

Post-Congress Seminar in Copenhagen

On Monday, 20 August, 1973, at the invitation of Emeritus Professor Vilhelm Møller-Christensen, a number of participants from the Bergen Congress, together with Danish colleagues, gathered at the Museum of Medical History (Bredgade 62, Copenhagen K) for two sessions of relaxed and pleasant interchange of information and ideas.

Dr. J. Koch, the recently-appointed director of the museum, welcomed the guests, and Professor Møller-Christensen gave a brief sketch of the museum and its activities before asking Professor Erik Waaler to assume the duties of chairman of the meetings. In a felicitous speech, the latter referred to his introduction to the specific osteopathology of leprosy and to his warm friendship with Professor Møller-Christensen, extending now over 25 years.

The visitors then proceeded to the museum, and studied the bones from the Naestved medieval cemetery, together with the teeth now displayed from both ancient Denmark and modern Thailand. Dr. Knud Danielsen has brought back from Thailand convincing clinical, pathologic and radioscopic material illustrating the specific rarefaction of the alveolar process of the maxilla and the consequent loss of the upper central incisors in patients suffering from lepromatous leprosy.

The next day, about 50 persons gathered in the auditorium to be brought up to date with the researches at Naestved and in far-away Thailand. With no specialized training or academic links with either os-

teology or archeology, Professor Møller-Christensen retold the story of how he—a general practitioner with an inquiring mind—lighted on the site of the churchyard where between 1250 and 1550 AD over 600 sufferers from leprosy were buried. After his early essays into osteoarcheology, Professor Møller-Christensen sought training in the specialized technics he subsequently made his own. Fascinating material from Naestved has been fully investigated, adequately documented and now published in a series of monographs and articles in the scientific press.

The "Bergen syndrome," or *facies leprosus*, consisting of erosion (and eventual complete disappearance) of the anterior nasal spine and rarefaction of the alveolar process of the maxilla, described in the Naestved skeletal remains, is now well-recognized in the living patient.

Dr. Knud Danielsen followed with a detailed description of his dental findings in both north and south Thailand. Skilled buccal examinations, often under difficult conditions, furnished fascinating clinical material, supplemented by histologic and radioscopic confirmation of specific leprosy lesions of periodontal and pulp tissues.

The ensuing lively discussion brought out further points in the pathology of the osseous and dental lesions that had been described with a great wealth of colored transparencies.

Visitors to Denmark should not miss paying a visit to this historical museum. Serious students will wish to stay longer.

—S. G. BROWNE