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INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS 2027

MEDICAL NEWS 2033

Lessons From Love Canal . . . Bladder Problems in Multiple Sclerosis . . . Epidemiology of Multiple Sclerosis . . . Prophylaxis for Traveler's Diarrhea . . . Viremia in Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease? . . . Clinfo System

FROM THE NIH 2041

JAMA 75 YEARS AGO 2106

REFERENCE DIRECTORIES

Previous Listings: US Meetings, Oct 6; Meetings Outside the US, Sept 8; Organizations, Oct 20; State Associations and Exams and Licensure, Sept 22; AMA Officials, Oct 6 (p 1596)

LETTERS 2044

The Value of Microscopic Examination of Urinary Sediment R. M. Donauer, MD, Chicago . . . **The Case of the Triangular Foreign Body** D. D. Von Hoff, MD, N. R. Dunnick, MD, Bethesda, Md . . . **Left-Coronary-Artery to Left-Ventricle Fistula** A. I. Midell, MD, G. A. Bermudez, MD, Chicago . . . **Inhibition by Raw Eggs of Vitamin B₁₂ Absorption** A. Doscherholmen, MD, Minneapolis . . . **Chromium Supplementation and Diabetes** A. Wise, PhD, Isfahan, Iran . . . **Feeding Jejunostomy via Stomach** S. C. Elerding, MD, E. E. Moore, MD, Denver . . . **Enterobius in an Unusual Location** P. Snow, MD, G. Cartwright, PhD, Cumberland, Md, R. Rumbaugh, MD, Meyersdale, Pa . . . **Malpractice Suits** H. B. Moss, MD, Indianapolis . . . **Thyroid Hormones in Uncontrolled Diabetes Mellitus** S. Rosenblatt, MD, J. M. Hershman, MD, Los Angeles . . . **Academic Viability of Family Medicine** W. M. Rodney, MD, Los Angeles, B. Z. Paulshock, MD, Wilmington, Del . . . **Severe Bradycardia With Clonidine** L. Van Etta, MD, H. Burchell, MD, Minneapolis

COMMENTARY

The Cost of Maternity Care in Rural Hospitals 2051
H. A. Hein, MD, N. N. Ferguson, RN, Iowa City

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Coronary Angiogram Interpretation 2053

J. E. Galbraith, MD; M. L. Murphy, MD; N. de Soyza, MD, Little Rock, Ark

Un-cross-matched Blood for Emergency Transfusion 2057

N. Blumberg, MD, J. R. Bove, MD, New Haven, Conn

Lung Tomography in Cancer Patients 2060

W. F. Sindelar, MD, PhD; D. H. Bagley, MD; E. L. Felix, MD; J. L. Doppman, MD; A. S. Ketcham, MD, Bethesda, Md

Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation 2064

R. G. Lerner, MD; J. C. Nelson, MD; P. Corines, MD; L. R. M. del Guercio, MD, New York

Gentamicin Tissue Accumulation and Nephrotoxic Reactions 2067

J. J. Schentag, PharmD; T. J. Cumbo, MD; W. J. Jusko, PhD; M. E. Plaut, MD, Buffalo

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

The Quality of Perinatal Care in Small Rural Hospitals 2070

H. A. Hein, MD, Iowa City

BRIEF REPORTS

Gray-Scale Ultrasonic Cholecystography 2073

A. H. Wolson, MD, B. B. Goldberg, MD, Philadelphia

Idiopathic Chronic Intestinal Pseudo-obstruction 2075

D. L. Faulk, MD; S. Anuras, MD; J. B. Freeman, MD, FRCS(C), Iowa City

CLINICAL NOTES

Aorto-esophageal Fistula 2077

L. A. Smaha, MD, PhD; T. Klima, MD; L. L. Leatherman, MD, Houston

Dislocation and Component Separation of the Bateman Hip Endoprosthesis 2079

P. R. Anderson, MD, J. W. Milgram, MD, Chicago

Endobronchial Metastasis of Uterine Leiomyosarcoma 2080

K. J. Flynn, MD, H-S. Kim, MD, Houston

Accessory Spleen in Hodgkin's Disease 2081

Maj J. M. Jacobson, MC, USAF, Travis Air Force Base, Calif, Col R. D. Reynolds, MC, USAF, Davis, Calif

CONTENTS—Continued

EDITORIALS

Quality and Cost 2082
American Medical Association Membership 2082

TOPICS IN RADIOLOGY

Neonate With Abdominal Calcifications 2083
 C. Beeststone, MB, BS, DMRD, Rochester, NY

STATE OF THE ART

Hyperventilation Syndrome 2093
 J. C. Missri, MD, S. Alexander, MD, Boston

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 2097

The Postoperative Hydrocele D. A. Culp, MD, Iowa City . . . **Abacterial Cystitis** A. C. Uson, MD, Madrid . . . **Punctate Keratitis and Medryson Therapy** I. H. Leopold, MD, Irvine, Calif, R. P. Burns, MD, Portland, Ore . . . **Bilateral Cataracts in Elderly Woman: Should Both Be Removed?** J. Hartstein, MD, St Louis . . . **The Blood Donor: Benefit vs Risk** H. A. Perkins, MD, San Francisco

THE BOOK FORUM 2101

The Alien Doctors (Stevens, Goodman, Mick) Reviewed by P. C. Anderson, MD, Columbia, Mo . . . **Atlas of Diagnostic Cytology (Gompel) Aspiration Cytology of the Breast** (Schondorf) Reviewed by T. S. Kline, MD, Philadelphia . . . **Neuroses** (Gray) Reviewed by N. C. Andreasen, MD, Iowa City . . . **Surgical Pediatric Urology** (Eckstein, Hohenfellner, Williams, eds) Reviewed by L. R. King, MD, Chicago . . . **In Brief**

OBITUARIES 2103

SELECTED ABSTRACTS 2105

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING 2113

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS 2124

CORRECTION

ECFMG and FLEX 2047

The Cover

John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), along with Mary Cassatt and James McNeill Whistler, was one of the few internationally recognized American artists of the 19th century. Born in Florence, Italy, to a middle-class expatriate family, he received his formal artistic training in Florence, later studying in Paris under Carolus-Duran. Duran, a successful portraitist, passed his skill on to the young student. Sargent, although destined to become the most fashionable society painter of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was also interested in genre painting. *Street in Venice* (cover) is a representative work from a large number of Italian daily-life scenes that the artist did during visits to Venice in 1880 and 1882. The street shown has been identified as Calle Larga dei Proverbi.

Stylistically, *Street in Venice* marks an extremely interesting phase in Sargent's vast opus. Sargent had made a trip to Madrid in 1879 to study the Spanish master Velázquez. Then, in 1880, he went to Holland to copy the works of Frans Hals. *Street in Venice* is a masterful reinterpretation of the brushwork of these two great artists combined with a spatial arrangement developed by a contemporary Italian artist, Giovanni Boldini. Boldini, a close friend of Sargent, had developed a new type of perspective. He blurred the frontal plane, or the area closest to the viewer, and placed the participants far back in the picture—deliberately creating a strange, vacuumlike setting. Sargent adapts this new approach to its greatest advantage, creating a dramatic and mysterious effect. The ragged young girl walks silently down the alley in a self-contained pose. Her black shawl carries the

continued on page 2072

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