OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Annual Congress of the Society, which was held from March 31 to April 2 at the Royal Society of Medicine, was attended by 204 members and 91 visitors. Mr. Frank A. Juler presided over this happy gathering, whose success augurs well for the International Congress to be held in London next year. Many distinguished foreign visitors attended, some of them old friends of the Society. From Utrecht came Professor H. J. M. Weve. The Swiss visitors were Professor Marc Amsler, Professor A. Franceschetti, Dr. B. Semadini and Dr. N. Chomé. Dr. E. Hartmann, although paying his first visit to the Congress, was particularly welcome not only by reason of his official position, but also for his own charm. He has succeeded Dr. P. Mérigot de Treigny as Secretary-General of the Société française d’Ophtalmologie. Other welcome visitors from France were Professor G. P. Sourdille of Nantes, Dr. L. Pauifique of Lyon and Dr. S. Vallon of Paris. We were also delighted to see Dr. Professor V. Rossi of Pisa, Professor G. B. Bietti of Pavia, Dr. R. Castroviojo of New York, Dr. A. Fritz of Brussels, Dr. A. C. Copper of Leiden, Dr. J. I. Barraquer of Barcelona, Drs. G. Karpe and J. Ollers from Stockholm, Dr. E. Palm of Lund, Dr. A. Mohn of Oslo, Dr. S. J. Braathen of Stavanger, Dr. B. Nyquist of Bergen, and Dr. H. Skydsgaard of Copenhagen. One pleasant surprise was the arrival from Spain of Dr. Arruga junior, on his way to Leeds, where he will be working with Mr. John Foster. A last-minute illness unfortunately prevented Professor M. A. El Kattan Bey, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Cairo, from attending the Meetings.

At the opening session the President extended a cordial welcome to ophthalmologists from abroad, and announced that future Bowman lecturers will receive a medal. Although there was not to be a Bowman lecture this year, medals had already been cast for presentation to former recipients of this honour, and he was glad that three of them were able to receive their medals in person. Sir John Parsons, F.R.S., whose Bowman lecture on the Foundations of Vision was delivered in 1924, stepped forward to receive the token, and was followed by Professor H. J. M. Weve (1939) and Professor Marc Amsler (1948). The President then announced that medals would be despatched to the other living Bowman lecturers — namely, Sir Arthur Keith (1930), Professor van der Hoeve (1932) and Dr. Arnold Knapp (1946).

The subjects considered by Mr. Juler in his Presidential Address were Some Points in the Operation for Acute Glaucoma and some Reflections on Refraction. Corneal Grafting had been chosen as
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the content of the main discussion, and the Honorary Secretaries succeeded in assembling a galaxy of world-famous keratoplasticians. Professor Franceschetti, who opened the discussion, was followed by Mr. Tudor Thomas. Professor Sourdille, Dr. Pauifique, Dr. Castroviejo, Dr. Barraquer, Dr. Fritz and Professor Bietti all produced interesting observations, and the other openers among British ophthalmologists were Mr. B. W. Rycroft and Mr. D. P. Choyce. Several most illuminating films were shown, and admiration was expressed for Dr. Castroviejo's astonishingly clear colour-photographs. This year the Society was particularly fortunate in the contributions made by people outside its speciality, because Dr. S. P. Meadows and Dr. Macdonald Critchley both read fascinating papers on neuro-ophthalmology, and Mr. D. N. Matthews gave a masterly, richly illustrated survey on the Technique of Plastic Operations in the Neighbourhood of the Orbit.

Abstracts of the above-mentioned and of additional papers will be published in Ophthalmic Literature. No clinical meeting was held, because the numbers attending Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom Congresses are now too large to permit examination by more than a minority of the members. The substitute plan of arranging a series of illustrated case-descriptions was voted a great success. Dr. Spence Meighan occupied the chair for the President on this occasion.

Professor Franceschetti proposed the toast of the Society after the Annual Dinner held at Grosvenor House on March 31. He reminded us of the close ties of friendship which have linked and still link British with Swiss ophthalmology. In replying to this toast the President referred in terms of warm appreciation to the kindness shown by Professor Franceschetti and by other hosts in Switzerland, France and Holland towards the parties of British ophthalmologists visiting foreign clinics under the auspices of the Faculty of Ophthalmologists. The official guests at the Dinner included Lord Webb-Johnson (President of the Royal College of Surgeons), Sir Henry Dale, F.R.S. (President of the Royal Society of Medicine), Dr. C. Thackray Parsons (Deputy Master of the Society of Apothecaries), Sir Stewart Duke-Elder (President of the Faculty of Ophthalmologists), Mr. F. A. Williamson-Noble (Master of the Oxford Ophthalmological Congress), Mr. D. N. Matthews, Dr. Macdonald Critchley and some of the above-mentioned foreign guests accompanied by their wives. Lord Webb-Johnson and Dr. Macdonald Critchley replied to the toast of the Guests, which had been proposed by Mr. J. H. Doggart. The President's health was proposed in terms of affectionate respect by one of his former house-surgeons at St. Mary's—Miss Ida Mann.

On April 1, a number of the foreign ophthalmologists and their wives were entertained to dinner by the Council of the Faculty of
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Ophthalmologists at Apothecaries Hall, where they were received by the President of the Faculty and Lady Duke-Elder. After dinner Sir Stewart Duke-Elder's words of welcome were followed by a short survey of old customs and institutions in the City of London, given by Mr. Frank Law, the Honorary Secretary of the Faculty.

It was felt on all sides that this 1949 Congress went well. Certainly the President communicated a spirit of quiet enjoyment and welcome, and the arrangements made by the Honorary Secretaries and by the Secretariat at 45, Lincoln's Inn Fields made for smooth working of the social occasions as well as the scientific programme. Sincere gratitude has also been expressed to Lord Webb-Johnson, whose invitation to distinguished ophthalmologists from abroad to lecture at the Royal College of Surgeons served two important purposes. We were thereby encouraged to prolong the delights of the Congress, and we were permitted to hear four stimulating talks by Professor Weve, Professor Franceschetti, Dr. Hartmann and Professor Bietti.

The following is the Honorary Secretary's summary of the business conducted at the last Council meeting on February 18:

It was learnt that the proposed enquiry into the working of the Supplementary Ophthalmic Service had been postponed. It was reported that following a meeting of the Ophthalmic Negotiating Committee the Ministry had decided to reduce the fee from £1 11s. 6d. to £1 5s. as from April 1 next, and that the turnover should be in the neighbourhood of 5 patients in two hours. The Minister proposed to discuss further with the profession the question of an investigation into the average time taken, and an undertaking had been given that the reduced fee should be suitably adjusted if its reduction was found to be unjustified. The matter was discussed at length and it was decided that the Negotiating Committee should be urged to protest against the reduction, and that each individual member of the Faculty should receive a copy of the Minister's letter with a letter explaining the position.

Mr. Duthie and Mr. Greeves have been elected members of the Standing Ophthalmic Advisory Committee for the National Health Service.

It was decided to send a circular letter to the Senior Administrative Medical Officers of Regional Hospital Boards urging them to set up Ophthalmic Advisory Committees if they had not already