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EDITOR'S CHOICE

BMJ

There's a marvellous escape from current preoccupations this week—in "Spring books" (pp 1109-23). Even those who haven't the time to read all the books will appreciate John Swales's discussion of Edward Lear, welcoming his conclusion that the idea that sexuality was the driving force in Lear's life is naive (p 1109); John Melmoth's evocation of one of the *BMJ*'s real characters, its former deputy editor, Dougal Swinscow (p 1113); and the complexity of a contemporary medical poet, Dannie Abse, shown by Edward Lowbury, no mean poet himself (p 1119).

And how many of us will echo Bruce Charlton's plea to revive *World Medicine*, with its blend of medically flavoured controversy, science, anecdote, and humour (p 1117)? Elsewhere in the journal are warnings against overenthusiasm for using pulse oximetry at the roadside (p 1096), an emphasis on giving vitamin E to patients with cystic fibrosis (p 1098), and a suggestion that perhaps Elizabeth Barrett Browning's illness may have been encephalomyelitis due to measles (p 1102). Clearly this last debate will run and run.