

# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1946

## THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES MID- WINTER SESSION

The first interim session of the House of Delegates was held in Chicago at the headquarters of the American Medical Association, December 9 to 11. The attendance by practically every delegate entitled to be present or by an alternate indicated the interest in the work of the organization.

Among the topics considered attention centered particularly on the report relative to the public relations of the Association; the revision of the Constitution and By-Laws; continued progress in the development of prepayment plans for medical costs; the medical care of miners, with a report by Admiral Boone on the survey now being conducted under his direction; the establishment of representation for the Veterans Administration in the Fellowship of the Association and in the House of Delegates; membership for general practitioners on hospital staffs; the plans for celebration of the centennial of the American Medical Association, and the report of the judicial council on brutal experiments by Nazi physicians. Other resolutions dealt with the functions of various agencies of the American Medical Association.

In this issue appear some of the minutes of the proceedings of the House of Delegates. The remainder will be published in issues that follow. Much of the discussion was held in executive session, and because it deals with intimate affairs of the Association these proceedings will appear in condensed form. As was emphasized in THE JOURNAL after the annual session of the Association last June, the report on public relations led to actions of the Board of Trustees making immediately effective certain recommendations. Thus there is now in the headquarters of the Association a division of public relations under an executive assistant to the general manager. This division will have the responsibility for the public relations activities of all councils, bureaus, publications and other agencies and operations of the Association. The activities include the preparation of a news letter for county and state

medical societies; releases of information to the press and radio; assistance in the preparation of pamphlets and brochures, and the general function of interpretation of the Association and its work to the public.

A significant action of the House of Delegates was the amendment of the By-Laws so that general officers and delegates will now be eligible for election to the presidency of the Association. In former years it has been necessary for the person selected for such honor to resign from the position held before nomination could be made.

So significant were many of the actions taken by this session of the House of Delegates that it is hoped every physician will study the minutes carefully. The amazing rapidity of growth of the Association and the multiplicity of its functions have indicated for some time the necessity for more formal assignment of various activities and considerations to its various agencies. No doubt increased efficiency will become apparent as these measures begin to be properly established and coordinated.

## FRIEDLÄNDER'S PNEUMONIA

Friedländer in 1882 described an encapsulated bacillus<sup>1</sup> which he believed was the chief etiologic agent of lobar pneumonia. His report was based, unfortunately, on postmortem findings, which, judged by more modern bacteriologic experience, are of doubtful value. A few years later other investigators<sup>2</sup> demonstrated conclusively that the common cause of lobar pneumonia is the pneumococcus. Nevertheless the concept that Friedländer's bacillus is associated with pneumonia and other respiratory tract infections pervaded textbooks and periodical medical literature for more than fifty years. Some investigators found that pneumonia due primarily to Friedländer's bacillus is relatively uncommon, if not a clinical rarity. Other writers have contended that in a small though definite percentage of cases of pneumonia Friedländer's bacillus is the primary cause.

Baehr, Shwartzman and Greenspan<sup>3</sup> reported that only 2 proved cases of primary Friedländer's pneumonia were observed at the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York in thirty-six years. The 198 Friedländer bacillus infections reported by them were in large part of the gastrointestinal tract, the genitourinary tract and the biliary tract; pneumonia and other upper respiratory infections were fourth in their list. Of 61 cases in which the intra-abdominal suppuration was apparently due to this organism, 53 were abscesses of the appendix. Friedländer's bacillus was far more commonly found in infections following perforations of the intestinal tract than in infections of any other organ. They reported

1. Friedländer, Carl: Ueber die Schizomyceten bei der acuten fibrinösen Pneumonie, Virchows Arch. f. path. Anat. **87**: 319, 1882.

2. Fraenkel, A.: Weitere Beiträge zur Lehre von den Mikrokokken der genuinen fibrinösen Pneumonie, Ztschr. f. klin. Med. **2**: 437, 1886. Sternberg, Y. M.: The Pneumonia-Coccus of Friedländer, Am. J. M. Sc. **90**: 106, 435, 1885.

3. Baehr, George; Shwartzman, Gregory, and Greenspan, Edward B.: Bacillus Friedländer Infections, Ann. Int. Med. **10**: 1788 (June) 1937.