at the cross-roads of civilisation and barbarism, the universities of the earth have no mean role to play in the maintenance of social progress.** The Medical Student should see in his profession not a mere passport to a livelihood, but a tremendous science which has emerged from the melting-pot of mysticism, magic and myth into a force replete with promise, incalculable in its influence on human behaviour; the Philosophy student should be able to assess the significance of the tides of reactionary idealism which are sweeping the world to-day; the student of History must place in their correct perspective the events of recent yesterdays and fluctuating to-days.

The social side of the Conference was a great success—the manner in which people of different universities came to know one another, especially those of opposite sexes, was most gratifying. When one comes to consider it, the social aspects of N.U.S.A.S. assumes great importace. Getting to know someone outside one's own sphere, is, to us, knowledge gained.

In a country such as ours, where the various centres are hundreds, if not thousands, of miles apart, people tend to become isolated from one another, to reach perhaps a too individualistic state of mind, and this is disastrous in the extreme. It was strikingly apparent at the Pietermaritzburg conferences, for example, that each of the Universities present had its own point of view as a group. This we should never have known, but for the N.U.S.A.S. conference, and during the all too short week that it lasted, much modification of views was brought about, the most valuable discovery being that a man may be a communist, and yet be good company, even to an imperialist.

It is this personal contact which goes much further than any discussion in modifying points of view, and bringing about a better understanding of the exponent of an idea, if not of the idea itself Students' conferences should never be allowed to deteriorate into dry-as-dust meetings, concerned merely with University politic, or reactions of University men and women to world affairs; read as set subjects from a previously prepared paper these items become abstract thoughts to an audience, who perceive nothing of the personality of the reader, his sincerity (however earnest he may be), or the eagerness with which he is attempting to deliver an idea of first import to him. But when, over a convivial cup of coffee or glass of ale, this same reader propounds his views, they immediately assume personal force and directness. "This man" say his companions to themselves, "is not trying to impress us with the brilliance of an address which he has compiled months back; he honestly believes what he says," and forthwith they listen with more closeness; an argument over a nice point crops up, and after several hours (and glasses of beer) a dielectical conclusion is reached—and the result is progress.

So far, N.U.S.A.S. is a success—but no further. The understandings it has brought about are between groups sympathetic to one another. **Only a very small proportion of the "Anti-pathetic Group" was represented—and here N.U.S.A.S. failed.**

To our minds, the prime function of N.U.S.A.S. is to bring together representatives of **all** the students in this country, and this it does not do. The N.U.S.A.S. as a mechanism for social reform is a child's toy, and can achieve next to nothing. **But as a mechanism for bringing together all groups of student opinion, that they might know one another better, it has great possibilities. Any means would justify this end, even, if necessary, the abandonment of the N.U.S.A.S. programme, and the reformation of a Student Parliament.**

It is obvious that a certain amount of argument and strife would result in such a parliament, but would it not be better so?

(Continued on next Page)

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MONTHLY COMMENT.

THE EAR 'EARS

That:—

N.U.S.A.S. was an unqualified success, except in one direction, as mentioned in the Editorial.

Despite black clouds of depression over the world, South African students are still as boisterous and optimistic as ever.

This was evidenced by the prodigious amount of singing, laughing and general "don't-care-a-hang" attitude at N.U.S.A.S.

Now that the July vacation is well behind us, students may consider doing some work for the Finals.

Nobody really considers this.

The All-Sports Committee has drawn up a very extensive programme for the next few months.

This same Committee is to be congratulated on the efficient manner in which they have carried out their duties.

Certain local newspapers seem to have been rather late in mentioning the retirement of Professor Levin and Professor Gordon Grant from the academic staff of the Medical School.

The University was greatly perturbed at the mishap to three prominent Rand professors in the National Park.

The elephant responsible stood fifteen feet high, six feet across and had tusks ten feet in length.

The last issue of the "Auricle" (the Crazy Edition) was received with much acclaim and enthusiasm, both at the Medical School and at Milner Park.

First Year Medical Students appear to be an apathetic crew, in every respect.

Apathy in contributing articles has been responsible for the late appearance of the "Auricle" each month.

Your report is our support—contribute to the "Auricle."

(Continued from previous Page)

At present, the two bodies of student opinion are like motor cars travelling towards one another at night—with their lights out.

Would it not be better to turn on the lights, and attempt to avoid the otherwise inevitable crash?

POYM

Each night I sit and think,
And think—
Of what I might have been
And what I am.
My genes are moulded strangely,
My chromosomes arranged strangely,
All sorts of things are strangely Arranged.
When the moon is high above,
And the stars are light of love
(That phrase is not so bad
Even for poetry, altho' it doesn't scan)
I think to myself,
—Maybe I should have been Casanova—
For there's fire in my eyes,
And passion in them thar hills.
But then I think again—
A pompous mining magnate,
Sitting in rheumy rumination—
Thar's gold in them thar hills.
And then I'd be a Casanova.
Then my strong-boned limbs
Speak up and say,
Rats!
You should have been an athlete
To pound the striving sand
Like Victor Turnbull,
While all the girls say
Cor! Don't he run like hell.
I'd still be Casanova.
Yet once again from heights supreme
My mind looks down,
My all-consuming, canny mind,
(You didn't know I was
A brainy bloke)
And urges me ever on
To studious ways,
So I think of studies
And mouldy exams.
And more exams.
Till I rebel
At all the vain futility
Of learning.
Then my larynx
In full and bright desire
Contracts with singing fire
And I know
I'm borne to be a Caruso,
Or a Tauber
Or a Crooks
Or a crook.
On second thoughts
I don't think
I think.

M.G.

IMPOSSIBLE PEOPLE.

The student who said "Gum Arabic" was the Arabic spoken by toothless Arabs.

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GEBOORTE - BEPERKING

Die Redakteur, Waarde Heer—

Die studente van die Mediese Skool stel dit hoog op prys dat Mev. Farrell ons kom toespreek het oor 'n onderwerp wat enige goeie, karaktervaste, jong, ongetroude man—as hy nie 'n mediese student is nie—volgens ons huidige maatskaplike opvattings verondersteld word om niks van te weet nie. Die brief, egter, wat sy aan die „Auricle" geskrywe het, lok baie argumente uit.

