

matter for our younger confreres, struggling with this new mass of cures, and, like a rudderless ship, being blown hither and thither by the wind of modern commercial therapeutics.

The other day a patient of mine who had been spending a holiday in the far North of England, and had occasion to seek the advice of a young country doctor there, showed me the prescription given him by this gentleman. It contained three separate proprietary articles, all German, and, as it happened, quite unsuited to his case. This patient could have been better treated, and more economically, with well-tried remedies of our own *B.P.* This instance is only one of many, for, practising as I do in a seaside town, one is consulted by visitors from all parts of the country, and it is surprising and disheartening to read the prescriptions of proprietary "remedies," mostly foreign, prescribed by their home medical man.

The most blatant of the drug-mongers are the manufacturers of organic substances, most of which are inert, with the possible exception of thyroid extract and suprarenal extract. Again, the number of new hypnotics is legion, and a few are really useful, while a large number are, if not actively dangerous, of small value. The old-time hypnotics of the *British Pharmacopoeia*, which have stood the test of time and clinical experience, are to-day being less and less prescribed, as any retail chemist can tell us. It appears to me that unless some check is placed on the unrestrained advocacy of new preparations there is very real danger of our reputation as a profession suffering in prestige in the eyes of the public.

I venture to suggest that a committee of clinical experts, composed of practising physicians, be empanelled to "try out" these newer so-called remedies, and report officially after, say, twelve months' trial. It would at least give the rank and file of the profession some authoritative guidance on which to model their knowledge and practice of the healing art.—I am, etc.,

VINCENT P. NORMAN,
M.D., M.R.C.P.

Bournemouth, May 4th.

The Springs of Neurosis

SIR,—I have read with interest Dr. G. F. Walker's article in the *Journal* of February 16th (p. 296), and am in full agreement with him that much neurosis is the result of unrecognized and unperceived factors. He particularly draws attention to sinusitis, which is so frequently overlooked. I would like to go a little further than he does, and include all infective agents. The neurosis in its extreme degree is exemplified in a case of thyrotoxic goitre—in other words, sympathetic overaction run riot. All infections make a call upon the sympathetic nervous system, resulting in some increased thyroid activity. With increased thyroid output there is a corresponding output of calcium salts, which if long continued reduces the normal blood calcium, the effect of this being to reduce the buffer action of the synapses, allowing impulses to pass to the central nervous system undamped, and so produce exaggerated responses. The great ideal in life is to have complete command over one's actions by training oneself to inhibit stimuli, but to people with their synapses undamped the impulse is so active that the reaction takes place before they are able to bring into force their voluntary inhibition. This condition of undamped impulses is usually associated with a certain degree of tachycardia and tremor, making a syndrome which is more or less common to most infections, and for which I have suggested the term "toxic syndrome."—I am, etc.,

Melbourne, March 29th.

SYDNEY PERN.

Obituary

R. B. STAMFORD, F.R.C.S.Ed.

Honorary Medical Officer, Loughborough General Hospital

The sudden passing of Mr. Robert Basil Stamford while in active practice at Loughborough has left a gap in the profession in that town which will be difficult to fill. Educated at Repton School, he entered Guy's Hospital in 1890, and at once gained a place in the cricket eleven, which at that time was a very powerful side. He also played Association football for the hospital. After a very good record as a student at Guy's, he acted as house-surgeon to Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane. When the South African War broke out he was one of the first civilian surgeons to offer his services, and, after serving for one year, he contracted a severe attack of enteric fever, and was invalidated home.

