

# Obituary

## Professor D. G. Millar

DAVID GAVIN MILLAR, Foundation Professor of Human Reproduction and Obstetrics at the University of Southampton, died on March 4 at the age of forty-one. The son of a general practitioner, he was born in Durham and educated at Durham School. He studied medicine at the University of Durham (at Newcastle upon Tyne), graduating with honours in 1952. He was elected FRCS in 1959 and MRCOG in 1962.

As an undergraduate he won the Gibson Prize in Obstetrics and the British Medical Association essay competition for medical students in 1952—the subject of his essay was “The Training of the Student in Personal Relationships between Doctor and Patient”. After a distinguished undergraduate career and service in the RAMC he returned to Newcastle upon Tyne where he trained first as a general surgeon and then as a gynaecologist. He soon secured the reputation of a highly skilled and sympathetic clinician and on this sound foundation he built his research interests. As Luccock Research Fellow from December 1959 to March 1961 he mastered the use of the digital computer and produced programs for the handling

of data from the community study of obstetrics in the City of Newcastle upon Tyne. This personal experience of the application of computer techniques to research in obstetrics led to his taking a serious and lasting interest in the application of the computer to a wide variety of problems in medicine and to his appointment to a number of important medical committees. One of the highlights of the 17th British Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in 1965 was his paper on the contribution of the computer to research in obstetrics. David Millar was one of the few medical men who really understood and could talk authoritatively on the subject. He also contributed notably to the success of the new undergraduate curriculum in Newcastle upon Tyne. He understood the need to break away from the narrow, “departmental” approach to teaching with its tendency to present medicine as a series of disjointed and unrelated specialties. He was, in fact, a strong supporter of the integrated pattern of teaching and argued convincingly that human reproduction, touching on so many disciplines, lent itself to this approach. In Newcastle he helped build up a library of objective multiple choice questions for use in the final examinations and his complete grasp of the computer

analysis of such questions led in time to his appointment as chairman of the committee appointed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to supervise the setting and marking of the new MRCOG (Part 1) multiple choice question paper.

A major research interest, which extended over many years, was the effect of certain obstetric events on the physical and intellectual development of children. Here he collaborated principally with Dr Gerald Neligan in the Department of Child Health and several important papers were delivered to societies in the United Kingdom and America. He showed, for example, that such obstetric complications as vaginal breech delivery and placenta praerina had a significantly adverse effect on the IQ of surviving children at the age of 5 years.

His recent appointment to the chair in Southampton seemed to set the seal on what was to be a brilliant career and his tragic death at such an early age is a grievous loss to the subject and Southampton. Already David Millar had established a national reputation and had he lived he would certainly have reached the front rank of his chosen specialty. He is survived by his wife (also a doctor), two sons and twin daughters.

## Announcements

### University News

**Professor Gordon Atherley** has been appointed to the newly established chair of safety and hygiene in the **University of Aston in Birmingham**.

**Dr E. N. Corlett** has been appointed to the newly established chair of industrial ergonomics in the **University of Birmingham** and **Dr D. G. Walker** has been appointed to a chair of biochemistry.

**Dr C. Andrew** has been appointed to the chair of mechanical engineering, **Dr J. F. Mitchell** to the chair of pharmacology and **Dr R. D. Milne** to the chair of theoretical mechanics, all in the **University of Bristol**.

**Dr D. J. Osborne**, deputy director of the ARC Unit of Developmental Botany, has been elected to a fellowship at Churchill College, **University of Cambridge**.

**Sir Frederick Warner** has been appointed chairman of the council of the **School of Pharmacy, University of London**, in succession to **Sir Harry Jephcott**.

**Mr L. C. B. Gower** will succeed **Professor Kenneth Mather** as vice-chancellor of the **University of Southampton**.

**Professor T. A. Bennet-Clark**, University of East Anglia, has been appointed Royal Society visiting professor in the Department of Botany, **University of Zambia**.

### Miscellaneous

**Dr George R. Hill**, dean of the College of Mines and Mineral Industries at the University of Utah, will be the 1971 recipient of the H. H. Storch award for research on coal chemistry, presented by the Fuel Division of the **American Chemical Society**.

### International Meetings

May 24, **Environmental Influences on Reproduction**, London (Dr R. E. Lister, Inveresk Research International, Inveresk Gate, Musselburgh, Midlothian).

May 31–June 2, **Canadian Chemical Conference**, Halifax, NS (The Chemical Institute of Canada, 151 Slater Street, Room 906, Ottawa 4, Ontario, Canada).

June 6–11, **European Rheumatology Congress**, Brighton (Congress Secretariat, c/o Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, 8–10 Charing Cross Road, London WC2).

June 10–11, **Metabolism and Disease**, Ottawa (Dr R. S. Meldrum, Food and Drug Directorate, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa 3, Ontario, Canada).

July 5–9, **Introductory Course in Tropical Hygiene**, London (Ross Institute of Tropical Hygiene, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street (Gower Street), London WC1E 7HT).

July 8–9, **Behavioural Aspects of Parasite Transmission**, London (The Executive Secretary, Linnean Society of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0LQ).

August 16–28, **Organizations and Computers**, Dubrovnik (L. Radanovic, Centre of Advanced Studies, PO Box 356, Belgrade, Yugoslavia).

September 9–12, **Taxonomy and Phyto-geography of Higher Plants in Relation to Evolution**, Manchester (Dr C. A. Stace, Department of Botany, University, Manchester M13 9PL).

September 13–16, **Liquid Scintillation Counting**, Brighton (Mr M. A. Crook, Society for Analytical Chemistry, 9–10 Savile Row, London W1X 1AF).

September 14–16, **Quinone Chemistry**, Aberdeen (Dr L. Batt, Department of Chemistry, University of Aberdeen, Mes-ton Walk, Aberdeen AB9 2UE).

October 13–18, **The Protection of Nature and its Environment**, Rouen (Protechna-COMET, 48 Quai de Paris, 76 Rouen, France).