Ten eerste, moet die geagte skryfster nie vergeet om te onderskei tussen, byvoorbeeld, 'n tweedeen 'n sesdejaar-student nie. In haar brief skeer sy ons almal onder dieselfde kam. Tog snaaks hoe dat die naam „Mediese Student" mense betower! As jy eenmaal oor die Mediese Skool se drempel gestap het, dan moet jy anders wees as ander mense! Mev. Farrell moet tog wel besef dat ses jaar se studie baie groter veranderinge in ons opvattings omtrent geslagsverhoudinge sal bring as byvoorbeeld een jaar se studie.

Tereg erken sy dat so 'n Student heel moontlik net gekortwiek is deur sy studies. Ek stem saam met haar. Sy studies staan hom nie direk in die weg nie, net ondersom, maar dink net aan al die aande wanneer die student in sy kamer gebukkend moet sit oor sy boeke terwyl ander jongkêrels in die geselskap van dames verkeer en praktiese ondervinding omtrent geslagsverhoudings kan opdoen.

Vir enige student bokant die vierde jaar was daar natuurlik niks nuuts in Mev. Farrell se lesing nie. Al die metodes vir geboortebeperking wat sy opgenoem het, word in Professor Watt se aanteekninge beskrywe.

Ten twede moet daarop gewys word dat daar die aand 'n aantal ander studente teenwoordig was was nie medisyne bestudeer nie.

Die spreekster het die aand met die oortuiging hierheen gekom dat ons anders sou wees. Ons was dit ook. Net ons was op 'n ander manier anders.

N. KRAUSE.

ISOLATION ?

To the Editor,

Sir—During the years of my stay at the Medical School, I have kept aloof from most student activities—and now, after being a spectator for some while, I present to you some of my observations.

The first is this:—

The medicals consider themselves a tribe apart—some wish to secede from the rest of the University, and most of the rest, either from apathy or antipathy will have nothing to do with it. The average Medical, having gained some little knowledge of anatomy and physiology—knowledge which he considers "real," feels superior to the mere Arts man. Now, I ask you sir, is this truth or only rationalisation? Can it be perhaps that the Medical really feels inferior and attempts to clothe this inferiority?

The growing interest in "Cultural Activities" in the Medical School seems to support the latter theory. Evidently those Medicals who are more than mere "swotting machines" do not despise the Arts. Why, then, should they feel no kinship with those who study them?

Is it necessary that the Medical School should have its own debating, dramatic, musical, photographic and other societies?

Surely we could work quite peacefully and well together. The interests of a musically-minded Medical can be no different from those of an Arts student interested in the same thing.

In these days of Isolationism, Nationalism, and the insisting upon "rights of the group," which are splitting the world asunder, it is the work of those people who claim more knowledge than the "mob" to show the way back.

In a word, sir, I think it is our duty to bring back a union. In the old days a Medical man was an Arts student too. Nowadays, our medical work demands too much of us for this old standard to be achieved—but surely, in our extra-curricular activities we could heal this foolishly made breach, and start back a small way on the path to union with our fellow men?

"PERTINAX."

(*Continued from page 9*)

10. Imhotep, of Ancient Egypt.
11. 1388.
12. January 6th, 1725.
13. Laveran, in 1880.
14. Carbon monoxide.
15. Heart Disease.
16. Lower classes.
17. Upper classes.
18. Light.
19. No; only men and monkeys have a "yellow spot."
20. True.

LET'S GO ON—

MISCELLANEOUS MEANDERINGS

WITS GOES TO NUSAS

By our Exhausted Reporter.

The Wits. delegation crawled abroad at Johannesburg at 9.30 a.m., with the Baby. I went to sleep. Then they woke me up to have tea. Later I went to sleep—and they woke me for lunch. Later I went to sleep (for the night cometh, when no man may sleep)—and they woke me for tea.

Before dinner, the Baby was ceremoniously opened, sending up the C_2H_5OH content of the assembled company immediately. After dinner, I tried to find a bed steward; after much difficulty, I did find him, and, at eleven, I went to bed. But they didn't let me fall asleep. They

Talked
Sang
Laughed
Jumped up and down

and when anyone came into the compartment they shouted in unison "shut up! He's asleep!" At half-past two they went away, but at three they were back again because they were hungry. They went away, and came back at 3.20, because they wanted my sheets to play ghosts. At 3.30 the man in charge woke up and called everyone, telling them we were to arrive at 4.

At 5.40 we rolled into Pietermaritzburg; there was no-one to meet us, so we waited on the station till 7, then rolled off to breakfast.

If you think I got any sleep, you're mistaken.

REPRESSIONAL.

(Apologies to Kipling.)

God of our Psychoses, Disciple of Freud,
Cure for Neurosis supreme,
Sublime Sublimation, of Complex devoid,
Whom we sense in our sub-conscious dream—
Lord God of Ghosts, our Libidos bless,
Lest we repress—lest we repress.

Did Johveh with the years decay?
That fearsome, bearded God of yore,
Whom Moses walked with every day,
Has shrunk into a Psychic Law,
So, God of Ghosts, our Egos bless,
Lest we repress—lest we repress.

As ignorance in science dies,
And dogma passes out of date,
Wilt thou, O Lord, just vapourise?
You're wearing rather thin of late—
Well, ere you go, our Psyches bless,
Lest we repress—lest we repress.

GHOST STORY.

(Or the Anthropologists at Play.)

"I cannot believe," said Dr. Hezekiah, examining the skull I had just unearthed, "that the possessor of such fine teeth was ever a cannibal."

I pitched the skull back into the sand from whence it came. "All the evidence," I began, "points to the—"

"Yes, evidence," said Dr. Hezekiah, prodding the skull with his toe," that's all there is. There's no proof that—"

"Aw, nerts!" said the skull, and bit him in the leg.

ON A LECTURER.

I thought
I bore you a grudge.
But I don't know now
That I do.
It may be that
All your youth,
You were
Lectured at,
Too—.

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR (VERY!).

