

Editorials

THE PRACTITIONER'S HUNDRED YEARS

THE achievement of *The Practitioner* in surviving one hundred years of continuous publication is a matter on which all those who are associated with it must be congratulated. During its lifetime there have been many crises in publishing and many medical journals have gone under in the struggle. The College has special reasons for being grateful to the editor of *The Practitioner*. Although his journal is not dependent on any particular section of the profession and no society or institution claims it as its voice-piece, he has always given prominence to the work of the College; every year the annual report is reproduced in its pages, and in the early days the first newsletters of the College were reprinted. The James Mackenzie Lecture owes its existence to the generosity of the directors of *The Practitioner*. The continued success of *The Practitioner* is due to the great skill of its editor DR W. A. R. THOMSON, a man of strong principles, yet endowed with great vision and a wide range of interest. The 'symposium' method of publishing which he favours provides short, authoritative texts on individual systems and specialties and makes each number the last word on the subject chosen.

The July number—the centenary number—is a symposium on the last hundred years of medical progress in the widest sense, but the future is also 'taken care of'. An article on the future of general practice contributed by the president of the College, DR JOHN HUNT, shows how the recent changes in practice methods and organization are calculated to enrich the life of the family doctor. DR D. F. ROBB writing on everyday problems of general practice is more subdued in his vision of the future, and, though he agrees, as all good medical practitioners must, that family practice is a worthwhile career, there is a whiff of nostalgia in his essay. Doubtless, in his position as a medical secretary in the Medical Defence Union, he sees the pitfalls and hears the tales of the unfortunate. There are many good things in this centenary number.

The Practitioner provides for the general practitioner and the hospital doctor a series of refresher courses, and does it so well that it would be unnecessary and unwise for us to attempt to do the same in the *College Journal*. We have always admired this most excellent journal and have learnt a great deal from it.