

SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL CONGRESS, DURBAN 1957

This, the 41st South African Medical Congress and (to pursue a curious distinction) the 20th Annual Scientific Meeting, took place in Durban from Sunday to Saturday, 15-21 September 1957. The Congress was planned on broad and ambitious lines, which achieved a success that must be a source of deep satisfaction to its promoters, to whom the thanks of the Medical Association of South Africa are due. About 1,000 members of Congress registered, in addition to 500 associate members (chiefly members' wives and relatives). The City of Durban provided a lovely setting for the proceedings. The weather was changeable, some days being bright and sunny and others cloudy and overcast; it was ideal for such an occasion, never being oppressively hot. The week ended with a heavy thunderstorm on the Friday night which was over by Saturday morning. The Durban newspapers reflected great public interest in the Congress and devoted many columns to reporting and commenting on its proceedings.

A *Congress Brochure* was presented to all members of Congress, comprising 204 pages, of which all but 27 consisted of Congress matter, with about 30 illustrations, including 24 portraits of Congress officials and others. This publication was edited by Dr. F. B. Proksch with the assistance of Dr. J. J. Pauw. It contains messages from His Excellency the Hon. E. G. Jansen, Governor General of the Union, His Worship the Mayor of Durban (Councillor Percy Osborn) and the President of the Medical Association of South Africa (Dr. H. Grant-Whyte); detailed information concerning the Congress, including the Trades Exhibition, the Scientific Exhibition and the Arts Exhibition (Doctors' Hobbies); interesting articles on Durban and its history (Dr. Proksch), the Natal hospitals (Dr. R. E. Stevenson), the Natal University medical school (R. S. McK. Thomson) and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of South Africa (Prof. G. A. Elliott); and an article by Dr. J. Drummond on 'A Decade of Medicine'; together with synopses of 121 of the 200 papers presented at the plenary and sectional sessions. Each member was also supplied with a pocket diary of Congress and the associate ladies with a similar small diary of those Congress events which were designed or were available for them.

The tone of the proceedings was set at a high level, for which the medical profession of South Africa and the Association are greatly indebted to the many visitors from the UK, the USA and elsewhere, who contributed notable addresses, and to the high quality of the contributions of South African members of Congress.

The Congress Headquarters and the Trades Exhibition were located at Red Cross Hall, Old Fort Road, Durban. The plenary and sectional sessions and most of the Group meetings were also held in Red Cross Hall and in buildings in close proximity to it, viz. Haining Hall (M.O.T.H.), the B.E.S.L. Hall, the Boy Scouts' Hall and the St. John Hall. The Scientific Exhibition was held in the Old St. John Hall, Epsom Road, Durban, and the Arts Exhibition (Doctors' Hobbies) in the Art Gallery, Durban Town Hall.

Public Lecture. Congress proceedings began on Sunday evening 15 September with a public lecture by Dr. T. C. Routley, C.B.E., Past President of the Canadian Medical Association and the British Medical Association. This was held at the Playhouse Cinema Theatre, and was attended by an audience of many hundreds. The title of the lecture was 'You, and your Doctor', and it dealt mainly with the aims and achievements of the World Health Organization and the World Medical Association, of which latter Dr. T. C. Routley is Consultant-General. A report of the lecture will be published in a future issue of the *Journal*.

Openings of the Exhibitions. Monday morning saw the official openings of the Trades Exhibition, the Scientific Exhibition and the Arts Exhibition, followed in the afternoon by the first plenary session.

Congress Opening Ceremony

On Monday evening at 8.30 the opening ceremony took place in the Durban City Hall. It was an impressive and colourful occasion. Academic dress was worn, and the large hall was well filled by a great gathering of Congress members and others. After a musical programme on the organ played by Mr. Errol Slatter, L.R.S.M., the distinguished platform party entered in procession with musical honours and preceded by the Associa-

tion mace, and the chair was taken by the President of the Medical Association of South Africa (Dr. H. Grant-Whyte).