I
am tired.
I
don't want
to go back
and work.
I
would like
to
spend stagnant
days
and days
at the Metro,
or some
other
capitalistic palace
of illusion.
But instead
I shall do Pharm.
in
moderation,
and surgery
in
the wards
and
perhaps
I
shall come
to
eight
o'clock
lectures.
Shall
I?
I
wonder!

AN APOLOGY

The Editor, Sir,

Your last issue gave considerable prominence to recent undesirable occurrences at the Medical School—I refer to the unfortunate events which took place at the lecture given by Mrs. Farrell towards the conclusion of the last term. I feel that an apology from me, as the proposer of the vote of thanks is long overdue. The lecturer's complaint about the treatment meeted out to her has certainly every justification and the apology should have been offered directly, in the vote of thanks. I very much regret that I did not then rise to the occasion. I missed an excellent opportunity of saving the situation; instead I blundered like the rest.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing publicly what I have already done in private, viz., my profound regret at what happened, and especially, my personal part therein, and I beg to state that Mrs. Farrell has been kind enough to accept my apology. I only hope that my fellow students will be equally magnanimous.

SAM KAGAN

(Continued from page 7)

17. In which social class does diabetes have the highest mortality—upper or lower?
18. The amoeba shows a primitive sensibility to one of the following: Light, magnetism, gravity.
19. Is this statement true? All mammals have a "yellow spot on the retina"
20. Is this statement true or false? Hypnotism can produce, by pure suggestion, an area of hyperaesthesia over a certain spot, and an area of complete anaesthesia over another spot, while blindness of both eyes or paralysis of a limb can also be suggested and accepted without question by the hypnotised subject.

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A STORY OF A STRANGE POSSIBILITY.

ELIXIR OF LIFE

The Graham's party was in full swing, and the guests were making the most of the last hour left to them, till both the dancers and the band were too exhausted to continue. With many a sigh of relief the guests flopped down into the comfortable armchairs, while Harold Graham handed round the drinks, and soon a silence prevailed, the blue smoke of the cigars slowly twisting round and round towards the light.

Graham turned towards one of his guests, and offering him another drink, said, "Well, Major Andrews what about a story? Something good, you know. One of your own experiences in the Orient." Major Andrews lit a cigarette and nodded.

"I loved India ever since I was a child. It used to fascinate me and whenever I had the chance to read, a travel book on this country was what I chose. In college they called me Indian, but I was determined to visit the place of my dreams during my lifetime. It was with a passionate love of youth that I loved India. To me it stood for the true East, the mystic, enchanting East, something beautiful and fascinating. It's hard to express in actual words. I often intended to compose some music to the lure of—My Country. Anyhow, to cut a long story short, after two years of military training at the college, I was sent to India. My joy knew no bounds, and soon, to me, I was in the midst of very India.

"How throbbing it was! How I enjoyed watching the millions of people, the poor and rich, the scorned and reputed, surging on to serve their own faith, loyally and kindly. Whenever I had the chance I visited the old tombs with which India abounds. It was on one of these that I discovered a stone, on which was written in some strange dialect, the exploits of the heroes of old. I was determined to learn this particular language, and it was my luck to discover an old fakir, who professed to know this dead language. Within three months I was sufficiently versed in the language to read and learn what was on the stone.

"On it was how Mahooa, a respected and awe-held hero obtained perpetual life. I laughed at the idea of this ever-sought after dream coming true, but as time hung heavily on me, I decided to compose the mixture for the elixir of life. I had to boil a whole lot of herbs, some being scarce and rare, to get the final mixture. However, I was going to send it to a friend of mine to get it analysed before I drunk it. It was at that time that trouble broke out among the tribes of Salue, and I was away for six months.

"I came back one evening, dog tired and with the idea of a well-earned rest in my mind, I entered my bungalow. I opened my bathroom closet, and it struck me that something was missing. It was my bottle of 'everlasting life,' to call it something. I asked my boy where it was, and was told that my friend, the chemist, had taken it. Knowing how keen he was on these sort of things, I dismissed the thought, and decided to see my friend the next day.

"It was on a Friday that I visited him, Friday the thirteenth, nineteen hundred and six. It was one of those oppressive, sultry days, and without knocking I entered, as was my custom. I called out for him and receiving no answer, I assumed he was in the laboratory which was in the yard.

"He was there. But not the same person. God! His face, his face. It was devoid of sense. Brutish, horrible! Oh God! that vacant stare, that expressionless something."

He stopped there, and a silence, a deathly silence prevailed.

"What happened to him?" asked Graham.

"He's in a mental asylum. He's a hundred and four!"

R.L.G.

APOLOGY.

Owing to unforseen circumstances, the "Local Letter" and "Sports Column" has been omitted from this issue, but will appear as usual in September.

ALAS, FOR NIETSCHE

Alas, for Nietsche—he lived and died too early—his search for the superman was unsuccessful. Zarathustra was a poor sort of superman compared to some people that I know—he lived in a cave for years and meditated—and what did he achieve? Next to nothing.

Now, Nusas was a different matter. The delegates lived at Pietermaritzburg for a week—and meditated—and Pietermaritzburg hasn't recovered yet.

One of the first qualifications necessary, it seems, for Nusas, is that the delegate must be able to do without sleep for long periods—very long periods. He must listen intelligently to 3 or 4 complicated papers a day, and then discuss them at length. Then, he must be able to clear the fogs of his deliberations from his (or her) mind at a moment's notice, and go dancing, or dining— or to mayoral receptions, and also assist in the process known as "taking the town to pieces." All these things the delegate must be prepared to do some 18 hours a day, and spend the next 6 hours being woken up by more convival delegates who need no sleep at all.

Also, the delegate must have a throat of brass (non-corrosive) and the lungs of a long distance runner. His voice must have the power, range and endurance of a soapbox orator's, in order that he may shout war-cries, sing and otherwise disturb the the sleep of anyone, within a half-mile radius. This powerful voice, too, is useful in making oneself heard in the aforementioned discussions. His gastro-intestinal tract must be metal-plated to cope with the inordinate quantity of alcohol which it is deemed necessary to absorb. He must have an aquisitive nature, and be prepared to collect anything from a hurricane lamp (marked C.E.D.) to a 2½-ton steam roller as a "souvenier" (it may be of interest here, to note that some Capetown Delegates tried gallantly, after the Nusas Dinner, to take a policeman home with them as a souvenier.)

