

1946

OUR SOCIETY TODAY

Presidential Address

WILLIAM H. DANIEL, M.D., LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

THE privilege of presiding at this meeting in San Francisco is an honor, of which a native son of California is sincerely appreciative. Your preceding presidents have presented to you the beginning, the progress, and the future of our Society, which has been the foundation of the specialty of Proctology in America. It would be like putting sand in the mortar for me to attempt to add anything to the structure so well built.

In an effort to depict fully the theme of this address "Our Society Today," and to give due credit to the men, the members of standing and special committees, who are responsible for our present status, I have deviated from the usual trend of presidential addresses, and have asked the chairmen of these several committees to present a brief resume of their work to you.

Our Society, a comparatively small, although a closely allied part of the American Medical Association, is confronted with the common enemy of the American way of life, that is, federalization, regimentation, or socialization of medicine. Although at this moment this subject does not have priority in our law-making bodies, it has not been forgotten and will be brought out with a greater effort when the opportune time arrives. Many States, including California, have voluntary medical plans which are answering a part of the question of pre-paid medical care. This subject will be presented to you by the Chairman of the Committee on Public Policy and Legislation, Doctor Joseph W. Ricketts, our President-elect. (See page 45).

Prior to and during the war the Committee on Military Affairs influenced the military authorities to recognize Proctology as a specialty. Doctor Louis A. Buie will now bring the report of his committee up to date. (See page 32).

Our total enrollment today is approximately 200 members of all classes. There are many ethical, well trained men who are majoring in Proctology in the United States who have not become associated with our organization, because they have not been invited to join or have not recognized the merits of our Society. Our neighbors to the north and south are desirous of joining with us in the advancement of the specialty in the Americas. Argentina and Brazil have recently organized Proctologic Associations and have requested our cooperation and have invited us to join with them in their meetings in their own Countries. The committee on the Survey of Proctologists in the United

States has been working for two years on this subject. Chairman, Doctor Martin Kleckner, of Allentown, Pennsylvania, will report to you the work of that committee. (See page 33).

We are all interested in the American Board of Surgery and Proctology. Such information as may be permissible will now be given to you by Doctor Curtice Rosser, of Dallas, Texas. (See page 35).

We as Proctologists are vitally interested in the fee schedules established by insurance companies, pre-paid medical plans of our own profession, and those of political organizations. For too long anorectal operations have been regarded as minor procedures, and it is our opinion that they should be on the same basis as those in every other branch of surgery, and that the term minor be discarded. Insurance carriers, offering protection against malpractice, accept fees from advertising rectal specialists, and when these policy holders are sued the insurance company makes an appeal for ethical specialists to testify in their behalf on the pretext that any unfavorable judgment reacts against the whole profession. The chairman of the committee on Insurance problems Doctor Edward J. Martin, of Detroit, Michigan, has appointed Doctor Fred Campbell of Kansas City as his representative who will review the report. (See pages 37 and 53).

Since 1944 a committee on Post-War Planning has been at work with the object in view of providing for returning service men, post-graduate courses, residencies, teaching positions, new locations, associations with established specialists, etc. This program had been progressing normally during the war, but when V-E and V-J days arrived unexpectedly, and rapid demobilization began, our committee was beset with the problem of supplying these objectives as an emergency project. Last but not least, it is appropriate that the chairman of this committee, Doctor Louis E. Moon of Omaha, who worked with Doctors Buie and Hirschman on a special assignment, present to you one of the most important achievements of the past two years. (See page 41).

You have heard from the men responsible for "Our Society Today," and what has been accomplished in the past few years. Our thanks and appreciation for duties ably performed by the members of the council, Doctors Homer I. Silvers, George H. Thiele, and A. W. Martin Marino: To the Vice President Herbert T. Hayes, to the Editor of the Transactions, Frederick C. Smith, to the Treasurer, Hoyt R. Allen, and to the Secretary, Harry E. Bacon.

Our organization has grown slowly and will continue to do so. Proctology is now recognized as a specialty and takes its rightful place

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

with all other branches of medicine. This is an incentive for men interested in Proctology to perfect themselves, and it is the duty of this Society to aid them in obtaining the necessary training.

In our invitations to guests, potential members, we must not forget that our organization is the group which is recognized and with which these men desire to affiliate. At the same time we must think of the standards of our Society, and realize that structures may be built only with the material at hand. We should also encourage those interested, to consider Proctology as one of the highest branches of surgery and not as an adjunct to a general practice. We must not limit ourselves to a narrow field, but must realize that our specialty is so intimately correlated with others, that unless we are alert we may encroach upon another. A Proctologist must be a diagnostician, and a surgeon.