Message from the President

Xth International Congress of Logopedics and Phoniatrics
London, August 17-22, 1959

It was with particular pleasure that the delegates and members of our organization which covers some 20 countries, accepted the invitation to hold the next International Congress of Logopedics and Phoniatrics in London, the centre of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It is in England that medical science has taken many a new turn. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) rejected the old method of Natural Philosophy which leaned on authorities. In his Instauratio Magna he introduced a new way of interpreting natural phenomena, based on experience, and gave science the freedom necessary for the advancement of knowledge. To William Harvey (1578-1657) we owe the foundation of modern physiology, as well as the conception of pathology as a branch of physiology. His modesty which revealed itself not only in his demeanour, but also in the great care with which he repeatedly checked his observations before publication, is still exemplary. Just as nature provides enough space for a tree to develop fully, so the British Commonwealth has always promoted the growth of the spirit of liberty and enterprise. Small wonder, therefore, that e.g. Manuel Garcia (1805-1906) to whom medicine owes the invention of the laryngoscope entrusted his observations in the field of laryngology and his contributions to the art of singing to the publishers of an English journal. Laryngology and Phoniatrics have been represented in England by a number of distinguished workers. Sir Morell Mackenzie (1841-1902) published a book on singing and speaking, which is still read by many, and Lennox Browne (1841-1902), the founder of the Boyal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital, acquainted a wider public with the principles of voice and speech. The beginnings of speech therapy in the strict sense of the word can be found, however, only in the first three decades of the last century, after Dr. Henry McCormac had paved the way in his Treatise on the Cause and Cure of Hesitation of Speech (London 1828). Apart from French workers such as Bouillard and Broca (1824-1880) it was mainly English neurologists who were prominent in the fields of Aphasia and allied disorders. Suffice it to mention William Ogle (1867), Broadbent Wyllie (The Disorders of Speech, 1895), Collins (The Faculty of Speech, 1897) and above all J. Hughlings Jackson (1834-1911). At the turn of the century English speech therapists took up the findings arrived at by Continental and American workers. Yet Speech Therapy as a well ordered body of knowledge came into being only after Elsie Fogerty (St. Tomas’ Hospital), Mac Mahon (St. Bartholomew’s Hospital), L. Stein (Tavistock Clinic) as well as J. Boome, C. Worster-Drought, H. Baines, D. Harries had given fresh impetus to our specialty. The organization of Speech Therapy associated with such names as Joan Van Thai, Marion Fleming, Anne MacAllister, Muriel Morley, Sylvia Hudson-Smith, Joyce Wilkins, Edna Butfield and others culminated in the foundation of the College of Speech Therapists (1944). Its objects are to promote the Art and Science of Speech Therapy, to supervise the training of speech therapists in recognized schools, and to act as a qualifying body. British Speech Therapy has reached a high
standard inasmuch as it has, in Dr. Síeire’s words, “weighed the findings of foreign workers and integrated them with British ideas in such a way as to arrive at first principles, and to weave the facts into a systematic fabric of knowledge (1948)”. Phoniatriics has revealed itself to be a fertile field for research. The ten volumes of the Folia Phoniatriica provide ample evidence of the extensive research which has been carried out in our specialty. Even for a scientific inquirer who aspired to the highest excellence our branch of medicine offers ample opportunities. It may be hoped that the forthcoming Congress of the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatriics will gather new friends from medical, educational and academic circles.
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