In 1901 he became F.R.C.S.Ed., and joined the late Dr. Eddowes at Loughborough, where he practised until his death. He was an active member of the British Medical Association, and had been chairman of the Leicester and Rutland Division, a past president of the Leicester Medical Society, and for many years a member of the Leicestershire Panel and other committees. In 1908 he received the King's commission *à la suite* to act on the staff of the 5th Northern General Hospital, and on the outbreak of war was called up. He continued to serve during the duration, and did very valuable work as a surgeon. In December, 1919, he married the widow of the late Edward Cunliffe Owen. There was no issue of the marriage. Tall, elegant, of soldierly appearance, a fine sportsman in many branches of sport, he was very popular, and it is not too much to say that he was beloved by all classes; and though this is not usually the highest praise which can be given to a man it was true of Stamford in every sense of the word. Of especially charming manners and a very agreeable disposition, he had at the same time a mentality which showed a character of great decision in medical and other matters. He was a very capable surgeon, and his opinion was frequently sought by his colleagues in the town and neighbourhood.

R. H. F.

FIELDING H. GARRISON, M.D.

Librarian, Welch Memorial Library, Johns Hopkins University

The death in the Johns Hopkins Hospital on April 18th of Lieut.-Colonel Fielding Hudson Garrison in the full maturity and activity of his literary powers is a serious blow to all interested in medical history, and more particularly to those in English-speaking countries. He was born on November 5th, 1870, in Washington, D.C., where he spent the greater part of his studious life. Qualified medically in 1893, he entered the medical department of the United States Army, and was appointed assistant librarian in the library of the Surgeon-General, thus serving an apprenticeship under Robert Fletcher and John S. Billings, whose life he subsequently wrote, and continued their methods and tradition. He was co-editor of the *Index Medicus* from 1903 to 1912, and editor until 1927, when it became fused with the *Quarterly Cumulative Index* of the American Medical Association to form the *Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus*, financed jointly by the Association and by the Carnegie Institution of Washington. It is impossible to exaggerate the value to medical authors of the *Index Medicus* (1879-1926) and the *Index Catalogue* of the Surgeon-General's library (1880-1934). In both these Garrison played a great and equally unobtrusive part; probably few outside that library have any idea how extensive this work was.

When America entered the war in 1917 he was transferred to active service in various camps, and after the war was in the Philippine Islands (1922-4). In 1925 he was appointed consulting librarian to the New York Academy of Medicine, and constantly wrote editorials in the *Bulletin* of the Academy. Garrison retired from the army on May 19th, 1930, became librarian of the Welch Medical Library at the Johns Hopkins University, and in the autumn of that year crossed to Europe, saw medical London with, as he later wrote, "a minimum of that stupefying variant of the Erb-Goldflam symptom-complex (myasthenia levis) which is apt to go with perfunctory sight-seeing." He then visited Copenhagen, Stockholm, various centres in Germany and France, and attended the meeting of the Germanic Society of the History of Medicine at Budapest. At the Welch Medical Library and the Associated Institute of Medical History he continued to be very busy and prolific with published papers on medical bibliography, such as revised catalogues of medical and scientific periodicals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Garrison was always a very hard worker. In a private letter he confessed that the memoir of his former chief, J. S. Billings, took more vitality out of him than anything else he ever did; this is rather surprising in view of his masterly work, modestly called *An Introduction to the History of Medicine*, which originally came out in 1913 and passed into a fourth edition in 1929. This is the indispensable and daily companion of those who care to verify the accuracy of names, dates, and facts. Concisely written, it is difficult to imagine the size of the work to which it could possibly be the introduction. It is, however, wanting in one respect—that of references to his own publications. Garrison was a great correspondent, and thus had friends, such as Clifford Allbutt, whom he had never seen. He wrote a neat hand quite free from any trace of writers' cramp, though in 1928 he admitted that he had "never had the luxury of a doctor's private secretary." The amount of help he gave to others—for example, in the posthumous preparation and publication (1921) of Osler's Silliman Lectures delivered in 1913—passes all calculation. With a wide and refined taste for literature and music, the latter recently shown in a charming essay on the Schumann family and Brahms, a philosophic humour, and a wise estimate of values, he lived and laboured in a calm backwater while honours drifted by in other directions; but his work has assured his reputation.

H. R.

AXEL REYN, M.D.

