

his F.R.C.S. in 1931. Then followed resident surgical appointments at the East Surrey Hospital, Redhill, the Victoria Hospital, Westcliff-on-Sea, the Radium Institute, and the Central Middlesex Hospital.

Mr. T. G. I. JAMES writes: Life in London appealed to Letcher very much, and the example of his father and his love of people led him to a career as a general-practitioner surgeon. With this end in view he settled in Acton in 1937 and became a member of the surgical staff of Acton Hospital, where, during the earlier part of the last war, he showed skill, dexterity, and speed in dealing not only with air-raid casualties but with the large number of general patients whom he was called upon to treat. He was particularly interested in the acute abdomen and in urology, but he was a sound all-round general surgeon. During the last war he served overseas in the R.A.M.C. as a surgical specialist, with the rank of major, mainly in the Middle East and in the Sudan. On his return to civil life, changing circumstances forced him to relinquish his activities as a surgeon and to devote his whole time to general practice, to which he gave his heart, but he still kept in touch with surgery and remained an active Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine. His personality was unique. A short, dapper figure, always neat and full of vitality, he radiated from his sparkling eyes and round, smiling face a warmth and friendliness which brought him countless friends. Nothing could ever damp his ebullient spirit and the sun always shone wherever he happened to be. One of his characteristics was a chuckle and a laugh that would infect any gathering and dispel any gloom. He lived a full life, and what little time he could spare from his patients he devoted to golf, tennis, racing, and cricket, and in exploring the English countryside with his charming wife and two boys. His home life was most serene, and his was an open house for many friends and a host of Australians, to whom he gave generous hospitality. He was a charming host, full of stimulating conversation, with a wide knowledge of men and affairs. Of few people can it be said that they never uttered an unkind word or performed an unkind deed, but of George Letcher this was true. It will be difficult for his patients, friends, and colleagues to realize his sudden and unexpected death, and all will extend to his widow and children the deepest sympathy.

## Medico-Legal

### DEATH FROM AIR EMBOLISM

[FROM OUR MEDICO-LEGAL CORRESPONDENT]

A man aged 34 was admitted to the Royal Northern Hospital in June, 1951, suffering from bilateral pulmonary tuberculosis, and underwent a pneumoperitoneum to collapse both lungs. The right phrenic nerve was crushed, leaving him with limited respiratory movement, and his condition was such that after leaving hospital in August, 1951, he had to attend the chest clinic weekly for refills of air to collapse his lungs.

On April 2, 1952, he attended for his refill, and 700 ml. of air was to be injected. The injection was made on the right side because of adhesions on the left, and after 600 ml. had been put in he complained of discomfort, and breathing became difficult. The needle was at once removed, but about 50 ml. more entered during removal. He then got off the table, walked into the passage, collapsed, and died.

At necropsy it was found that the puncture mark of the needle extended into the liver for a total depth of  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (1.9 cm.). There was a small haematoma at the site of the puncture of the liver capsule, and large bubbles of air were situated underneath. There was a column of air bubbles in the coronary sinuses, and the right side of the heart was filled with a frothy mixture of air and blood.

At the inquest, held at the St. Pancras Coroner's Court on April 7, a verdict was recorded of death by misadventure, caused by air embolism due to injection of air into the hepatic vessels during attempted pneumoperitoneum for double pulmonary tuberculosis.

## Universities and Colleges

### UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Inquiries concerning the Wiltshire Memorial Research Scholarship, which is now available for award, should be addressed to the Dean, King's College Hospital Medical School, Denmark Hill, London, S.E.5. The object of the scholarship is to encourage research in cardiology, and the honorarium attached to it is at least £400 a year.

## Vital Statistics

### Poliomyelitis

Poliomyelitis notifications (uncorrected) in the week ending September 13 (37th week of the year) were as follows: paralytic 115 (115), non-paralytic 68 (73); total 183 (188). This is a decrease of 5 compared with the previous week, the figures for which are in parentheses. Up to and including the week ending September 13 the overall uncorrected notification rate for England and Wales was 6.8 per 100,000.

### Paratyphoid in South Wales

Attempts to trace the source of the epidemic of paratyphoid fever which has been smouldering for some weeks past in Monmouthshire and Glamorgan have so far proved fruitless. In Glamorgan alone there have been about 170 cases. Various foodstuffs have been under suspicion, but no incriminatory evidence has yet been found.

### Infectious Diseases

In England and Wales during the week ending September 6 a decrease was reported in the number of notifications of measles 712, whooping-cough 30, and acute poliomyelitis 27, while the only rise of any size was 42 for dysentery.

The notifications of scarlet fever were the same as in the preceding week; during the week the incidence fell slightly in the southern section of the country. Although the incidence of whooping-cough declined slightly the largest fluctuations in the local trends were increases of 67 in Lancashire and 49 in London. The number of notifications of diphtheria was 1 more than in the preceding week, and no changes of any size occurred in the local returns. The largest falls in the incidence of measles were London 132, Essex 120, and Lancashire 110.

