THE LATE SIR ROBERT GEORGE ARCHIBALD, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.D., MAJOR (Retd.), R.A.M.C.

BY
Lieut.-General Sir NEIL CANTLIE, K.C.B., K.B.E., M.C.

ARCHIBALD was one of that select band of R.A.M.C. officers who served in the now almost forgotten Egyptian Army of the pre-1914 days. Service in the Medical Corps of the Egyptian Army was one of the much sought after plums of those days, but the outbreak of the First World War caused disappointment to many because they were not allowed to leave the Egyptian Army for service overseas. "Archie," as he was always called, left the Corps early in his career in order to succeed Sir Andrew Balfour as director of the Wellcome Research Laboratories in Khartoum, an appointment which indicated how highly his capabilities were regarded. For the next sixteen years he directed this important establishment and his name became well known in the realm of tropical medicine. With Byam, also a Major in the Corps, he collaborated to write The Practice of Medicine in the Tropics, and he devoted an increasing amount of time in later years to agricultural research, to the benefit of the cotton-growing industry which has done so much to further the prosperity of the Sudan.

"Archie" was the soul of honesty and no research worker was more critical of his own efforts. He was painstaking and meticulous, as research workers must be, and so enthusiastic that he sacrificed many a leave home to continue some absorbing subject in which he was immersed. I last met him in Alexandria in 2/5/53.
1950, where he was then Professor of Bacteriology, an appointment he had taken up after his retirement on age from the Sudan service.

The photograph, which includes Archibald, was taken in Khartoum in 1920 on the occasion of a levee held at the Palace.

Archibald is seated in front on the left, and on the right is Miralai Clarke Bey, Principal Medical Officer of the Egyptian Army. The names in the back row, reading from the left are, Bimbashi N. T. Whitehead, Bimbashi B. H. H. Spence and Bimbashi N. Cantlie. Bimbashi Spence is now Sir Basil Neven-Spence, former M.P. for Orkney and Shetland. The dress is the full dress of the Medical Corps of the Egyptian Army.

BLOOD PRESSURES AND COLD PRESSOR TESTS IN PSYCHONEUROTIC PATIENTS

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The relation between emotion and blood pressure is well known. Both normal subjects and subjects with benign essential hypertension respond with an increased blood pressure to the stress of an emotional situation. During a medical examination most patients’ blood pressures fall as they become more at ease and acclimatized to the unfamiliar procedures. Under conditions of absolute rest and quiet the blood pressure may fall very far below its initial value, and then respond with a large rise to a very slight stimulus (1).

From this sort of evidence, it might be expected that psychoneurotic patients would show large “emotional” variations in blood pressure, and this has been found in some cases (10). It is not, however, clear whether this is true of all psychoneurotics or only of certain groups (3).

Taking advantage of a visit to a military hospital for another purpose, it was decided to record the blood pressure in 70 psychoneurotics and to perform the cold pressor test on 22 of them. The interpretation of the cold pressor test, the reaction of the blood pressure to plunging the hand in ice-cold water, is controversial, but it may be taken as a measure of the lability of the blood pressure. It probably acts as a convenient form of painful stimulus (9).

METHOD

Blood Pressure Readings

Blood pressure readings were made on 70 psychoneurotic patients. The subjects were all soldiers, most of them between the ages of 18 and 25 (see Fig. 1). Blood pressure readings were taken with the subjects seated. Systolic and
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