We regret to announce that Dr. Axel Reyn died at the age of 63, on April 22nd, at Copenhagen. Soon after qualifying as a doctor Reyn joined the staff of the Finsen Institute in Copenhagen in 1897, and he remained attached to it more or less closely for the rest of his life. In 1900 he was appointed assistant physician, and in 1907 medical superintendent, of this institution. He retired from the last-named position in 1932, but continued his association with the Institute up to his death.

It was no easy task to succeed such a pioneer as Finsen, whose mantle would have fallen heavily on Reyn had he not been so singularly modest and unassuming. He filled his position worthily, not so much by virtue of any brilliance as by a dogged determination to serve science, his patients, and his colleagues to the best of his abilities. A sensitive man, he was remarkably free from scientific jealousy; and he earned the respect and affection of all who worked under him by his loyalty to their interests. His dominant motive was to exploit science in the service of therapeutics, and it was his almost apostolic fervour

on behalf of the patients under his care which so greatly endeared him to them. National and foreign honours were freely bestowed on him, and he came to be regarded as the leader in all that concerned actinotherapy. At home much use was made of him on medical and semi-medical bodies, to whose activities he contributed freely. Indeed, the services he was called upon to render in so many walks of life must have done much to shorten his days, but he was the last to grudge what he gave.

The following appreciation comes to us from Sir HENRY GAUVAIN:

Innumerable sufferers from lupus vulgaris the world over, and many medical colleagues, will deplore the death of Dr. Reyn, for so long head of the Finsen Light Institute, Copenhagen. I feel a great sense of personal loss at the passing of an illustrious and very dearly loved colleague—modest, kindly, sympathetic, always helpful and always approachable—who honoured me with his friendship for many years. I am indebted to Dr. R. Kissmeyer, who was one of his most intimate friends, for many of the particulars appended.

Reyn became associated with Finsen, and was appointed his assistant at the Finsen Institute at the commencement of his professional life in 1897. He was appointed chief of the dermatological department in 1908, and later became a very active member of the board of directors. A great tribute to his work was paid him when, at Copenhagen in 1932, he was elected president of the Second International Light Congress, and received tributes of affection and respect from all interested in that form of therapy to which he had devoted his life, and on the evolution of which he had exercised so great an influence. In high repute as a skilled and able dermatologist, his greatest interest was in actinotherapy and tuberculosis, and more especially on the light treatment of all forms of tuberculous disease, especially lupus vulgaris. His first publications were in collaboration with Finsen, and appeared in 1900 and 1901. He devised a practical modification of the Finsen lamp—the Finsen-Reyn lamp—which is still in very general use, and is especially adapted to the treatment of single patients. In 1913 he published *Die Finsenbehandlung*, wherein he collected all existing available knowledge of light therapy. Impressed with the value of heliotherapy, he utilized the carbon arc for general light baths for the treatment of surgical tuberculosis with signal success, and with N. P. Ernst published an account of his methods in 1914. Later he published papers on the value of Finsen therapy in the repair of lesions caused by overdosage of x rays, in tuberculous adenitis, and in certain skin diseases. As the value of his work obtained increasing recognition numerous honours were bestowed on him. He was a rapporteur at the International Conference on Light in Lausanne in 1928, and at the Eighth International Congress of Dermatology in Copenhagen in 1930. He also wrote chapters in the *Handbuch der gesammte Strahlenheilkunde* (Lazarus) and in the *Traité d'Hélio et d'Actinothérapie* (Brody). Among the honours he held were those of president of the Comité International de la Lumière, honorary member of the Radiological Society of North America and of the American Association for Medico-Physical Research, of the American College of Radiology, of the Nordisk Forening for Medical Radiology and the Svensk Forening for Medical Radiology, and of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Strahlenforschung; he was corresponding member of many other societies. In the same year as he was elected president of the Second International Light Congress; the journals *Strahlentherapie* and *Acta Radiologica Scandinavica*, of which he was one of the editors, published special numbers in his honour.