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Quantitative Methods in Human Pharmacology and Therapeutics

Proceedings of a symposium held in London on 24th and 25th March 1958.

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Preamble

The list of participants at this symposium demonstrates the extent of collaboration between the UK, USA, and mainland Europe. It includes Sir John Henry Gaddum (1900 – 1965) whose textbook *Pharmacology* (first published in 1940) includes a chapter on Therapeutic Trials in Man that discusses randomisation of treatments and is the subject of a recent article by Marson Smith, Colquhoun, and Chalmers I (2019) (www.jameslindlibrary.org/articles/john-henry-gaddums-1940-guidance-on-controlled-clinical-trials). This is volume 3 in the Biological Council's Co-ordinating Committee for Symposia on Drug Action Series; the two previous volumes were volume 1 (*Hypotensive Drugs*) and volume 2 (*5-Hydroxytryptamine*).

This symposium was held one month before the symposium sponsored by Pfizer Ltd (see (2) above) but was not published until the next year (1959). Its discussion of randomisation therefore takes second place, however it does include a chapter on sequential analysis, and that is the first outside of research papers.

Aims

In choosing this subject, the Co-ordinating Committee for Symposia on Drug Action has turned from the particular to the general and attempted to bring together workers and ideas from fields in which there is a common interest in the accurate measurement of drug effects. Quantitative pharmacology in animals has been brought to great accuracy, but in man it has lagged behind, partly owing to the inevitable difficulties of clinical experimentation and partly because clinical research workers have not always known of techniques in current use in physiology, pharmacology and statistics. Also, laboratory pharmacologists have not always been aware that some experiments which they perform in animals could be done, sometimes even more easily, in man. It may be hoped that this symposium will help to remedy these defects in communication between workers in different fields (Preface, page xiii).

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