These, then, are the attributes of the Nusas delegate—Supermen?

What do you think?

MEDICAL QUESTIONAIRE

[Test your General Knowledge on these questions. 60% correct is an average mark; 80% very good; 90% excellent; and 100% means keep off swotting for a bit. Answers on page 9]

1. What is the weight of the largest existing terrestial animal ?
2. What is the weight of the smallest visible bacteria?
3. Which one of these scientists ascribed animal development to the transmisson of acquired characteristics ? Darwin, Lamarck, Russel Wallace, Huxley, De Vries.
4. Who was the founder of the Eugenics Education Society ?
5. In which of the following countries is sterilization of the unfit a legal procedure ? England, Alberta (Canada), Sweden, Switzerland, Persia, Turkey, British Columbia, Germany, Abyssinia.
6. One of these Ancient Greeks is responsible for the proposition of an evolutionary scale —which ? Plato, Socrates, Hippocrates, Empedocles, Aristotle.
7. Which one of the following, besides being an anatomist and physioliogst, was also a physicist, author, painter, sculptor, and engineer ? Copernicus, Galileo, da Vinci, Harvey, Bacon.
8. Who was the first physican of the Dark Ages to break away from Galen's doctrines ?
9. Who founded the first systematic classification of plants ?
10. Who is the first physican of whom we have record, and where did he live ?
11. The first Sanitary Act was passed in England in one of the following years—800, 1388, 1710, 1856 ?
12. When was Guy's Hospital opened ?
13. Who discovered the plasmodium of malaria ?
14. What dangerous gas enters the system if tobacco is taken in excess ?
15. The main cause of death in England to-day is one of the following: Cancer, Tuberculosis, Heart Disease. Suicides, Old Age.
16. Does respiratory disease cause a higher death rate in the upper or the lower classes?

(Continued on page 5)

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MUSIC

Professor Kirby's lectures on music continue. The Medical School has a wonderful opportuinty of benefiting in one more direction from the excellent endeavours of Cultural Activities. For the first time in the history of the Medical School we think, an attempt has been made to arouse the interest of Medical Students into that often deplored field of "highbrow" music which, according to many suave and knowing Medical Student critics, is " just noise we can't bear. We switch on to a hot number when an old crank like what's his name—Bork or Bach, or heaven knows what, occupies a radio hour." Into this citadel of blissful ignorance Professor Kirby strides. Happy to say there are are quite a number of medicals who are really eager to hear what " this highbrow stuff is all about," and who come away humming or whistling not " Whistling in the Dark," but a theme of a symphony of " Old Papa Haydin" or a theme of one of Bach's suites, truly a sweet Bark of Bach.

Of course, the real interest of the musical hour of 4.15—5.15 p.m. on Monday's lies almost wholly in Professor Kirby's fascinating manner of putting the goods across. Professor Kirby's lectures are not academical in the sense of restricting his account purely to music. Rather does he put before his audience the historical perspective of each musical school or composer. The conventions, the tastes of the people at a given time, their social gatherings, domestic customs, personal idiosyncrasies of monarchs, dukes and other patrons of musical art, are all compounded into the life of the composer or the musical school. Added to this, the composers' fortunes, misfortunes, and his organic development out of the particular environment which moulds his music, are all woven into the professor's absorbing lecture. The records which demonstrate a given style of composition are needless to say, well chosen.

The series has continued with the entertaining use of music by Shakespeare, for effect and for eliciting additional interest in his plays by interpreting contemporary tunes and songs in his scenes. The music of the Elizabethans, the Restoration composers, the origin of opera, the miracles of Bach and Haydin were all related in the same inimitable manner so that one broke away from each lecture with a pang that the hour had passed so rapidly. The future lectures will all be no doubt of the same nature and one eagerly looks forward to an account of the contributions to music by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Wagner, and particularly the Moderns. As many students as possible should turn out to these lectures, for a knowledge of music, especially when imparted by so brilliant a lecturer as Professor Kirby, is essential to the moulding of the medical man's character. To quote Shakespeare one may aptly say:

" The man that hath of music in himself
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dark as night,
And his affections dark as Erebas:
Let no such man be trusted."

and Shakespeare meant these words to apply to music of the nature of the great " highbrows " while to the medical man their application is obvious.

Before concluding, a word of thanks to Mr. S. Kagan for the kind use of his radio-gram.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

" Compare the life of Mr. Everyman and his wife with the life of an amoeba, a life where an individual tears himself without residue or wastage into two and in which two individuals blend permanently and without reserve to form one. Consider the reconstitution of a scattered and sieved polyp, or the alternation of forms in the life-story of a liver-fluke. The world as we know it is surely strange enough to satisfy the most curious : the fabled sea-serpent and the fabled African brontosaur are banal imaginings compared with such mysteries as confront us already."

—" Science of Life."

DR. THOMAS, M.R.C.S.

When the Medical Register of Britain was first drawn up in 1858, one of the names recorded was that of Hugh Owen Thomas. He was an enthusiastic young man of twenty-four who had just returned from France, where among other things he had been interested in the surgery of the urinary bladder. He was now eager to enhance his knowledge by acquiring the F.R.C.S.Ed.

For a quarter of a century his father, Evan Thomas, had conducted an extensive practice as bone-setter among the dockyard folk of Liverpool. The father, interpreting the regus of the times provided each of his five sons with the opportunity of obtaining a registerable qualification, notwithstanding that for eight generations their ancestors had plied the craft of bone-setter. In 1860 Evan Thomas was involved in a lawsuit being charged with malpractice. The defendant not only was exonerated from blame, but his conduct was praised by the bench. To be the son of a successful interloper was no recommendation for Hugh Owen Thomas who could not hope for recognition from his professional colleagues.

