

Editorial

ANAMORPHOSIS

The academic diet of medical students has been, over the past few years, a matter of most interesting discussion in the circle of medical educators. This is not because the knowledge that a physician must possess has increased, but more because of the growing awareness of the factors which make up the substance of this knowledge.

Crude analogy makes us think of the dietary requirements that we know of today. These requirements were no less essential during the ages which trusted them to natural consumption. Yet, in order to derive advantage from our recognition of these factors, they must be learned, superimposed in an ordered fashion, over the basic premise that "eating suppresses hunger." The practical application of this superimposition introduces the problem of palatability and digestibility.

Such is the problem of the medical educator, for the basic principles of medicine remain stable. The practical value of the constant exposition of their mechanisms is in their being presented to the student in a palatable and digestible form. Therein lies the secret of a good diet, the desire of the dieter for it and his physiological capacity to consume it.

We are pleased that another step toward this end has been taken at Dalhousie this year. The change is a definitive one, rather than experimental, as some seem to believe. Contrary to the nature of an experiment, the results can be predicted in a reasonable fashion. In fact, the problem here is not conducive to experimentation, for conclusions could not be drawn until the lifetime achievements of the students involved could be tabulated. Indeed, these plans aren't designed to give better instruction in specific courses, but rather to mold a better doctor. Their tenets are not based on any one set of figures but on the accumulated logic, thinking, and intuition of men concerned with the forces which contribute to the complexity of the situation.

LETTER TO THE READER

The value of a medical journal as an integral extra-curricular activity at medical school has been further substantiated by the recent response of the first year class to an invitation to join the staff. This reflects the growing loss of apathy amongst the students toward the Journal. It is unfortunate, however, that so many capable upper class people are not taking advantage of a fine opportunity to get their thoughts and work in print. The ability to express oneself and to be understood is by no means the least of our obligations as physicians.

Not fully in agreement with the thought, "no news is good news", the editorial staff is continually disappointed by not receiving any reaction from the readers. We have, in no respect, reached the stage where we consider our publication to be perfect and beyond improvement. The Journal attempts to present material of direct interest to the students and doctors who read it; thus they are the only judges of its attributes or faults, its success or failure. The proper improvement of the Journal, its circulation being throughout the medical centres of North America, certainly calls for cross sectional criticism.

R. B. L.