Preface

With growing awareness of the modern plague of injury the Royal College of Pathologists has sought to promote interest in the pathology of trauma by setting up a working party to enquire into the present state of knowledge on this subject and to make recommendations for further work in this field. While awaiting the report of that working party it has also set aside one of its annual symposia for consideration of some aspects of the pathology of trauma.

The effects of trauma on the body are legion and it would not be possible to discuss them all in two days. In choosing only certain aspects for discussion, the College has tried to emphasize those in which recent advances have been made, those of outstanding practical importance, and those related to the 'complications' of injury, since with modern therapy more patients than formerly survive the initial stages. The relation of the individual contributions to each part of the whole is described by the chairmen of the different sessions in their introductions.

A symposium can only be considered successful if it generates a better appreciation of the problems of a subject and leads to further steps towards their solution. It is hoped that this symposium will prove successful when judged by these criteria. In the past, the pathology of trauma, although fundamental to the understanding of much of pathology, has not been a fashionable subject. It is hoped that the publication of this symposium will not only serve as an aide-mémoire for those who attended it, but will also draw the subject to the notice of a wider audience so that trauma may receive the attention worthy of the fifth commonest cause of death.

Symposia do not occur without organization and the College wishes to express its thanks to the members of its Working Party and its Academic Activities Committee who were responsible for the programme, to the contributors and chairmen, to Miss P. L. Chater and Miss M. A. Williams for their care of the 'domestic' arrangements. The College is also very grateful for the assistance of the Ciba Foundation, whose own symposium on 'Energy metabolism in trauma' immediately preceded this one thus permitting a fruitful collaboration between the two organizations.

S. SEVITT
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The Royal College of Pathologists is grateful to Dr S. Sevitt and Dr H. B. Stoner not only for their part in the organization of the Symposium but for all the work involved in editing this volume.