

DELAYED RECOGNITION

It may be recalled (see reference on page 9) that Professor Eardley Holland—now Sir Eardley Holland—was mentioned, in *The Lancet*, July 14, 1945, as having suggested at the Celebration of the Centenary of Lawson Tait's birth, that the great surgeon's "original mind and services to surgery deserved to be commemorated in a statue in his adopted city. If Birmingham delayed, perhaps Edinburgh might claim the privilege . . ."

Twenty years have passed since the above statement was made and, in that time, no statue has been erected to Lawson Tait's memory either in Edinburgh or in Birmingham, but a more permanent, and to him we feel a more pleasing memorial now exists in the form of a research Trust bearing his name, which has carried that name into the University of Edinburgh, where a Lawson Tait Memorial Trust Research Fellowship was established and to which Dr. J. N. Harcourt-Webster was formally seconded on April 1st, 1965, for the twelve months ending March 31st, 1966, investigating enzymes in surgically removed thyroid glands in an attempt to determine the place of such studies in diagnosis of malignant and pre-malignant disease.

The Lawson Tait Memorial Trust, sponsors of this Fellowship came into being in the following manner:

HOW A TRUST WAS BORN

ON THE FIRST OF DECEMBER, 1959, four men sat around a table, in a room on the second floor of a business house in London; on the wall at the head of the table hung a portrait of Robert Lawson Tait. They comprised one journalist, (at that time London Editor for *Empire News* an influential Sunday news-

paper, since defunct, based on Manchester); one public relations executive; one advertising specialist and the convenor of the gathering, Mr. Wilfred Risdon—at that time the Secretary of the oldest-established and one of the most respected Anti-vivisection Societies in the world, the National Anti-vivisection Society of Great Britain. The subject was “Animal Experimentation, What is Wrong, and What Changes, if any, Are Desirable?”

MR. RISDON was asked to open the discussion and he said that for a very long time he had held the view that anti-vivisection societies should not accept the responsibility for finding methods alternative to animal experimentation; the onus was on those who do that sort of work, for, if the use of animals in this connection was forbidden by law they *would* find alternatives—necessity being the mother of invention.

Although he still thinks that to be true in the main, he does not now think it to be the *whole* truth. He now feels that a stage has been reached where something more than denunciation is required from opponents of animal experimentation and that they must be prepared to give some indication of positive and creative activities.

In the field of positive alternatives there are some already in existence, although not developed to anything like their full potential; instances are: clinical observation and investigation, substitution of tissue cultures for living animals, use of three-dimensional photography and plastic models in teaching anatomy and physiology, use of computers utilising results of case records in pathology, and many other such means. All these could be speeded up and given greater emphasis, not only without detriment to medical progress but actually to its advantage.

Replying to a point raised concerning drug-testing, Mr. Risdon conceded that experiment is necessary, but went on to say that the experiment is justified