At first he worked with his father, but dissension arose from similarity of temperament and from difference in age, causing the son to set up on his own in the same neighbourhood. Dr. Thomas took over his father's practice when the senior retired in 1863. H. O. Thomas was married in the following year. Notwithstanding that his work was his life, there was always part of the evening for his wife, a loving woman who felt hurt for him as he was most sensitive to kindness. After his death, his widow averred that during their married life of twenty-six years he spent but six nights away from his home. He never took a holiday.

"Thomas was a striking, if eccentric, figure, thin and pale, very small and fragile. His features were clean-cut, with a fine brow, dark grey eyes, meditative and alert, and a slight moustache and beard. His manner was quick and caustic." He entered wholeheartedly into his patients' troubles, but was cheery and ready to chat brightly.

He would set out on his rounds at six in the morning, and in the evening, after fourteen hours spent in rendering immediate succour to the sick, he would be found until midnight in his workshop, manufacturing splints or in his library, reading or writing. His hands were quick and nimble and his memory was tenacious and accurate, for there was little time to waste. His range of academic knowledge was remarkable. A precise thinker, he expressed himself concisely.

In 1875 he published privately a book "Diseases of the Hip, Knee and Ankle Joints with the deformities, treated by a new and efficient method." This received immediate attention on both sides of the Atlantic, and in Germany. "One's character is one's fate." At a time when the name of Thomas "was in men's mouths, practical surgeons were interested in his technique, and lecturers had to refer to his new ideas, even if they did not fully understand them," he declined to address, at Bath, a meeting of the British Medical Association, thereby losing a splendid opportunity "to have taught his methods and principles by personal lectures and demonstrations." Through misapplication of his methods, his precepts fell into disrepute, and it was not until after a lapse of forty years that they were again within the focus of British Medical interest.

To-day, Thomas is remembered for his systematic treatment of joint injuries and diseases, and for the splints he devised to give effect to his system which was based on the following physiological principles:

1. All tissues live and perform their functions in accordance with consistent physiological rules.
2. An "inflamed" tissue immediately ceases its normal function and no longer responds to normal reflex stimuli.
3. Recovery depends on the patient's own power to fight local diseases.
4. During "inflammation" of a tissue, the rest of the body plays an important part in defence.

His precept was immediate and absolute rest to the affected bone or joint, while allowing exercise of the unaffected parts of the body. During the 1914-19 War, as the result of fixing compound fractures of the femur in the field, the mortality rate for such injuries fell from 80% to 20%. The now ubiquitous Thomas' Hip Splint was first used in 1867.

"It was Hugh Owen Thomas's great merit to have proved that a busy general practitioner can, by purely clinical methods, win for himself a permanent place among the benefactors of medicine."

D.A.

ANSWERS TO MEDICAL QUESTIONAIRE

1. The largest existing terrestial animal is, of course, the elephant which weighs 10,000,000 gms.
2. The smallest visible bacterium, which measures 0.2 microns, weighs approximately one-hundred-billionth of a milligram.
3. Lamarck.
4. Sir Francis Galton, in 1908.
5. Alberta, Switzerland, British Columbia and Germany.
6. Aristotle. This amazing almost legendary, figure worked out an approach to Evolution which is incredible considering that the theory of Natural Descent is not much more than a century old. He wrote "Nature proceeds by little and little from things lifeless to animal life."
7. Leonardo da Vinci, probably the greatest universal genius the world has known.
8. Andreas Versalius.
9. Linnaeus (1707–78), a Swedish botanist.

(*Continued on page 4*)

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MORE MEDICAL MARTYRS

In the April issue of the "Auricle" there appeared an article entitled "Some Medical Martyrs." Here is a further account of the noble deeds of men who have worked for humanity's sake.

On the eve of December 31st, 1938—a date still fresh in the memories of many—a brilliant 23-year-old obstretician died whilst experimenting in a surgery at the Westminster Hospital, London. This martyr was none other than the young Doctor Castelian. He died while testing out a new apparatus for increasing the speed and efficiency of an anaesthetic which could be used in connection with childbirth, and so minimize some of the pains of labour. His friends warned him against the danger of the task that he was undertaking, but dauntlessly Dr. Castelian carried out his experiments. When he was later discovered he was still holding his watch with which he was timing the experiment. Nothing could be done for him—Dr. Castelian had already lapsed into a coma, and was far beyond human aid.

Dr. C. H. Barlow went to China to study a mysterious disease almost as deadly as cholera. He spent many years in that country, but eventually he decided to investigate it in laboratories in Baltimore. Dr. Barlow applied for permission to bring cultures to America. His request, however, was refused, but this noble research worker was determined to carry out his experiments. He thus inoculated himself with the deadly bacteria, and returned to America. The inoculation period was soon over, and then Dr. Barlow became seriously ill. His case was carefully studied, and Dr. Barlow even kept a record of the course of the disease. Later, however, he became very ill, and it was feared that he would die. Everything was tried, and fortunately the doctors had already learned sufficient about the disease to save Dr. Barlow's life. Another milestone on the road to health was thus established.

Dr. Kurtskhan of Koenigsberg is the next hero of the medical world to be considered in this brief article. He was of opinion that cancer could not be transferred to a healthy person, and he carried out a daring experiment in which he planted a portion of a cancerous tissue into his own leg. The experiment was not successful, and so Dr. Kurtskhan vaccinated himself with cancerous tissue. He then prepared a serum which, however, gave negative results.

Dr. Hindhede, a Swedish scientist, carried out an experiment, which consisted of living only on boiled potatoes for a considerable time. In doing this he was attempting to prove that albumen was not essential to the human body. After ten days, however, Dr. Hindhede found himself unable to carry on the experiment. The monotony was terrible. In spite of this he was still able to carry out his work, as he found that his gardener was willing to try the test. For 300 days he lived solely on boiled potatoes, and did not feel any ill effects. He worked on as usual and maintained his normal weight.

From this article we thus see that some experiments are rather humorous, whilst others are very serious, involving much risk and danger. Research is still going on—workers are busy endeavouring to make this world more amenable to human existence.

ROSEHYM.

(*Continued from page* 11)

Good-night. Thanks for enjoyable evening. Get into bed, switch off light. To-morrow's another day. Do a lot of work, been a good day. Sleep—Sleep—.

M.G.

