

## **NINETY YEARS AGO, SEPTEMBER, 1922**

Frank J. McCabe, MD, looks at the etiology and treatment for glaucoma. He begins by noting how once some thought it was an affection in the vitreous humor, and others in the optic nerve and retina. It was Von Graefe who brought together the various signs and symptoms in a more complete understanding. The author that while there is no clear explanation for the etiology of glaucoma, patients should be considered individually. "Glaucoma simplex with little or no increased tension and fields and vision changing but slowly, I feel that conservative treatment would be the choice. In the inflammatory type, the sooner the operation the better."

L.L. Albert, MD, discusses the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis with reference to radium. He begins by stating that chronic arthritis develops not only because of long continued bacterial infections, but also from metabolic disturbances, gastrointestinal derangements, exposure, diseased teeth, tonsils and "so many other causes too numerous to mention." The main problem is to find a means for the system to eliminate the systemic infection. While using vaccines and proteins, radium treatments for extreme cases have shown the most marked success. "So pronounced have been the results obtained from the use of radium in the therapy of chronic articular rheumatism that I feel certain that a new and wide field of research has been opened to our profession in the use of this substance, and what the future will show as a result of experimentation with radium is indeed beyond our conception."

And editorial states that every effort is made by the advertising management to know that journal advertisements are of ethical character and represent the best in their special line of merchandise; for obvious reasons they must decline, however, to entertain any suggestion of editorial comment or praise of various commodities that are advertised within the journal, however worthy they may be of commendation.

## **FIFTY YEARS AGO, AUGUST, 1962**

Charles Rob, MD, presents a piece on the surgical treatment of stenosis and thrombosis of the extracranial portions of the carotid arteries. In a series of 431 patients with proved stenosis or thrombosis of the extracranial cerebral arteries, the cause was atherosclerosis in all but one patient. Two main lines of development were likely to occur. The first concerned the surgery of partial occlusions which were, to a large extent, prophylactic procedures. With complete occlusions, the development of a sense of urgency amongst those who care for those patients so that operation could be performed within a few hours of the onset might well lead to considerable improvement in the results of treatment.

An editorial discusses mechanical medicine, or, "Tender Loving Care By Machine?" "No one can deny the great value of the various mechanical, electrical, and related types of apparatus now

in use in the diagnosis and treatment of diseased human beings. Such instruments, developed by modern engineering skill and based on the advancement of knowledge in the fields of physics, chemistry, and other basic sciences, are of the utmost importance in medicine. Radiologic and electrocardiographic examinations, to cite two of the more familiar procedures, yield diagnostic information that saves many lives every day of the year."

In a piece regarding physicians and lobbying, it's suggested that the doctor, as any citizen, certainly has a right to express his views on any and all legislation. But when he speaks on legislative proposals affecting health and welfare he finds himself unduly criticized. Yet, like any person engaged in a specific art or craft, he has an intimate knowledge by reason of his life career that qualifies him eminently as a critic of such proposals which may not be in the best interests of good health for the public.

## **TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, AUGUST, 1987**

Seebert J. Goldowsky, MD, provides a brief overview of the 175-year history of the Rhode Island Medical Society citing the charter from the Rhode Island General Assembly at its February session in 1812, and an organizational meeting called by Amos Throop, MD, for April 22, 1812 in the Senate Chamber of the old State House on Benefit Street in Providence. Throop became the first president and the first annual meeting was held on September 1, 1812 at the same location as the organizational meeting.

From that same meeting was read a discourse by Edmund T. Waring. Among his comments was this particular address:

"Gentlemen of the Medical Society of Rhode Island: From the conviction that medical science has been advanced by the united energies of individuals, you have laudably associated yourselves for its diffusion and improvement. As Physicians, you have individually estimated the importance and dignity of the profession which you have embraced; you have realized the weighty responsibilities attached to it; you have been the guardians of the health and lives of your fellow citizens. From the moment that man ushers into being, through the varying and perilous track of life, even to that solemn moment when Nature's mandate is to be obeyed, you have been his hope; the sympathizing colleague of the ministers of peace, to alleviate the agonies of death."

To briefly quote a discourse prepared by an anonymous author published during the tenth year of the Society's existence: "Never was learning more general; sense more common; reason more enlightened; society more refined; the arts more flourishing; and the sciences more diligently cultivated than at the present day. Geniuses are springing up in every direction, and are busily employed in the constructions of fabrics to commemorate themselves to posterity. It seems as if human intelligence were beginning to acknowledge no bounds."