His Honour the Administrator of Natal (Mr. D. G. Shepstone), Chancellor of the University of Natal, delivered an address and formally declared the Congress open.

Dr. J. S. du Toit, retiring President of the Association, was invested with the insignia of Past President; Dr. A. W. S. Sichel, who the previous week had vacated the office of Chairman of Federal Council, with the insignia of Past Chairman; and Mrs. H. Grant-Whyte with the Badge of Office of President's Lady.

Next the Association's Bronze Medal for distinguished service to the medical profession was presented by the President to the following recipients, after the respective citations had been read by Dr. A. H. Tonkin, Secretary of the Medical Association: Dr. B. A. Armitage, Pietermaritzburg; Dr. A. Broomberg, Durban; Dr. C. M. Grundlingh, Pretoria; Dr. M. Shapiro, Johannesburg and Dr. R. Theron, Bloemfontein.

The President also awarded (*in absentia*) the Association's Hamilton-Maynard Memorial Medal to Dr. Geoffrey Dean, of Pretoria, and Leipoldt Memorial Medal to Dr. H. Braude, of Kroonstad.

Dr. H. Grant-Whyte then delivered the Presidential Address,* after which the platform party retired in procession.

Congress Banquet

The Banquet was held in the City Hall on Tuesday at 8.15 p.m. It was restricted to medical members of Congress, of whom over 600 sat down. This large attendance was easily accommodated in the magnificent City Hall which, beautifully decorated, presented a brilliant scene. Dr. H. Grant-Whyte presided. The toast of the Medical Association of South Africa was proposed by Dr. T. C. Routley, of Canada, and Dr. A. W. S. Sichel replied. Dr. A. Broomberg proposed the toast of the Guests, which was replied to by Sir Russell Brain, Bt., of London, and Prof. E. L. Bortz, of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. T. Cawthorne, of London, Prof. N. M. Dott, C.B.E., of Edinburgh, Prof. V. Kinross Wright, of the Baylor University, Texas, and Dr. A. J. Wrigley, of London, also spoke. The eloquent speeches were much appreciated by the company and added greatly to the memorable character of the occasion.

Mayoral Reception

His Worship the Mayor of Durban (Councillor Percy Osborn) entertained members of Congress and their ladies to a Civic Reception in the City Hall on Wednesday at 6 p.m. A very large party enjoyed the Mayor's hospitality and were welcomed by his Worship in a very entertaining address. The next night (Thursday) the City Council invited Congress members and their ladies to the symphony concert at the City Hall (Durban Civic Orchestra, conductor Fritz Schuurman, and solo pianist Kendall Taylor).

Congress Ball

The concluding social event, a Ball in the City Hall, at which 600 couples attended, was another brilliant affair. The Hall was lavishly and artistically decorated with flowers, and the scene was one of beauty and gaiety.

In the course of the evening the Mayor of Durban, on behalf of the City Council, presented a plaque bearing the City arms to Dr. H. Grant-Whyte in commemoration of this outstanding Medical Congress. Dr. Grant-Whyte then made commemorative presentations to Dr. A. Broomberg (chairman of the Organizing Committee), Dr. B. Crowhurst Archer and Dr. S. Dislen (Joint Organizing Secretaries) and Dr. J. Kelman Drummond and Dr. A. J. Wilmot (Joint Medical Secretaries).

SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

Four *plenary sessions* were held, on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. They were attended by probably the largest audiences ever seen at the scientific meetings of a South African Medical Congress. The overseas members took a prominent part, and the contributions were of a high standard. The subjects of the symposia and the readers of the papers were as follows:

* Published in the *Journal* of 21 September 1957 (31, 945).

1. Cerebral Vascular Disease and the Problems of Aging: Sir Russell Brain (London), Prof. E. L. Bortz (University of Pennsylvania), Dr. M. M. Suzman, Dr. F. H. Kooy, and Mr. K. Lewer Allen.

