

### News, Notes and Queries

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### PROPER NAMES—ZURICH PLETHORA

by

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WHILE listening to a tape on renal tubular diseases, the name 'Fanconi syndrome' came up in the discussion and this started me thinking—not of renal diseases or congenital defects—but of Professor Fanconi and proper names in medicine. Professor Guido Fanconi was my professor of pediatrics at the University of Zurich medical school and I remember his son, who graduated the year before I did, his textbook, and transacting business at the same bank. According to the medical dictionaries there is a Fanconi's disease (constitutional infantile anaemia) and Fanconi syndrome (osteomalacia, aminoaciduria, hyperphosphaturia, glycosuria and aciduria). Further thinking yielded sixteen further proper names that can be associated with Zurich and medicine. If my memory serves me correctly the University of Zurich was only founded in 1833 and the Cantonal hospital and medical school at the same time. The original hospital was only torn down to make room for the new hospital in 1950, when I arrived.

European medicine is, of course, a mirror of its culture and so is tradition bound, i.e., it respects its past and its ancestors, so if anything is achieved at all by an individual he is best remembered by having his name attached to what he described. During my studies at the faculty the professors were Loeffler, Mooser, Bleuler and Kartagener. Professor William Loeffler has his syndrome, transient eosinophilic infiltration of the lung, well known in this country. I best remember him in that I took my final examination with him at his home because he was ill and could not come to the university. Professor Hans Mooser was my professor of bacteriology and has named after him the causative agent of murine typhus, *Rickettsia mooseri*, as well as the Mooser test for this disease. He is best remembered for his humour and vivid language. Professor Manfred Bleuler was professor of psychiatry and author of the text his father Eugen Bleuler began in which the old 'dementia precox' was dropped and the name schizophrenia coined. This is, however, not referred to as Bleuler's disease. I best remember him for his textbook and that after the final examination he asked me whether I had any questions for him. Professor Kartagener gave us a course in ECG

### *News, Notes and Queries*

and had his name attached to a syndrome or triad, consisting of situs inversus, sinusitis and bronchiectasis.

Now this is only the current crop of proper names associated with Zurich. Professor Loeffler continually referred to many more from the past in his lectures and I shall try to recall as many as possible (with the aid of Dorland). In alphabetical order there is Biermer's anaemia (pernicious anaemia), Billroth's disease (malignant lymphoma), mixture (an anaesthetic mixture of chloroform, alcohol and ether), operations (I, II and an excision of the tongue), strands (trabecula lentis) and suture. He taught surgery from 1860–7 before being called to Vienna. Further there is Bloch's reaction or stain (dopa), Forel's commisure (across the posterior prefrontal space), decussation (ventral tegmental), field (dorsal strata of the subthalamus) and fornix (a band of fibers which perforate the corpus callosum), Goll's columns (fasiculus gracilis), fibres (to the vermis of the cerebellum) and nucleus (in the basal part of the medulla oblongata), Henle's layer (outer part of hair root sheath), loop (in kidney tubule), membrane (lamina basalis choroidea) and sheath (the endoneurium). Henle was professor of anatomy from 1840–44 before being called to Heidelberg. Further there is Horner's syndrome (unilateral ptosis, miosis, enophthalmos, diminished sweating and flushing of the face), Jung's method or psychoanalysis, Kölliker's cells (spermatozoa), layer (the mesiris), and nucleus (the gray matter surrounding the central canal of the spinal cord). Kölliker was born in Zurich and became professor of anatomy in 1839 and later went to Wurzburg. Then there is Ludwig's ganglion (a part of the cardiac plexus). Karl Ludwig taught physiology at Zurich from 1849–55 before going to Vienna and then Leipzig. In addition there is Sauerbruch's cabinet (for chest surgery) and prosthesis (an artificial limb with which the tissues of the stump are used to secure motion). He taught surgery before going to Berlin after the first world war and also was the subject of a German film about 1953. Lastly there is Schoenlein's disease or purpura and *Trichophyton schoenleini*, the cause of favus. He taught medicine about 1840 and Professor Loeffler often told us how he would demonstrate pneumothorax by having a candle blown out through a needle injected into the chest where he suspected this lesion to be.

This is an impressive list. Incidentally across from the school is the Swiss National Technical University where two rather famous scientists often associated with medicine studied (Wilhelm Röntgen and Albert Einstein).

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#### UNIVERSITY OF PARIS, FACULTY OF MEDICINE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY

Professor Charles Coury, Head of the Department of the History of Medicine and Surgery, is organizing a course of lectures on 'Antiquity' during the winter of 1966/67. Students will hear lectures on primitive medicine in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, Greece, Alexandria, Italy, etc. Original texts of the period will be discussed, and the origins of the medical profession will be traced from the earliest times. The two final lectures of the course, in March 1967, will deal with the evolution of surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology.