

Editorial

It is indeed our pleasure to write this editorial for the Acta Anaesthesiologica Melitensia: the only regular scientific publication from St Luke's Hospital Medical School since 1982.

The Association of Anaesthetists in Malta has these last 12 months been successful in:

- getting an education team from the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesia to visit the Island and report on the standard of the local practice of anaesthesia.
- obtaining affiliation with the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland.
- getting elected as a full member on the European advisory board on Paediatric anaesthesia.

The Association, although not a trade union, has worked unceasingly in the interest of all its members and this united approach has surely been a contributing factor in the success registered so far.

Although research in Malta is limited by lack of facilities and funds the Association has encouraged projects on scoline apnoea (pseudocholinesterase deficiency) and has been offered the excellent laboratory services of the London Post Graduate Medical School for blood studies.

The World wide distribution of this Acta has attracted contribution from Belgian, Spanish, Czechoslovak and South African authors. Its distribution makes the name of Malta better known and appreciated in scientific circles.

The Association is justly worried about the lack of interest that senior students and young doctors have in the speciality of anaesthesia. Are they afraid of shouldering the heavy responsibilities involved? Is it that such work has poor prospects financially? We are convinced however that this problem has developed because the facilities set up previously for training abroad in Belgium – tailor-made for those students with the U.K. recognition handicap – were not followed up. Hence the current large shortage of Maltese anaesthetists will still be with us for a long time yet.

The art of anaesthesia which this Acta humbly tries to promulgate is best expressed by the citizen of Boston (USA) epitaph on the tomb of V.Y.E. Morton:

Before whom in all time surgery was agony
Since whom science has control of pain.

Dr N. Azzopardi Dr D. Spiteri
Editors