

# THE SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

## REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

Session 1972–73

Another successful session has been concluded, during which three well-attended meetings were held.

### MEDICO-HISTORICAL NOTES

The centenary of the foundation of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary School of Nursing was commemorated on 7 and 8 October 1972, by a thanksgiving service in Greyfriars Kirk, and a reception. An exhibition showing the development of the school and of nursing throughout the century was held in the Florence Nightingale Nurses' Home. An admirably written and produced booklet outlining the history of the school was published. A pelican figures on the school's official crest and Royal Infirmary-trained nurses are known as 'Pelicans'. One of the events during the celebrations was the adoption of Peter, the forty-year-old pelican at Edinburgh Zoo, by the Infirmary nurses.

November saw the quarter-centenary of the death of the great Scottish reformer, John Knox. Appropriate commemorative services, exhibitions and other events were held to mark the occasion which was also recognized by the Post Office by issuing a special envelope. In last year's Report of Proceedings we referred to the final medical graduation at St. Andrew's University. In this connexion it is worthy of note that in the *Book of discipline* (1560) prepared by the "Six Johns" of whom Knox was the best known and the main author, proposals were made for a scheme of educational organization throughout Scotland, including the universities. "In the first Universitie and principall", viz. St. Andrews, were to be three colleges, the first for arts, understood then to be the basis of all true study, and for medicine; the second for moral philosophy and law; and the third for theology. At Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities, however, only arts, law and theology were proposed. But the *Book of discipline* was never adopted in its entirety. Incidentally, the duration of the medical course at St. Andrews was to be six years.

During 1971 the bicentenary of the birth of Mungo Park was commemorated. Many who have visited the Park memorial at Selkirk have been impressed by the decorative panels and figures on the memorial but few knew who created them. Thomas Clapperton (1879–1962), a Galashiels man, was the sculptor, and in late 1972 his native town paid tribute to him with a photographic exhibition in the public library illustrating his work. Among Clapperton's other works are the figure of the Bruce on the esplanade at Edinburgh Castle, the statue of "Literature" on the dome of the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, the "Border Reiver" in Galashiels itself, and

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even as far south as Wales Clapperton's work is to be seen in the figure of Bishop Morgan on Cardiff City Hall.

Chelsea Physic Garden was founded in 1673 by the Society of Apothecaries and the Garden has associations with Scotland. It was James VI who founded the Society at Blackfriars, and during the eighteenth century the garden was much frequented by Mrs. Elizabeth Blackwell during the preparation of her beautifully illustrated botanical volumes. In this way she raised the money to release her husband from a debtors' prison, at the same time attracting the attention of many eminent individuals including Dr. Richard Mead and Sir Hans Sloane.

In March 1973 it was announced that one of Scotland's most significant documents describing the social scene in the late eighteenth century was to be republished in twenty volumes. The *Statistical account*, appearing between 1792 and 1799 is a rich source of medical information on the Scotland of the period. The first volume of the projected re-publication is scheduled to appear later this year.

A major commemorative event in Scotland and Africa during May and subsequent months in 1973 was the centenary of the death of David Livingstone. A special stamp was issued by the Post Office and celebrations were held in both countries. Books, both critical and adulatory of Livingstone, were published, but maybe, as doctors, we would still prefer Professor Michael Gelfand's study, *Livingstone the doctor* (1957). The Society was very fortunate in being able to have Professor George Shepperson, Professor of Commonwealth and American History at Edinburgh University, as its speaker at the meeting held on 23 June. Professor Shepperson has studied Livingstone deeply, has written much about him, and as was to be expected, gave not only an interesting address but a penetrating analysis of Livingstone's character and of his place in history.

On 6 June the Postgraduate Medical Centre at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, was officially opened by Dr. Christopher Clayson. Dr. I. J. T. Davies is the regional director of postgraduate medical education at the centre.

A service was held in Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh, on 9 September to mark the centenary of the death of the Reverend Dr. Thomas Guthrie. Although not the founder of ragged industrial schools in Scotland—this honour belongs to Sheriff Watson of Aberdeen—Guthrie in 1847 threw himself wholeheartedly into the movement and the industrial schools named after him became well known. He was among the first to appreciate the value of the ragged industrial school movement as a preventive measure in dealing with juvenile delinquency.

#### THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SEVENTY-FIRST ORDINARY MEETING

The Society met in the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh on 21 October 1972, for its Annual General Meeting. At the Seventy-First Ordinary Meeting which followed two papers were read, one by Mr. Charles G. Drummond, F.P.S., the other by Mr. Noel Kretzmar, F.R.C.S.Ed. Mr. Drummond spoke on:

ADAM DRUMMOND OF MEGGINCH, SURGEON-APOTHECARY  
(1679–1758)