
NEWS AND VIEWS

INDIAN SOCIETY OF HAEMATOLOGY

A new addition to the existing medical bodies in India is the Indian Society of Haematology, formed at Bombay last December. Opportunity for formation of the Society arose after a hematology symposium on "Recent Advances of Therapeutics in Haematology." Attended by hematologists from all parts of India and presided over by Dr. J. G. Parekh, the symposium, which was designed for the benefit of general practitioners, was held at the Bombay Hospital theatre, on December 16, 1959, under the joint auspices of the Bombay Haematological Society and the Bombay Hospital. The Hematologists present then met formally to discuss formation of the Indian Society of Haematology as it would help diffusion of hematological knowledge throughout the country.

The aims and objects of this society will be: (1) to encourage investigation in the study of blood in health and disease; (2) to promote and foster the exchange and diffusion of knowledge relating to blood and blood-forming tissues; and (3) to provide a forum, on a national basis, for discussion of hematological subjects.

The initial congress of the Society was held on December 17, 1959. Inaugurated by Dr. V. R. Khanolkar, the session was presided over by Dr. C. R. Das Gupta. Dr. J. G. Parekh made a speech of welcome and Dr. Soonu S. Setna gave a vote of thanks.

This was followed by a short scientific session at which the following papers were read:

1. "Status of Gastric Intrinsic Factor in Nutritional Macrocytic Anaemia," by J. B. Chatterjea, D. K. Banerjee and F. Hosain;
2. "Preliminary Report on the Use of Radio-isotopes in Diagnosis," by R. S. Sharma, P. J. Dave, J. G. Parekh and K. M. Shah;
3. "Haemorrhagic Disorders following Chest Surgery," by Soonu S. Setna;
4. "Possibilities with the Use of a Cytochemical Localisation of Succinic Dehydrogenase in Leucocytes as an Index of Activity," by E. J. D'Souza, S. N. Kothare and M. B. Kher;
5. "A Variant of Blood Group A in a Leukaemia Patient," by H. M. Bhatia and L. D. Sanghvi;
6. "Leukaemia—A study of Autopsy and Clinical Pathology Material," by G. Reddy and K. Bhargava;
7. "Myelofibrosis," by M. K. Sandozi;
8. "Serum Vitamin B₁₂ Levels serially taken in a case of Chronic Myeloid Leukaemia treated with Myleran," by S. Narayanan.

The following office-bearers were elected at the business meeting of the Inaugural Congress:

President: Dr. C. R. Das Gupta;
 Vice President: Dr. J. G. Parekh;
 Secretary: Dr. Soonu S. Setna; and
 Counsellors: Dr. J. B. Chatterjea, Dr. Sujata Chaudhuri, Dr. Sharad Kumar, Dr. S. M. Narayanan and Dr. M. K. Sandozi.

Those desirous of joining the Society may kindly communicate with Dr. Soonu S. Setna, "Piloo Minar," 15, Walton Road, Apollo Reclamation, Bombay.

POSTGRADUATE SEMINAR IN ARTHRITIS AND RELATED DISEASES

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For further information write to *Seminar Committee*, Florida Chapter, Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation, 1206 Huntington Medical Building, Miami 32, Florida.

BOOK REVIEWS

ROBERT SCHWARTZ, M.D., *Editor*

THE CLONAL SELECTION THEORY OF ACQUIRED IMMUNITY. *Sir Macfarland Burnet*. Nashville, Tenn. Vanderbilt University Press, 1959.

In the last twenty years, Sir Macfarlane Burnet has been the principal author of four books and three theories dealing with antibody formation. During this time his views as expressed in these books have been central to any discussion of the nature of antibodies. *The Clonal Selection Theory of Acquired Immunity*, given as the Abraham Flexner Lectures at Vanderbilt University in 1958, promises to be no exception.

The Clonal Selection Theory of Acquired Immunity represents, superficially at least, a sharp departure from *Enzyme, Antigen and Virus* (Cambridge, 1956) published a scant two years earlier. The author has abandoned entirely his early theory of enzyme adaptation with its ingenious and favored "self marker" concept, and also his recently held views on DNA and RNA modification. He has also countered the strong biochemical emphasis of modern times by abandoning all efforts to explain antibody production on a molecular basis. This last is perhaps the key to the present approach. The cell is considered a self-replicating, integrated unit capable of responding to environmental stimuli according to fixed inherited patterns. Cells acquire inheritable differences through mutation. Selective cell multiplication or death produces changes in cell population similar to those occurring in bacterial cultures. The action of environmental agents such as antigens is limited to relatively permanent effects on cell population, and temporary changes in physiological state such as the rate of protein synthesis.

The author first shows how the above working hypotheses are solidly based on analogy to adaptation in microorganisms, then how these hypotheses explain the known facts of the immune response more readily than any of the other existing theories. There is a full dis-