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PORTRAIT OF A MEDICAL STUDENT

What? Seven o'clock already? Could do with an hour's more sleep. But to-day—work. Out of warm, caressing bed into cold biting atmosphere, hastily drink coffee, run into bathroom. sprinkle cold water onto face, clean teeth, brush hair. Whose face? Your face, staring unwinkingly back from mirror; grey eyes, dilated nostrils, thick eye-brows. Funny that should be your face, created from God knows what, from chancy union of developing cells, from protoplasm, nucleus, centrosome—. Breakfast. Kipper cold. Borbyrygami—. In tram, stare woodenly at back of peoples' heads. All sorts of heads—round, square, oblong, rectangular, shrunken, expanded—. What goes on inside those heads, under the sleek, oily covering of hair? Thought, like yours, all staring woodenly—wooden soldiers. Tram stops, goes, stops, goes. Sways, goes, stops. Terminus. Catch bus to Medical School.

Lecture at eight. Good-morning. Hello. How are you. Good-morning. To-day we will consider the Autonomic Nervous System; anatomically this consists of two parts—nice song you heard last night, tra-la-la la-la tra-la-la—the Parasympathetic has origin in—don't forget party on Saturday, who will you take, Doris is not bad, Phyllis is a good dancer—the Sympathetic accelerates the heart and dilates the bronchioles, therefore, for asthma give an adrenergic drug—have a good lunch to-day; hope there's sausage and mash—responsible for referred pain, the mechanism being as follows—tra-la-la la-la tra-la-la—we will continue our studies on Wednesday. Lecture over, not much notes, oh well, look it up in text-book.

Go into corridor, walk slowly to locker, vacant of purpose, vacant of mind. One hour before ward round with chief. Don't forget, work to-day. Let's go to the library and swot congestive cardiac failure. Pick comfortable seat, open book, take out pencil. Look at the way old Fred swots, twirling a lock of hair in his hand; pleasant face he's got, but nose is a bit too classical. Wonder what's the meaning behind Picasso's latest painting. Modern art too involved and complicated for the average mind. Is yours an average mind? Of course. Sure? Well, secretely, not exactly average, thinks about other matters besides medicine—Good Lord! Ten o'clock. Run off to Ward Round.

Well, what's the treatment for oedema? Diuretics, sir. What diuretics? Digitalis, theobromine, urea, caffeine, sir. Anything else? Can't think of any others, sir. Ever heard of direct removal of fluid? Oh yes, of course, sir. Don't forget it. No, sir. Yes, sir. No, sir. Yes, sir. Ward round over. Lecture at twelve. Never forget, gentlemen, the three methods for reduction of shoulder dislocations; an immediate diagnosis does much to—what's on this afternoon? Lecture at two, lecture at three—always remove the shoe when attempting the heel-in-axilla method—how about a flick? Ask friend—it is so essential, gentlemen, in these cases—what shall we see?—we shall now show you some slides—thought you were going to do a lot of work to-day. Oh, well, there's plenty of time; do some work to-night.

Lunch. Bioscope. God Save the King. Enjoyable show. Catch tram, home. Tea, cigarette. Phone—hello, yes. Oh hello, Phyllis! Yes—yes—when? To-night? No, doing nothing, who else is coming? of course, yes. About eight o'clock—be right over.

Phyllis. Phyllis. Phyllis. Should be home, doing some work. Not here listening to the vapid extemporisings of a nit-wit. Her mouth's too full, she's got a slight lisp, does her hair dreadfully.

(Continued on prev. page)

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A NEW SERIES

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

I. MODERN ART

[Editor's Note: This article is the first of a series by Medical Students who have no professional knowledge of the subjects on which they write. They are presented as queries, and correspondence is cordially invited.]

I am sincerely grateful to the Editor of the "Auricle" for allowing me this opportunity to set forth my views on a subject which has alternately bewildered and inspired me. I know very little about the theoretical aspects of modern art; I know practically nothing about the inner significance of colour, harmony, discord, patterns, perspective, or any other of the details of which any mediocre artist is fully conversant, because I can't paint or sketch: I've never been able to. But I am deeply interested in the meaning of modern art.

I have never had much time for those individuals who are either too pedantic or too ignorant to do anything but ridicule the work of modern artists and sculptors. It seems to me only logical that a man has something to say when he produces a painting—it is either a message, or a gesture of futility or belief, or an expression of some beauty that has hit the artist so hard that he feels it imperative to put it in some concrete form. It's the same with music, or literature, or poetry. And if modern artists express their deeper thoughts in a medium which is incomprehensible to people of a shallower intellect, does this render them subjects for ridicule and destructive criticism? Einstein was once shouted down because he used a geometry entirely different from that which a Greek mathematician used ages ago, but no-one to-day doubts the validity of the Theory of Relativity which has found fulfilment in its practical application to Astronomy. Very few know anything about Einstein's Theory; when a layman first learns the bare outlines of that colossal work of intellectual prowess, he is amazed and incredulous—until he is told that the Theory is applicable and is actually more than dogmatic statements. Similarly, when Jacob Epstein first exhibited his sculpture, "Adam," he was greeted by a howl of derision from the Press and a scream of anger from the critics who told the public that it was a monstrosity, a gargantuan farce, a horrible freak of art, a product of complete insignificance. What utter drivel! Epstein had something to say, he said it in a form unintelligible to those presumably born and bred in an atmosphere of conservative classicism, and the result was a mad thunderbolt of silly, useless criticism.

Modern sculpture has always struck me as something extremely powerful and essential, using this last word in its strict sense. Ivan Mestrovic's "Madonna and Child," for instance, gives me a mental jolt with its power—there is something fascinatingly tremendous in the posture of the Madonna, with her legs crossed, her downcast eyes, and the cold austerity of her features; there is some violent rhythm about the whole thing; in the same way Epstein's sculpture of "Night" impresses me with its massiveness and ponderousness.

