Annual Report based on the Secretary's report to the Annual General Meeting on 27 October 1978

Medical Society for the Study of Venereal Diseases

During the past session, 53 new members were elected to the Society, of whom 33 are resident in the United Kingdom. Three members died and two resigned. It was found necessary to stop sending the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases* to 198 members because of underpayment of subscriptions, but their names were not removed from the list of members. This means that until action was taken about one-third of the membership of the Society was receiving the *Journal* without having paid for it properly, a situation which could not be allowed to continue. Since this action I am glad to report that many have adjusted their subscriptions to the correct level. At present the membership stands at 619; in October 1977 it was 570.

Five ordinary meetings were held during the period October to April and they were all extremely well attended. It is very gratifying that this high standard of attendance has been so well maintained, an excellent indicator of the health of the Society.

The Spring Meeting was held in Leeds from 19 to 21 May 1978 and was very successful, for which thanks are extended to Dr M. A. Waugh, the local organiser, who put in so much hard work. Our meeting was followed by the Congress of the International Union against the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses, many of our members staying on to participate.

The Harrison Lecture was delivered by Dr C. S. Nicol at St Thomas's Hospital on 16 June 1978 and was followed by a buffet supper—an enjoyable evening which was well supported.

The Council of the Society, under the chairmanship of the President, Dr E. M. C. Dunlop, held five ordinary meetings and one extraordinary meeting, all of which were well attended.

At the October meeting Dr L. Cohen produced a gavel and block, which he had had made and inscribed in Wales. This was paid for by the honorarium which had been returned to the Society by Professor T. Turner, the second Harrison lecturer.

At this meeting Dr C. S. Nicol, speaking as adviser to the Department of Health and Social Security, a post he was about to vacate, mentioned that a completely new clinic was to be furnished at St Stephen's Hospital, London, and that the first chair in venereology was to be established at the Middlesex Hospital, London.

During subsequent meetings Council agreed to invite Professor I. Phillips and Dr E. Stolz to join the Editorial Committee of the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases*, and Dr R. D. Catterall announced that he had been asked to become the next adviser to the Department of Health and Social Security. It was agreed that the January 1979 ordinary general meeting should start at 7.00 p.m. to see if this would make attendance easier for provincial members. It was also agreed that recorded telephone messages for use when clinics were closed would be of value, the content of the messages being dictated by local circumstances.

An extraordinary council meeting was held at the Middlesex Hospital on 28 July to discuss the proposed new consultant contract. Its possible ill effects on our specialty were recognised, and it was agreed that direct representation to the Royal Commission should be made, indicating the areas of our disquiet, it having been previously ascertained that such representation would be acceptable.

The Editor of the *Journal*, Dr R. N. Thin, and his assistant editors, Dr J. D. Oriel and Dr B. A. Evans, merit our congratulations on maintaining the high standard of papers and extracts under mounting difficulties of financial strictures and pressures within the British Medical Association. The new format of the *Journal* has met with general approval and so far the first three issues of Volume 54 show a slight increase in size on Volume 53, which was 17 pages smaller than Volume 52.

At the Editorial Committee meeting, which was attended by Dr S. Lock, Editor of the *British Medical Journal*, relief was expressed that Dr Thin had

agreed to continue in post and not to retire in October as had been his original intention. Dr Lock expressed concern over the loss of 33 subscriptions from the British Isles but stated that world wide the overall pattern was the same as that shown by other specialist journals. The new format of the *Journal* was discussed and the question of change of title was raised, but it was agreed that the title should remain unchanged. The relationship of the *Journal* to the British Medical Association was discussed, as was the composition of the Editorial Committee. Discussion on both these matters continues. Dr A. E. Wilkinson tendered his resignation from the Committee and Dr Thin expressed gratitude for all the work he had done over the years.

Since the last report of the Secretary of the MSSVD was prepared, the Specialist Advisory Committee on Venereology has met twice. Very few senior registrar posts remain to be visited, and it was noted that the JCHMT had set a deadline of June 1979, by which time all initial visits are to be completed. More than 40 posts have been visited and approved for senior registrar training. Since there was an obvious need to tailor the number of training posts to the expected consultant vacancies the Committee had approached the British Co-operative Clinical Group for help to compile as complete a list as possible of future consultant vacancies.

The Specialist Advisory Committee considered and accepted applications for enrolment from a number of trainees but noted that there are still some senior registrars who have yet to enrol. Applications from trainees without acceptable higher qualifications have been deferred pending reassurance from their heads of departments that the standards of their general medical training had been satisfactory. It was noted that the JCHMT would only recognise part-time trainees who worked at least half-time. All trainees appointed as consultants in the National Health Service or as specialists in EEC countries have been recommended for certificates of accreditation. Applications for accreditation from two doctors,

who were not trainees, were refused. The Specialist Advisory Committee felt that appointment committees for senior registrar posts in London teaching hospitals should contain at least one external assessor.

The European Union of Medical Specialties met in Liège on 5 and 6 May 1978, and Dr Duncan Catterall attended as our representative.

It would appear then that we can reasonably congratulate ourselves on a healthy and flourishing Society, which continues to expand both in the United Kingdom and abroad despite the many difficulties within the National Health Service and, more generally, in the present world-wide climate.

Finally, I must thank all those who have helped me during my first year in

what is becoming an even more onerous office, especially the President, Dr E. M. C. Dunlop, the Council, and my predecessor in office, Dr C. B. S. Schofield.

J. BARROW
Hon. Secretary