OBITUARY

JOHN DENNIS MARTIN-JONES

In King Henry IV, Sir John Falstaff says, "Will you tell me, Master Shallow, how to choose a man? Care I for the limb, the thewes, the stature, bulk, and big assemblance of a man! Give me the spirit, Master Shallow."

John Dennis Martin-Jones was indeed a man of spirit in both work and play, but neither in mundane ambition nor in reality was he a giant in our profession. Characteristic of his qualities of mind and heart he did whatever lay clearly at hand with efficient and conscientious thoroughness, meticulous care, with kindness, and with that sound common sense which dominated his judgment in all matters. Much of his well balanced thinking and behaviour, his poise and purposefulness and well timed actions were compatible with his physical make-up, for he possessed the compact, well proportioned and slight physique of the outdoor games player and sportsman.

Such a distinguished anatomist as the late Professor Woollard held that there are men in whom there is combined an aristocracy of both mind and body. The harmony of both mental and physical qualities was evident in John Martin-Jones.

He was born on March 29, 1907, the elder son of the late Martin Llewellyn Jones, F.R.C.S., and Mrs. Martin-Jones of Aberdare, Glamorganshire. From his father he inherited an aptitude for surgery and good literary taste, for both father and son read widely.

He was educated at Denstone College and then at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he obtained honours in the Natural Sciences Tripos.

In January, 1931, he entered St. Bartholomew’s Hospital and in 1934 qualified. He became House Physician to Dr. Hinds Howell and later House Surgeon to the Eye Department, 1935-36. In 1936 he took his Cambridge M.B., B.Ch., and in 1938 the D.O.M.S. He was resident surgical officer and then registrar at the Royal Westminster Ophthalmic Hospital and there as Cruise research scholar he investigated uveal sarcoma, on which subject he wrote a thesis for the Cambridge M.D., 1939, which had the distinction of being published as a monograph supplement of the British Journal of Ophthalmology in 1946.

He served in the army from 1940-45 and spent 4 years overseas as an ophthalmic specialist in hospitals in the Middle East and in a Mobile Ophthalmic Unit in Normandy. Despite the stressing and often difficult conditions of active service the excellence of his work never varied. The field medical cards which accompanied the wounded who had passed through his capable hands were marked with his neat handwriting setting out concisely and clearly every essential detail. I do not think that the smallest lesion at the extreme periphery of the ocular fundus ever escaped his notice. He possessed that admirable quality, so essential in our professional behaviour, of imperturbability (Osler’s Aequanimitas) and such never left him in the stress and squalor of war and in handling
large convoys of wounded. Indeed I never saw him out of temper or other than neat, debonair and well dressed whatever the conditions; a tribute to his self-discipline, control and poise.

On leaving the army he decided wisely that the unbalanced and madly competitive career of a consultant in London was not his way of life. In the Cathedral Close of Salisbury and the consultant staff of the General Infirmary he found the suitable medium for his unhurried and thorough clinical work. In Salisbury he was fortunately spared the isolation that specialists may endure in a provincial town, for near by there lived his old chief, Robert Foster Moore, to whom he went both for advice and for the recreation of fishing. Theirs was a friendship which was perfectly complementary. Soon he established in Salisbury an efficient eye unit which gave good service of a high clinical order to a wide area of surrounding country. His loss will be felt acutely by the hospital team he has trained and by the many patients he has treated with such characteristic care and kindness. He was a competent operator, inclined to be too modest about his ability. His many friends and patients will for ever remember his absolute honesty, his modesty and integrity.

At Salisbury he led a well-balanced life, enjoying to the full his work, his outdoor games, his fishing and shooting, and above all his family life in an admirable home. It is tragic that he has died in his prime. His loss is irreparable but the memory of his many fine qualities as a doctor and a man will endure with the wide circle of his friends who held for him an affectionate regard and loved his constant good nature and kindness, and enjoyed his gaiety and the spontaneous warmth of his friendship.

To his wife and two young daughters we extend our sincere sympathy in their great sorrow and tragic loss.

H.B.S.

NOTES

AMERICAN OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The following office bearers have been appointed for 1955-56:

President: ... ... Dr. Alan C. Woods (Baltimore).
Vice-President: ... ... Dr. Frederick C. Cordes (San Francisco)
Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. Maynard C. Wheeler (New York)
Editor: ... ... Dr. Gordon M. Bruce (New York).

V Pan-American Congress of Ophthalmology

At the fifth Pan-American Congress of Ophthalmology, which will meet in Santiago, Chile, on January 9 to 14, 1956, the following subjects, will be discussed: glaucoma; collagen diseases; infantile glaucoma; secondary glaucoma; strabismus; detachment of the retina; psychosomatic ophthalmology; tropical diseases of the eye; physiopathology and surgery of the crystalline lens; plastic surgery; visual fields and neuro-ophthalmology; intra-ocular tumours.

The official languages will be Spanish, Portuguese, and English. Ophthalmologists who desire further information about the programme should consult Dr. James H. Allen, 1430 Tulane Avenue, New Orleans, La.

Other enquiries should be sent to Dr. Daniel Snydacker, 109, North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 2, Ill.