So far, you will have gathered that, talking only as a layman in Art, I have defended modern artists simply by making an attempt to see what they are driving at. But I admit without hesitation that there is much in this realm that is quite unintelligible to me; let me hasten to say that I do not hold this grounds for condemnation. I remember an article in one of the previous issues of the "Auricle," written by Mr. Goosen, in which he described, with exactness and fluency the meaning behind an abstract harmony of curves that he had drawn. Without his explanation, the illustration would have been incomprehensible to me. So when Edward Wadsworth draws something similar and entitles it "Composition," I am at a complete loss; I have never read his explanation—if there is one—and so I have not the faintest idea what it's all about. I don't know why di Chirico paints a human figure of abstractly geometrical design with a featureless face and one eye—that is not in the least like an anatomical eye—and calls it the "Oracle;" or why Penrose sculptures a perfect female form without head or limbs surrounded by thin iron bars and entitles it "Captain Cook's Last Voyage." I do know, in common with many others, that surrealism is a sort of psycho-analytical expression of art, and maybe "Captain Cook's Last Voyage" can be explained on that basis; for my own satisfaction, I have made it so intelligible, but, of course, I am not at all sure whether I am correct or not. Epstein's "Rock Drill" I can understand, symbolising as it does the inexorable mechanical spirit of to-day. I can't get away from Epstein. Perhaps it's the savagery of his work that appeals to me, or perhaps it's his dynamic power; at least I'm honest enough to admit that there is sufficient savage in me to which the tremendous, the ponderous, the massiveness in Art can appeal.

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TEA WITH THE IMMORTALS

Well, there I was, seated at a big table, in company with figures, the mere mention of whose names causes you to catch your breath with awe and bow your head in reverence. I can tell you, I was feeling pretty strange; after all, I was the only living being among a gathering of ghosts, who were still ghosts however illustrious they might have been during their lives; but what set my nerves on edge was the thought that I, a mere medical student, was having tea with Louis Pasteur, Joseph Lister, James MacKenzie, Robert Koch, Galen, Hippocrates and a score of others. I sat at the head of the table, a cup of tea in my hand, looking completely oafish. What could I say? Put yourself in my place.

Robert Koch leaned forward. "How's your tuberculosis?" he said to me. I was taken utterly by surprise. "I havn't got tuberculosis," I stammered. "No, no, no!" exclaimed Koch impatiently, "I mean what does the world of to-day know about the disease?" At that moment, everything I had ever known about tuberculosis slipped like a wraith from my memory. I forgot all. The great bacteriologist was looking at me penetratingly. "Who discovered the tubercle bacillus?" he asked suddenly. I thought desperately, then, "why, you did," I said. "That's just where you're wrong!" said Koch triumphantly, "It wasn't me at all. It was—."

But before he could finish, someone rapped on the table, and there was dead silence as Joseph Lister rose. He said, "Medical Student of 1939, we owe you an explanation for bringing you here to-day. We have been working at great expense and trouble for twenty years to accomplish this meeting. You are honoured beyond all mortal kin in being present as representative of your living confreres. Your life has been watched with great interest by Galen, who informs us that he is confident of your intellectual powers. I will not waste the time of this gathering by further speech. Your purpose to-day is to give a full resumé of medical knowledge as it exists in your time." He sat down, and there was a round of applause. As for me, I was completely paralysed with apprehension. Can you possibly imagine what I was feeling? For twenty years, these Immortals of Medicine had watched and waited, and then I had been plucked from my environment into this atmosphere of colossal knowledge and asked calmly to give a summary of medicine as it existed in my time. It was impossible, ridiculous, fantastic. Where could I start, what could I say? Without a doubt, some horrible vengeance would be wreacked on me if I didn't satisfy them. They had waited twenty years—. It was like a tremendous viva. I thought of my friends, my home, my little waitress, and I groaned. "More tea?" said Florence Nightingale sweetly. All eyes were turned on me—on me, a miserable fourth-year medical student; Galen was looking at me encouragingly, but as I caught Koch's eye, I saw something malicious. Louis Pasteur started to clap, and I found myself on my feet; cold shivers ran up and down my spine. "Medicine," I stuttered, "has advanced greatly since your time—" I stopped, realizing what I had said. A shadow crossed Galen's eyes, but my heart nearly stopped beating when I saw Lister. His brow was black as thunder. It was too late to retract my words. I plunged desperately on. "In bacteriology" I said, in a cracked voice, "Robert Koch is reckoned to hold first place, in surgery Joseph Lister; in medicine, James MacKenzie." I had a vague idea that I was being complimentary to at least a section of the gathering, but I was totally unprepared for the consequences. Everyone leapt to their feet, shouting, screaming and gesticulating.

"Koch the greatest bacteriologist! Oh, my God!" screamed Pasteur.

"Lister the greatest surgeon! what irony!" yelled Semmelweiss

"MacKenzie the greatest physician! Shades of Aesculpius!" shouted Hippocrates.

"More tea?" said Florence Nightingale sweetly.

Well, there I stood, bewildered and amazed, while bedlam seemed to be let loose. In between their angry shouts, the Immortals threw

(*Continued on page* 14)

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Three teams were entered in the Transvaal Knock-Out Competition, but two failed in their first matches.

Our strongest trio, Rogalsky, Pelkowitz and Kagan defeated East Rand at Benoni by a comfortable margin. Rogalsky and Pelkowitz were in magnificent form and easily won all their matches.

In the third round we defeated the Jewish Workers' Club after a terrific struggle in which Pelkowitz and Kagan distinguished themselves by their spectacular and aggressive tactics. The team has qualified for the quarter finals. This is the first occasion on which a new club has advanced so far in this contest.

The team consisting of Abro, Smith and Blumberg were heavily defeated by Y.M.C.A., the winners of 1938, but they put up a creditable performance especially against Taylor and Lawe, who are well-known players in first league circles. The former has been Transvaal Champion on several occasions.

Messrs. Prissman, Bryer and Mendelow lost to the Youth League. Our players went down heavily to the visitors.

In a friendly match, the Medical Women's team drew with a team representing the nurses of the General Hospital. Misses L. Cohn and V. Katz were the best players in our team.

These matches have served as a means of improving our standard of play and increasing the interest of the Medicals in the "baby" club. The inter-year and firm matches, which are to be held in the second term will eagerly be awaited by many intending participants.

