

To Our Readers

Medical History was founded in January 1957 and was designed to cater for the needs of the ever-increasing number of readers who are interested in the historical and humanistic aspects of medicine. The vitality of medico-historical studies is proved by the large numbers of books and papers now being recorded and indexed in the invaluable guide to *Current Work in the History of Medicine* prepared by the staff of the Wellcome Historical Medical Library.

As a medium for the publication of serious work on the history and bibliography of medicine *Medical History* has received wide support from individuals, from libraries, and from many of the leading historical clubs and societies.

Although *Medical History* is a British journal—the only one of its kind—it is international in its scope and it has been privileged to publish articles by leading medical historians from many parts of the world. Representation has been given not only to the work of established authorities in this field but also to that of junior contributors, including medical students.

The number of contributions submitted to the Editor continues to be almost overwhelming, and limitations of space and frequency of issue have necessarily imposed a time-lag on the publication of many valuable papers.

Medical History has hitherto been subsidised by its publishers, but at the end of its third year it became apparent that rapidly rising production costs meant an increasing gap between subscription income and expenditure. In these circumstances a lowering of printing standards, a drastic reduction in size, or an increase in the subscription rate seemed inevitable, and the future of the journal appeared to be very uncertain.

It is with deep gratitude that we are able to report that the Wellcome Trustees have made a grant which will ensure the continued publication of *Medical History* over the next five years. This generous action will enable us not only to maintain the present standard of production but also to increase the size of the journal, and this without any increase in the subscription rates.

Medical History extends its thanks to all those contributors and subscribers at home and abroad who have given their support during the last three and a half years.

Every effort will be made to justify the confidence expressed by the very generous action of the Wellcome Trustees by making the journal self-supporting. In order to achieve this end we must find more subscribers, both individual and institutional.

Readers of *Medical History* are asked to help by continuing their subscriptions and by bringing the journal to the notice of their friends.

W. J. BISHOP, *Editor*.