2. Parasitic Diseases of Man in Africa: Dr. M. Gelfand, O.B.E. (Salisbury, S. Rhodesia), Mr. C. Marks (ditto), Prof. Paul C. Beaver, and Dr. R. Elsdon-Dew.

3. The Surgery of Repair: Sir Harry Platt (Manchester), Mr. W. Gissane (Birmingham), Prof. T. Pomfret Kilner, C.B.E. (Oxford), Prof. Norman M. Dott, C.B.E. (Edinburgh), and Prof. J. H. Louw.

4. Recent Advances in Child Care: Prof. Alan Moncrieff, C.B.E. (London), Dr. D. M. T. Gairdner (Cambridge), and Dr. H. L. Wallace.

Some of the sectional meetings were also in the nature of symposia, for instance: (1) A combined meeting of the sections of Medicine and Surgery dealt with the subject of Thyrotoxicosis, and the following speakers contributed to the symposium: Dr. J. S. Richardson, M.V.O. (London), Prof. Paul Wilflingseder (Innsbrück), Mr. L. V. Pearson, and Dr. Maurice Weinbren; and (2) a meeting of the section of Neurology, Psychiatry and Neuro-surgery was devoted to a symposium on the Treatment of Pain, to which papers were contributed by Sir Russell Brain (London), Prof. V. Kinross Wright (Baylor University, Texas), Dr. J. S. Richardson (London), Dr. B. Crowhurst Archer, and Mr. A. Lewer Allen.

At the meetings of the 19 sections into which the scientific meetings were divided (many of them combined meetings of two or more sections) 163 papers were presented, making, with the 17 papers read at the plenary sessions, a total of 200 scientific papers presented to the Congress.

The national Groups of the Association held business meetings during the Congress.

TRADES EXHIBITION

As always at the Medical Congress, the Trades Exhibition constituted an important central feature of Congress. There were 47 exhibiting firms, from South Africa and other parts of the world, mostly manufacturers and distributors of drugs, instruments, infant and invalid foods, and medical publications. The stalls were staffed by a large number of well-informed representatives of the exhibiting firms. The exhibits showed the newest and most important products, and the relative therapeutic information was available to enquirers. Simplicity was the keynote of the exhibition, and there was little of the cluttering up of stalls with a multiplicity of 'lines' which was sometimes seen at the Trades Exhibitions of former Congresses. The exhibits were judiciously chosen and the exhibition as a whole presented an attractive appearance.

Dr. J. Stolp was the convener of the Trades Exhibition Subcommittee.

Dr. Grant-Whyte's Address

The Trades Exhibition was opened by the President, Dr. H. Grant-Whyte, who said that to no duty at this Congress had he looked forward with greater pleasure. He was one of those doctors who were always ready to listen to the pharmaceutical expert. The Trades Exhibition, he said, was always a central feature of their medical congresses, to which it was of considerable financial importance. He took this opportunity to thank the overseas members who had contributed so much to the interest of this Congress, and also the pharmaceutical houses who had subscribed so generously to the overseas-visitors fund.

This was only one instance of the financial assistance which the pharmaceutical houses gave to medicine. Vast sums were ploughed back into the pharmaceutical industry and research. These sums, of course, ultimately came out of the pockets of the public who paid for the drugs which these houses put on the market. But the relative importance in the national economy of what is spent on drugs was illustrated by the following comparative annual expenditure per head in the USA: Drugs £3 12s. 8d., alcoholic drinks £19 15s. 2d., tobacco £11 9s. 11d., and repair and maintenance of motor cars £6 9s. 4d.; 4% of the total national expenditure was on drugs. Pharmaceutical houses were playing a prominent part in the fantastic rate at which medicine was advancing.

Dr. Grant-Whyte referred to the fact that in the national service the doctor's freedom in prescription was limited by the Tender

Board's insistence on the lowest price. In medicine, quality ought to be the main consideration. He expressed the thanks of the Association to the exhibitors and invited members to spend ample time in examining the exhibits and in conversation with the experts in charge.