The number of notifications of paratyphoid fever was 3 less than in the previous week. 15 of the 41 cases were notified in Wales. The largest returns during the week were Middlesex 8 (Edmonton M.B. 4) and Glamorganshire 8.

The chief features of the returns for dysentery were a fresh outbreak with 18 notifications in Bristol C.B. and a rise from 9 to 37 in Lancashire. The other large returns were Surrey 18 (Carshalton U.D. 10) and London 17. In Scotland the notifications of dysentery in the outbreak in Glasgow rose to 100.

The number of notifications of acute poliomyelitis was 35 less for paralytic and 8 more for non-paralytic cases than in the preceding week. The largest returns were London 28 (Woolwich 6, St. Pancras 5), Essex 23 (Southend-on-Sea C.B. 5, Ilford M.B. 5), Lancashire 13, Kent 10, and Middlesex 10.

The largest outbreak of food-poisoning notified during the week involved 50 persons in Essex, Tendring R.D.

**Dame Hilda Lloyd**, president of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, is one of the 87 applicants this month for the freedom by redemption of the City of London. Her application is through the Society of Apothecaries.

**Major-General P. H. Mitchiner** has been elected president of the Casualties Union. This is a voluntary organization of trained "casualties" who help teachers of first aid by staging accidents and acting as realistic casualties. The address of the Casualties Union is 29, Whyteleafe Hill, Whyteleafe, Surrey.

### COMING EVENTS

**Society of Apothecaries of London.**—The Liverymen of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London have been summoned to meet at Guildhall on Monday, September 29, at 10.30 a.m., to elect a Lord Mayor of the City of London for the year ensuing.

**Leeds Medical School.**—Professor Matthew Stewart will deliver the inaugural lecture, entitled "A Pathologist Goes Round the World," on October 16. The dinner for new students will be held on October 4.

**Child Health Services Conference.**—A conference on the integration of the child health services will be held at Highgate Wing of Whittington Hospital, Dartmouth Park Hill, London, N.19, on October 11 from 2.30 to 6 p.m. Professor Alan Moncrieff will be in the chair, and there will be contributions from a general practitioner, a school medical officer, a paediatrician, and a divisional treatment officer. Admission by ticket only, obtainable from the paediatric department of the hospital.

**Military Medicine.**—The 59th annual meeting of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States will be held in Washington, D.C., from November 17 to 19. Following the meeting there will be a two-day international clinical symposium for visitors from abroad. This will be held in the various Government hospitals and medical centres in the Washington area.

**Friends of Vellore.**—The annual reunion of the Friends of Vellore will be held on October 8 at the Caxton Hall, S.W.1, at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speakers will include Dr. Paul Brand, Mrs. Margaret Brand, and Dr. Gwenda Lewis. Dr. Brand will show his new coloured film "New Life Through New Hands" at the evening meeting. Full details may be obtained from Miss Marjorie Chapman, Friends of Vellore, Annandale, North End Road, London, N.W.11.

**Service for Doctors.**—A special service to mark the opening of the academic year will be held at All Souls' Church, Langham Place, on Sunday, October 19, at 11 a.m. Seats will be reserved for doctors who apply for tickets to the Church secretary, All Souls' Vestry, Langham Place, W.1, not later than October 16.

**Wessex Rahere Club.**—The autumn dinner of the Wessex Rahere Club will take place at the Grand Spa Hotel, Clifton, Bristol, on Saturday, October 25. Further details can be obtained from the hon. secretary, Mr. A. Daunt Bateman, 3, The Circus, Bath.

**Contraceptive Technique.**—Lectures and demonstrations on living models on contraceptive technique will be given by Marie C. Stopes, Ph.D., at the Mothers' Clinic, 108, Whitfield Street, London, W.1, at 2.30 p.m. on October 2, November 6, and December 4. Tickets, limited to medical practitioners, must be obtained in advance.

### SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

A fee is charged or a ticket is required for attending lectures marked ●. Application should be made first to the institution concerned.

#### Monday, September 29

●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND: FACULTY OF ANAESTHETISTS, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—9.45 a.m. and 11.15 a.m., "Physical Problems in Anaesthesia," by Dr. H. G. Epstein; 2.30 p.m., "Functional Anatomy of the Air Passages," by Dr. R. Machrav; 4 p.m., "Respiration During Clinical Anaesthesia," by Dr. H. J. V. Morton.

●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—5.15 p.m., "The Surgery of the Spleen," by Mr. A. H. Hunt; 6.30 p.m., "Intestinal Obstruction in Childhood," by Mr. G. H. Macnab.