(*Continued from page* 13)

tea-cups, saucers, spoons and biscuits at me; when somebody picked up a large tea-pot, I realised that immediate action was essential. I took one last look at the meeting, and ran—ran as I had never run before. That I came back to my worldly surroundings is proved by this account. I can only pray to Providence that the Immortals have given me up as a bad job. One last word: if you ever meet me, don't offer me tea.

DR. BROOM ON—

EVOLUTION

On Tuesday, 6th June, Dr. Broom delivered his address to the Medical School under the auspices of the Cultural Activities Society with Professor Dart in the Chair. The latter, in his opening remarks, reviewed the history of Anthropology and Dr. Broom's lengthy and intimate connections therewith, also stating how honoured we should be for the opportunity of listening to so eminent a personage as Dr. Broom, and hoped that we appreciated under what difficulties Dr. Broom was speaking.

Dr. Broom, in his usual brisk and efficient manner, began by saying that this was merely to be a lecture on the "Descent of Man" and not on evolution, generally. Among his opening remarks he affirmed that he was an Anti-Darwinian, no doubt due to his Scotch descent, and confidently expected the early downfall of the Theory of Natural Selection. He briefly went over the discovery of *Pithecanthropus erectus* (Java Man) and *Eoanthropus* (Piltdown Man) making some very derogatory remarks about Dr. Emile Dubois. Then came the discovery of the Taungs Skull (*Australopithecus*) by Professor Dart, and the great importance he attached to it as a "missing link," in opposition to such eminent anthropologists as Sir Arthur Keith, Elliot Smith, Smith Woodward and Duckworth, who came in for some scathing criticism. He drew up a scheme of Man's descent showing how the various fossils had been linked up by him, showing also the relation of his own discoveries at Sterkfontein (*Paranthropus* and *Pleisanthropus*). He then discussed Peking Man (*Sinanthropus*) and its relevance and many other important fossils found in caves in Africa.

After a vote of thanks the meeting closed with tea.

S.J.

EVOLUTION

The anatomy class is now in full swing. Students talk brazenly of "origins" and "insertions" and "courses of arteries and nerves" and a few shining lights have discovered that the black-board is meant for writing and drawing on.

Text-book anatomists are now in full "swot."

The procedure appears to be as follows. Suppose a student wishes to learn a muscle. The text-book is carefully placed over the muscle so that it is wholly obscured. The student now looks earnestly at the description of the muscle in the book while his one hand gropes uncertainly in the general direction of the structure. After ten or twenty minutes the eyes are turned towards the ceiling or turned introspectively inwards and the student attempts to ascertain the extent of his recently-acquired knowledge. The process is repeated several times till the description can be repeated word for word.

Scalpels and forceps are grown rusty with disuse and lie completely neglected, easy prey for some predatory science student, while the owner woos the pretty descriptions of text-books. On being questioned on this muscle, however, the next morning, the knight (or lady) of the text-book is mute or mumbles something about having swotted the muscle yesterday, and immediately leaps for his text-book instead of working out the origin and insertion from the actual muscle on the body. The unfortunate thing, of course, is that the student has little idea where the muscle is even situated on the body.

Such students solemnly and in good faith write in their texts that the popliteal artery arises from the sacral plexus, and the axillary nerve anastomoses with its fellow of the opposite side around the neck of the humerus.

At the beginning of the year students appeared to be abounding with energy, and even spent their lunch-hours feverishly attempting to find cutaneous nerves, but now they have a wan and weary look, apparently exhausted by the load of undigested print with which they have engorged themselves.

Isolated individuals contentedly dissecting are looked upon by the disowner of the scalpel and forceps with a vague sort of envy and in their befuddled minds a dim suspicion stirs (as it did in mine) that perhaps these individuals are the knowing ones.

However, the habit is an insidious one and students pursue their way contentedly for months before being jolted into consciousness. Some chance word or remark makes the student realise that he has a practical examination as well as a theory paper at the end of the year.

About this time certain rumours are rife concerning the dreaded viva. Generally, these tales are told by a repeat who usually narrates his own harrowing experience to an audience of fascinated listeners. "What happens is this," says the repeat, "you have to wait outside the anatomy lab. After a while the door is flung open and you are told to enter. The first thing you notice is Dr. Galloway at one end of the room and Dr. Wells at the other. As you enter, Dr. Galloway, with a sardonic look, seizes an object from the table (it might be the calcaneus or one of the bones of the hand or skull) and hurls it through the air to the equally saturnine Dr. Wells, who catches the bone and concelas it behind his back. While it is in the air," hisses the unfortunate experiencer of the ordeal to his listeners, "you have to recognise what bone it is and from what side it comes!"

His listeners gasp and turn pale and some laugh scoffingly yet with a hint of panic in the sound. Another rumour circulated is that an isolated nerve is placed in a dish, and the unfortunate student has to recognise what nerve it is.

Concerning histology the tale is as follows. The whole senate is assembled. Dr. Gillman sits by a table with a huge pile of slides. As the student comes up to the table he flicks a slide off the pile and while in the air the student has to recognise the slide.

After hearing such tales, many of the students realise with a shock, if it is a saga concerning anatomy, that they do not even know where many of these structures are on the body. They walk up and down frantically for a while and then make a bee-line for the body and with tears and entreaties and soulful looks in the case of female students, and a much humbled mien in the case of males, the man who has dissected on the body is persuaded to demonstrate the carefully-dissected structures which are now in great danger, for when a structure is pointed out, the ignorant one makes a convulsive grab at it, and pulls and tugs frantically; in many cases it comes away in the hand to the accompanying curse of the dissector.

Towards the end of the year, as I have pointed out, students realise that the body is not there merely to suit their aesthetic tastes, and frantic efforts are made to remedy their deficiencies in knowledge before the exams. arrive. Forceps and scalpel having for the most part corroded away or otherwise lost, are now at a premium.

Some unfortunates fall by the wayside and wait apathetically for the end. Some few are unlucky; others concentrate on learning their physiology and cannily bank on obtaining a superficial anatomy; however, the examiners are just a bit more canny. Others manage to gain sufficient temporary knowledge to enable them to pass. With what results? Ask some third-year student to describe the composition and formation of the cervical plexus or fascial investment of the abdominal region.

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