Mr. M. Stabler, Chairman of the Medical Exhibitors Association, thanked Dr. Grant-Whyte. He expressed the exhibitors' appreciation of the way the Congress committee had co-operated in the organization of the exhibition. They associated themselves in the welcome to the overseas visitors. They welcomed all members of Congress to the exhibition and wished the Congress every success.

SCIENTIFIC EXHIBITION

At the Scientific Exhibition, which was held at the Old St. John Hall, Epsom Road, the main exhibition consisted of 41 sets of exhibits shown by University departments, other institutions and individual workers. It was of high medico-scientific value and well worth many hours of close study. Another section of the exhibition was devoted to medical instruments and books. Cinematograph films were shown throughout the week, dealing with various branches of medicine and surgery; 5 of them had been made by individual practitioners, and the rest by institutions and organizations.

This year's exhibition showed a considerable advance on its predecessors at former medical congresses, which presaged well for future developments.

The Chairman of the Scientific Exhibition Subcommittee was Mr. B. W. Franklin Bishop, and the hon. secretaries Dr. E. Rosenberg and Mr. G. Stafford Mayer.

The Scientific Exhibition was opened by Dr. E. G. Malherbe, Principal of the University of Natal, who remarked that it contained so much of educative value to the ordinary man and woman, and even to the high-school pupil, that it should not be limited to the medical profession, but should be kept open for the public. Dr. Malherbe's address is reported at page 1022 of this issue of the *Journal*.

ARTS EXHIBITION: DOCTORS' HOBBIES

The Hobbies Exhibition was a display of 'work' done by doctors as a relaxation from their professional duties, and by their wives and families. Some 75 exhibitors put up about 100 exhibits, many of great merit or interest. The largest section was the paintings, of which 86 were grouped in 28 exhibits. Amongst these one noticed specially 3 oils by Sybil Traut (Mrs. John Richardson, of London), and portraits in oils of Dr. J. Drummond and Mrs. Kelman Drummond by Dr. J. Drummond's daughter (Mrs. R. Yuill), and a portrait of Dr. H. Grant-Whyte by Mrs. Doreen Wynberg. Dr. Morris J. Cohen's exhibition of 129 pieces of shellcraft made a wonderful centre-piece to the exhibition, as his work always does. The classes of exhibits were of varied interest but were too numerous for mention, except perhaps the antique medical books and the medical curiosa. Dr. Cohen and his colleagues on the Subcommittee are to be congratulated on the great success of this exhibition.

Mrs. Richardson's Address

This Arts Exhibition was opened by Sybil Traut (Mrs. John Richardson, herself an artist (and an exhibitor in this exhibition) and the wife of one of the distinguished overseas visitors to the Congress. She said that almost all her life she had been concerned chiefly with artists and doctors; part of her training had been under Professor Tonks at the State School of Art, London, who was both a medical man and a great painter, as well as an inspiring teacher. Many doctors she had known had found their greatest pleasure in the arts, and their work convinced one of the sincerity and appreciation of beauty which they brought to it. This was hardly surprising since both professions trained one to look into the heart of things and try to understand them. With doctors, however, their work had a special quality in bringing them relief from the stresses of their lives. In the doctor-artist the word 'amateur' had its true meaning—not one who dabbles and is outpaced by the professional, but one who practices his art or craft for the love of it.

Mrs. Richardson assured her hearers that they would find much in the exhibition to convince them of this. Apart from the

paintings there was such a diversity of skills that it could never be suggested that doctors in South Africa had no interest besides their 'shop' or that their wives and families were only telephone drudges.

Mrs. Richardson expressed her thanks for 'the incredible kindness' which she and her husband, like all the visitors from overseas, had received, and in declaring the exhibition open

she thanked Dr. Cohen specially for his personal kindness and congratulated him on his shell work which, she said, could not fail to find pride of place in an exhibition of this kind anywhere in the world; it had caused much admiring comment when seen on television in Britain last year. Mrs. Richardson also made special reference to the flowers which, she said, were arranged with an art that rivalled the exhibition itself.