#### Tuesday, September 30

●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND: FACULTY OF ANAESTHETISTS, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—9.45 a.m. and 11.15 a.m., "The Modification of Respiration by Pathological and Clinical Factors," by Dr. A. I. Parry Brown; 2.30 p.m., "Pathological Conditions Modifying Cardiovascular Physiology and Anatomy," by Dr. H. Rink; 4 p.m., "Clinical Problems in Anaesthesia for Cardiac Surgery," by Dr. H. Rink.  
●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—5.15 p.m., "Endometriosis," by Mr. Douglas MacLeod; 6.30 p.m., "Surgery of the Pancreas," by Mr. Rodney Smith.

#### Wednesday, October 1

●INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.—5.30 p.m., "Histology of Normal Skin," by Dr. H. Haber.  
●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND: FACULTY OF ANAESTHETISTS, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—9.45 a.m. and 11.15 a.m., "The Effects of General Anaesthesia on Cardiovascular Function," by Dr. J. Gillies; 2.30 p.m., "The Clinical Implications of Hypotensive Techniques," by Dr. J. Gillies; 4 p.m., "Neuromuscular and Synaptic Block," by Dr. T. Cecil Gray.  
●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—5.15 p.m., "The Uses of Cerebral Angiography," by Mr. J. Pennybacker; 6.30 p.m., "Surgery of the Endocrines," by Mr. L. R. Broster.  
SOCIETY OF PUBLIC ANALYSTS AND OTHER ANALYTICAL CHEMISTS.—At Chemical Society's rooms, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W., 7 p.m., "Spectroscopic Properties of Vitamin A<sub>2</sub>: Application to the Assay of Cod Liver Oil," by Dr. H. R. Cama and Professor R. A. Morton, F.R.S.; "The Estimation of Carbonyl Compounds by Semicarbazide and Hydroxylamine with Special Reference to Fatty Acid Oxidation Products," by Mr. A. J. Feuell, B.Sc., A.R.I.C., and Mr. J. H. Skellon, M.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.I.C.; "Simultaneous Determination of Pentose and Hexose," by Mr. W. R. Fennell and Mr. H. K. King, Ph.D.  
YORKSHIRE SOCIETY OF ANAESTHETISTS.—At Leeds General Infirmary, 8 p.m., "New Developments in Muscle-Relaxant Drugs," by Dr. H. O. J. Collier.

#### Thursday, October 2

●HUNTERIAN SOCIETY.—At 41, Portland Place, London, W., 6 to 8 p.m., annual party.  
●INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.—5.30 p.m., "Mycology—Diagnosis of Mycotic Infections," by Dr. R. W. Riddell.  
●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND: FACULTY OF ANAESTHETISTS, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—9.45 a.m., "Neurological Mechanism in Anaesthesia," by Professor E. A. Pask; 11.15 a.m., discussion on Professor Pask's and Dr. Gray's lectures; 2.30 p.m., "The Clinical Implications of Relaxant Techniques," by Dr. T. Cecil Gray; 4 p.m., "General Considerations and Pharmacology of the Local Analgesics," by Dr. C. A. Keele.  
●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—5.15 p.m., "Reconstructive Surgery of Burns," by Mr. Richard Battle; 6.30 p.m., "Cleft Palate," by Mr. Denis Browne.

#### Friday, October 3

●INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.—5.30 p.m., "Eczema," clinical demonstration by Dr. J. E. M. Wigley.  
●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND: FACULTY OF ANAESTHETISTS, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—9.45 a.m. and 11.15 a.m., "Some Specific Nerve Blocks, their Anatomy and Technique," by Dr. W. W. Mushin; 2.30 p.m. and 4 p.m., "Spinal and Epidural Analgesia," by Professor R. R. Macintosh.  
●ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.—5.15 p.m., "Peripheral Arterial Grafting," by Mr. H. G. Eastcott.

### BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS

#### BIRTHS

**Bolton.**—On September 9, 1952, at the Bristol Maternity Hospital, to Joyce (formerly Baker), wife of Dr. F. G. Bolton, a daughter—Eleanor Mary.  
**Clark.**—On September 7, 1952, to Mary Rose (formerly Harris), wife of Dr. David Clark, of Bromley, Kent, a son—Alan Trelawney.  
**Davies.**—On September 17, 1952, at Ashleigh Elmfield Park, Gosforth, Northumberland, to Mary (formerly Whiteaway), wife of Dr. Leslie Davies, a brother for Michael.  
**Morgan.**—On September 12, 1952, at Royal Infirmary, Salisbury, to Barbara (formerly Shipley), wife of Dr. H. D. S. Morgan, a son.

#### DEATHS

**Allworthy.**—On September 13, 1952, Samuel William Allworthy, M.D.I., of Holly Villa, 3, Winston Gardens, Belfast, aged 85.  
**Fergusson.**—On August 29, 1952, at Carnlia, Salen, Acharacle, Argyll, Duncan Fergusson, M.B., Ch.B.  
**Parry.**—On September 7, 1952, at Annfield Plain, Co. Durham, Richard Parry, L.R.C.P.&S.Ed., aged 67.