CENTENARY OF THE QUEKETT MICROSCOPICAL CLUB

THE Quekett Microscopical Club celebrated its centenary with an exhibition at the Central Hall, Westminster, during October 8–9. This club, named in commemoration of Prof. John T. Quekett of the Royal College of Surgeons (1815–1861), has fostered the interests of microscopists by holding meetings and promoting field work throughout the past hundred years.

Foremost among the exhibits were a number of family relics loaned by Captain Charles Quekett, the great-grandson of John Quekett. Several examples of Quekett's work, including the manuscript of the *Catalogue of the Histological Collection* and a small selection of his microscopical preparations, were displayed by the Royal College of Surgeons. A fine display of microscopes made before 1865 was shown by Dr. H. Heywood. Mr. E. P. Herlihy's exhibit of portable microscopes, many of which dated from the past century, emphasized the great part these models have played in the history of the Club by facilitating the demonstration of microscopical preparations at the meetings. The historical display also included numerous examples of instruments and accessories designed or made by past members, and the work of Richard Beck, Andrew and Thomas Ross, Powell and Lealand, J. W. Stephenson, F. H. Wenham and Julius Rheinberg was well represented. Dr. Savile Bradbury contributed a special display devoted to E. M. Nelson—one of the Club's most famous members; and we were reminded that Ernst Abbe had been an honorary member of many years standing.

The rest of the space in the main hall was devoted to members' and guests' individual exhibits. The light reflexion in the eye of the spur dogfish was shown to be due to the presence of guanine crystals in the layer known as the silvery tapetum. Two exhibits of electron micrography in the investigation of neurophysiology and neuropathology were shown by Drs. Bradbury, Harris and Salmon. Prof. Booth from Saskatoon demonstrated his Kerr-effect microscope for the visualization of magnetic domains. Dr. Gahan gave a demonstration of the cytochemistry of chromosomes. These were but a few of the exhibits, which also included beautiful mounts of diatoms and mosses among the 'showpieces'.

The versatility and skill of members was shown by various pieces of apparatus for aiding microscopical techniques. These included various kinds of magazine slide-carriers, a home-constructed mounting cabinet incorporating an electrically driven ringing turntable, a simple but very effective mechanical finger for aiding the arranging and mounting of diatoms and similar minute objects, and a tube-length corrector mounted in the body-work of a microscope. Three members showed microscopes made by themselves. An original display showed the use of paper-sculptures to illustrate microscopic and natural-history specimens. A number of excellent drawings and paintings of entomological and botanical subjects were shown by Miss Dorothy Fitchew.

A programme of films included a 16-mm sound colour film on modern freeze-sectioning by the Pathology Department of the Royal College of Surgeons, and another, by a member, dealing with crystal growth. Sessions of micro-projection on a home-built machine by Mr. H. S. Henderson aroused admiration.

A trade exhibition was held in the smaller hall and many firms displayed their latest models of microscopes and photomicrographic apparatus. Many teaching aids for microscopy were on view, and a display of live *Daphnia* and *Volvox* projected by Flatters and Garnett evoked much interest. Dissection microscopes and equipment were shown in addition to knife-sharpening machines and an automatic staining apparatus.

It is estimated that about a thousand people attended the exhibition. These included a number of young people from schools and technical colleges, and it is anticipated that many will, in the future, want to join this flourishing club. The general opinion seemed to be that the centenary of the Club that commemorates that foremost microscopist of the past century, Prof. John T. Quekett, had been worthily celebrated.

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TEACHING IN THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

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IN 1960 a questionnaire was sent out to British and Commonwealth universities to determine what teaching was being done in the history and philosophy of science[1]. As it was felt that some of the information was now out of date, it was decided in April 1965 to make a further survey, restricting it this time to British and Irish universities. Since 1960 a number of new universities have been established; there have also been numerous debates on the so-called 'two cultures'. It was, therefore, of interest to see whether these factors had had any significant effect on the development of the subject. In all 34 replies were received. These covered the greater part of the universities to which circulars were sent, and they can be said to give a representative picture of the state of teaching in the subject at the moment.

What general impression does one gain when one looks over the replies? First, it seems clear that there have been no dramatic developments. The past five years have been a period of consolidation rather than rapid advance. There has, it is true, been the establishment of two new departments in the history of science and technology. One at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, the other at the Manchester College of Science and Technology. A Department of the History and Philosophy of Science has also been set up at Queen's University, Belfast.

The consolidation has perhaps been greatest in those institutions where independent appointments have been made. Where the teaching has been largely on a voluntary basis, there has in some cases been an actual decrease in activity, either due to the interested member of the staff leaving the institution or getting disheartened. As was noted in the 1960 survey, one of the reasons why the subject has not grown commensurately with its educational