

THE DOCTOR AND THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Once again we are nearing the end of the year, and a large number of newly-qualified doctors will be joining the ranks of the medical profession. Since the first group of students will be graduating from Stellenbosch this year, all five of our medical schools are now fully productive. In view of this fact, therefore, it would be fitting to stress once more, as in the past, the importance of membership of and dedication to the Medical Association of South Africa—the only national professional organization of doctors in this country.

It has become a tradition for professional men all over the world to organize themselves into learned societies to safeguard their material interests and to provide a medium through which they can give expression to their cultural and scientific aspirations. In most of the countries of the Western world doctors have organized national medical associations which are, in turn, members of the World Medical Association. In the same way we, in this country, have established the Medical Association of South Africa 'to promote the medical and allied sciences and to maintain the honour and interests of the medical profession'.

Since the early days of its existence it has been the explicit aim of the Medical Association to function as a responsible body of professional men who are fully aware of the great and important obligation which rests on them—to keep abreast of the times in scientific and cultural matters.

Admittedly, the Association has, in recent years, been subjected to severe scrutiny and criticism. It must, however, be borne in mind that it has had to face extremely difficult problems especially in the field of the economics of medical practice. The Association can only continue to deal with these problems on a satisfactory level if it can be assured of the whole-hearted support, not only of all its members, but also of each individual practising doctor, irrespective of whether he is in private practice or in full-time employment.

The advantages of membership of the Medical Association have been well known to a large number of its members all over the country, but there are still many doctors who are unaware of these advantages. Furthermore, there are the newly-qualified doctors we have previously referred to. It is to these three groups of doctors—those who are in private practice and are not members of the Association; those who are in full-time employment, including professors, research workers, health officers, etc. who are not convinced of the value of the Association as a scientific and academic body of national importance; and those who have qualified recently—that we should like to extend a special invitation to become members of the Association. The Association is at present urgently engaged in attempting to find a formula which will attract all those who are in full-time employment to the Medical Association.

In particular, we should like to draw the attention of

all doctors to the excellent article on 'The Medical Association: its rôle in the past and its ideals for the future' which was published in the issue of the *Journal* for 31 May 1960 (34, 423). This article was written by Dr. J. H. Struthers, Past-Chairman of the Federal Council, and deals with the services rendered by the Association to the profession in the fields of the economics of medical practice, the publication of the *Journal*, the rôle of the Association in promoting medical education in the widest sense of the word, international affiliation, and the Association's hopes for the future.

Following is a brief summary of all the services which are at present being provided by the Association:

1. Opportunities for meeting colleagues, holding scientific meetings and providing a forum for the exchange of opinions.
2. A *Journal* for the spreading of medical knowledge.
3. Means for the settlement of ethical disputes between members.
4. Means for negotiating with medical aid societies and provision of some measure of control over medical benefit societies.
5. Means for negotiating with the Workmen's Compensation Commissioner.
6. Acting as the voice of the profession in all matters concerning medical practitioners, and being recognized as the official body in various Acts and Ordinances.
7. Legal protection for individual practitioners.
8. Procuring of income-tax concessions of various kinds.
9. Obtaining preferential insurance of various forms for members.
10. Assistance to members by the Agency departments.
11. Amenities for members travelling overseas by reciprocity with the British Medical Association and the Canadian Medical Association, and through membership of the World Medical Association.
12. Improvement of salary scales of full-time personnel.
13. Influence on medical schools and medical education generally, e.g. encouraging and working towards the establishment of the College of Physicians, Surgeons and Gynaecologists of South Africa.
14. Postgraduate courses, provided directly or through medical schools.
15. Library facilities through grants to medical school libraries.
16. Assistance to needy dependants of members, through the Benevolent Fund.
17. Acting as a unifying factor, through Branches and Divisions, among practitioners.
18. Liaison with other professional bodies and the public.

The Association can succeed in playing a satisfactory and worth-while rôle in medical professional life only if it has the wholehearted support of *all the doctors* in the country.

BEELDRADIOVERTONINGS BY DIE MEDIESE KONGRES

Lede van die Mediese Vereniging wat die pasafgelope Kongres van die Vereniging in Kaapstad bygewoon het, het vir die eerste keer in die geskiedenis van die Vereniging die geleentheid gehad om in hierdie land 'n reeks beeldradiovertonings in kleur te sien. Hierdie vertonings is moontlik gemaak deur die firma Smith, Kline en French wat die beeldradio-eenheid na Suid-Afrika toe gebring het nadat die Minister van Pos- en Telegraafwese toestemming gegee het vir die vertoning van geslote-baan, mediese beeldradio-uitsendings vir gehore van geneesherë en ander mediese personeel. Soortgelyke vertonings is ook van 9 tot 13 Oktober in Johannesburg, en sal van 23 tot 27 Oktober in Durban aangebied word.

Die vertonings bestaan uit die uitvoer en aanbieding van operasies of ander mediese prosedures deur 'n span geneesherë. Die prosedures word met beeldradiokameras afgeneem en op 'n groot doek in 'n lesingsaal geprojekteer. Die chirurg en sy assistente, insluitende die narkotiseur en ander lede van 'n spesiale paneel van geneesherë, verduidelik sistematies en stap vir stap die prosedures waarmee hulle besig is. 'n Moderator, wat in die lesingsaal is, lei die bespreking en rig vrae aan die span wat in die operasiesaal werk.

Die mediese profesie het dus direkte geleentheid gehad om beeldradiovertonings as onderrigmetode te sien en te bestudeer. En ons wil dadelik sê dat die eksperiment 'n groot sukses was. As onderrigmetode vir die toekoms het dit beslis baie groot moontlikhede, veral omdat so baie soorte prosedures, bowe en behalwe chirurgiese operasies, hulle tot hierdie metode van onderrig en benadering leen.

Vir die student is daar natuurlik geen substituuat vir die persoonlike, daadwerklike *doen* van dinge nie. Elkeen moet

sy eie praktiese ervaring en vaardigheid uitbrei en verbeter op die grond van sy teoretiese kennis en insig. Maar, dit is ook nie die bedoeling met beeldradiovertonings om hierdie ervaring uit te skakel nie. Die waarde van die vertoning is juis om vir die voornemende beoefenaar van die vak 'n agtergrond en verwysingsbasis te skep waarop hy dan sy eie pogings kan modelleer.

Die tegniek van beeldradiovertonings skep veral die moontlikheid vir 'n „meester” om die fynere besonderhede van sy tegniek aan 'n groot aantal toeskouers te vertoon op 'n manier wat nie in die operasiesaal self moontlik is nie. Dit wil dus voorkom of direkte ondervinding in die operasiesaal, aangevul deur herhaalde geproekteerde vertonings van prosedures en metodes deur die „meester” self, die ideale benadering tot die onderrig van baie aspekte van die medisyne in die toekoms kan vorm.

Namens die mediese profesie wil ons aan die Minister, dr. A. Hertzog, die versekering gee dat hierdie nuwe metode van onderrig met 'n kritiese gesteldheid benader is. Ons is dankbaar vir die geleentheid om self direkte ervaring van beeldradio-onderrig te kon opdoen, en dit sal help om ons perspektief ten opsigte van onderrigmetodes te verbreed.

Lede van die profesie wat nie die geleentheid gehad het om beeldradio-uitsendings in kleur in Kaapstad te bestudeer nie, word aangeraai om die vertonings by 'n ander geleentheid te probeer bywoon. Op dié manier sal ons dan later die menings van uiteenlopende deskundiges kan kombineer om dan te probeer om ooreenstemming te bereik oor nog 'n manier waarop ons mediese onderrig bevorder kan word.