

Obituary

William Lemuel Benedict, 1885–1969

Many of our readers will be distressed to know of the death of Bill Benedict, one of the great American ophthalmologists of the past generation, who did much to shape the development of our specialty in



his country. Educated at the University of Michigan, he went in 1917 to the Department of Ophthalmology at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, becoming associate and eventually full professor, a post which he held with distinction until his retirement in 1950. During his professional life he worked unceasingly, contributing more than 200 articles to our literature, several of which are classical, prominent among them being those dealing with orbital tumours. But his main influence in American ophthalmology had a wider compass. He took an immense and practical interest in ophthalmological education, in the prevention of blindness, and in research, while he served on many societies, received many honorary awards, and gave several honorary lectures. He was Vice-President in 1950 of the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology and President in 1954 of the American Ophthalmological Society by which he was presented with the Howe Medal in 1964. Perhaps his most outstanding achievement of this type was in his remarkable enthusiasm for the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, of

which he was executive Secretary-General from 1942 until his death, as well as Editor of its *Transactions* over this period. Most of the prominence of the position occupied by the Academy in the United States both in teaching and as a forum for new knowledge depended on his untiring efforts. He became internationally known as the effective Secretary-General of the XVII International Congress of Ophthalmology in Montreal and New York in 1954, and with all these activities he was the most genial of hosts and a delightful companion; he is survived by an equally delightful wife, two daughters, and a son.

Joseph Meller, 1874–1968

Many of our readers will have known Professor Meller who succeeded Ernst Fuchs in the Chair in Vienna and who died at the age of 94 years on November 23, 1968. Fewer have had the pleasure of meeting him. In ophthalmology he had many interests. His principal contributions to our specialty were the origin of cilio-choroidal detachments, his clinical studies on the leukaemias as they affect the eye, and the various forms of keratitis. His great interest, apart from art and music, was his belief that the major factor in the aetiology of uveitis was tuberculosis, a subject on which he gave the Doyne Lecture in 1934. At operative surgery he was unusually good, and his standard textbook, *Augenärztliche Eingriffe*, has long served as the standard for the German-speaking world (1st edition, 1918; 6th 1950).