From the Editor

—reveille

Possibly what we have just read is the story of a breakthrough the age barrier. More probably, the procaine therapy will prove to be one more valuable weapon in medicine's arsenal against disease. Time and rigid testing may even show it to be only one more medical dud.

The facts should emerge in 1960. Laboratory research, controlled tests, and clinical studies of this therapy are under way at the present time in both the United States and Great Britain. The results of such studies will be published in appropriate medical journals and reported to medical meetings, and will thus be available to all doctors.

Whatever the outcome, the exciting fact is that the battle against old age has begun, and the real question surely is whether we are going to have an all-out effort, or another Hundred Years' War.

If the present tempo and scope of Western research into old age and its diseases are not quickened and expanded, the prognosis is for a long drawn-out struggle. The delayed reaction of American (and British) medicine to the presentation of the claims for procaine therapy is a good case in point.

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H. Marx, “H 3 in the Battle Against Old Age
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At this writing (January, 1960) two and one-half years have passed since Prof. Aslan reported her clinical results to an international medical congress. It has been fourteen months since Henry Marx first informed the American public of this therapy in a national magazine. Yet the definitive answer to the question: Does this therapy work? has still not been provided either by government research centers, medical societies, or by the research or medical departments of the pharmaceutical companies. In fact, there are not even tentative answers. The card catalog of the National Library of Medicine—one of the largest and most efficiently organized medical libraries in the world—does not list a single report of Western Research either in verification or in denial of the efficacy of this treatment, as regards the therapy of diseases of old age in humans, or as a prophylactic measure on the basis of animal experiments.

This is in spite of the fact that the diseases of old age against which Prof. Aslan reports procaine to be an effective treatment have reached epidemic proportions in the United States. Over 15 million Americans and their families—together surely at least a quarter of the population—are directly concerned.

It would be easy to lay the blame for the slow-motion approach to investigating the potential of procaine therapy on one or more of the usual scapegoats—government, the medical societies, or the practicing physician. But is not the real culprit a general attitude