

SECOND AWARD OF MACCABAEN PRIZE AND MEDAL

THE second Maccabaean Prize and Medal has been awarded to a student from Yale University, Mr. Robert W. Shapiro, for his essay on 'The Life and Work of James Currie'. This annual prize, which is endowed by The Maccabaeans and awarded by the Faculty of the History of Medicine and Pharmacy of the Society of Apothecaries, consists of a specially designed bronze medal, and a money prize of 25 guineas. The competition is open to anybody under thirty years of age, and the prize is awarded for the best original essay on any aspect of the history of medicine or pharmacy. Mr. Shapiro was presented with the prize by the Chairman of the Faculty, Dr. W. S. C. Copeman, at the Osler Lecture at Apothecaries' Hall on Wednesday, 18 April, before an audience of students and members of the Faculty.

Mr. Shapiro is a student at Yale University School of Medicine, where students are encouraged to interrupt their formal studies for a year of research—usually outside the United States. He has been spending a year in England carrying out research into the life and activities of James Currie (1756–1805), an English physician who lived for a time in the American colonies, noted literary critic, and the editor of the poems of Robert Burns. The information which Mr. Shapiro collected during his stay in England has provided the material for the prize-winning essay. He returned to the United States in September to continue his clinical studies. The prize essay is to be published in full in a forthcoming issue of *Medical History*.

J. W.

THE THOMAS SYDENHAM–BENJAMIN RUSH TRANSITION IN THE HISTORY OF PSYCHIATRY

THERE appears to be a transition in the ideas of Thomas Sydenham¹ and Benjamin Rush which is meaningful in the historical development of psychiatry. Some basic background details about these physicians have been generally accepted and should be mentioned first. Sydenham (1624–89) had broad experience as a clinician,² recognized and described hysteria in his *Dissertatio Epistolaris* (1682), and noted its existence in men as well as women. Benjamin Rush (1746–1813) also was a clinician of broad experience, was very much influenced by Sydenham as shown in his autobiographical statements,³ and was indeed called 'the American Sydenham'. Goodman,⁴ the biographer of Rush, tells us that the latter's friend Lettsom,⁵ famed in his own right, believed that in some ways Rush surpassed Sydenham. In his comprehensive history of medicine, Major⁶ offers the opinion that Rush's *Medical Inquiries and Observations upon the Diseases of the Mind* is probably his most important scientific contribution.⁷ Zilboorg⁸ sees Rush as having introduced into psychiatry little that was original, and Roback⁹ seems lukewarm in his appraisal of Rush as a medical psychologist. Although Casamajor¹⁰ was unimpressed by Rush as the 'Father of American Psychiatry', he is nevertheless usually regarded as such and his publication of 1812 mentioned above is generally accepted as the first American psychiatric textbook, a work that retained its influence for several decades. Rush's fascinating and controversial personality is clearly delineated in biography and also in his