

CENTENARY OF THE ADDINGTON HOSPITAL, DURBAN

The Addington Hospital, direct descendant of Natal's first government hospital, will celebrate its centenary on 10-17 June 1961. That this hospital has remained a vital modern institution, keeping well abreast of the times in all respects, is shown by the services it has been rendering to the European and Coloured population of the City of Durban and the neighbouring areas, by the quantity and quality of research work carried out at the hospital, and by the new four-million rand extension project which is well under way.

The building of the first government hospital in Durban was suggested by Lt. Governor Scott who, in 1858, wrote to the Rt. Honourable Lord Stanley, Minister for the Colonies, as follows: 'I now propose to erect a hospital at Durban at a cost of about £800. The hospital will be a Native hospital, but, as there is no other building of the kind at Durban, it will be open for the White colonists . . .'. This building, which was of brick, iron-roofed, and which contained two wards, was completed in 1861 on an erf extending from Smith Street to the bayside.

With the growth of Durban the work of the little bayside hospital outgrew its capacity, and in the late 70's the Natal Government decided to build a new and larger hospital. This new hospital, which superseded the old bayside hospital, was built on a site nearer the Point, and was completed in 1879 at a cost of £16,000. Subsequent additions brought the cost of the building up to £500,000 in 1945, and the present extension project will turn the Addington Hospital into a proud modern institution.

Medical Services Rendered

Addington General Hospital serves the European and Coloured population of the City of Durban and the neighbouring Coastal area. It also provides specialist services for the Province of Natal. In addition to the large residential population, the hospital is responsible for the treatment of an ever-increasing floating population of holiday-makers who come from all parts of the Union and the Rhodesias.

At present thoracic surgery, neurosurgery and plastic surgery are temporarily accommodated at Wentworth

Hospital, but as soon as the new buildings are complete, these special services will take over their respective departments in the new 16-storey block at Addington Hospital. Since the last World War additional medical services have been provided which include a neuropsychiatric unit and outpatient clinics for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and asthma, and the District Nursing Service has been consolidated.

Scientific Work and Research

Scientific work and clinical

research have been greatly stimulated by the close association of the hospital with the Medical School of the University of Natal. Many members of the visiting medical staff of Addington Hospital are actively engaged in teaching at the medical school and King Edward VIII Hospital, and their scientific interest in clinical research is indicated by their contributions to medical literature. It may be remembered that, in February 1955, 98 members of the nursing staff were struck down with epidemic myalgic encephalomyelopathy, the so-called 'mystery disease' which was reported in the *South African Medical Journal* the same year, and the whole subject was subsequently reviewed by a member of the visiting medical staff of the hospital in the *Lancet* in 1959.

A subject of topical interest to residents and visitors alike, is the incidents of sharkbite occurring on the Natal Coast. Active research is being undertaken by the hospital in conjunction with the South African Association of Marine Biological Research, and informed articles have been published on the prevention and treatment of these accidents.

Teaching

The teaching programme of the hospital includes post-graduate courses for general practitioners, the last course being conducted in association with the Medical School of the University of Natal. In the general hospital, clinical meetings are held for graduates every month, and regular case conferences take place between the Departments of Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Ortho-

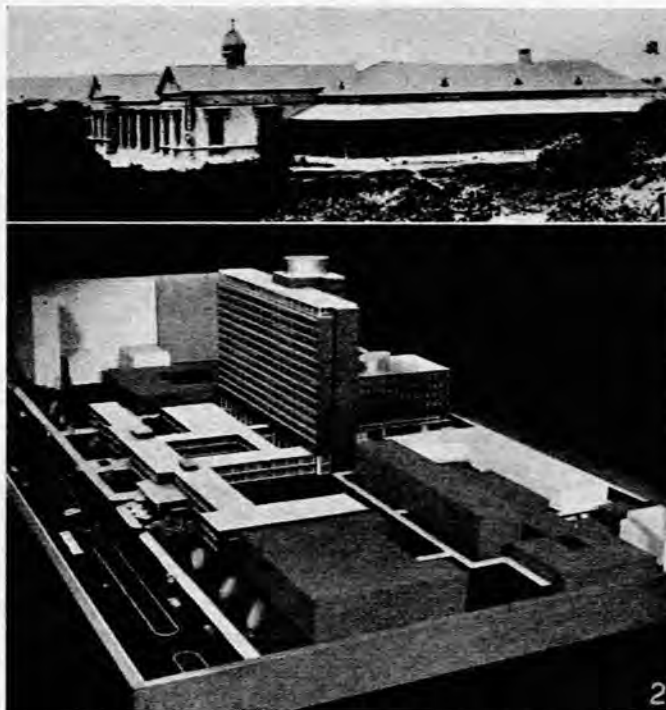


Fig. 1. Addington Hospital, Durban, 1878. Fig. 2. Model of new outpatient department and 16-storey inpatient block.

paedics, and Radiology. The Durban group of Provincial Hospitals (Addington, Wentworth, and King Edward VIII Hospitals) provide excellent facilities for postgraduate training in anaesthetics. The Department of Anaesthesia at Addington Hospital is approved by the South African Medical and Dental Council and the Faculty of Anaesthesia of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Courses are in progress in the basic sciences for the higher diplomas in Anaesthetics.

The children's hospital, adjacent to the general hospital and under the same administration, is recognized as a teaching hospital and is closely integrated with the paediatric department of the University. Regular clinical meetings and teaching rounds for graduates are held at the hospital and all members of the hospital staff, both visiting and full-time,

meet every month to discuss special problems and review current literature.

The medical staff have reason to be proud of the high standard of instruction given in the Nursing College of the hospital and they, themselves, have gladly taken part in the teaching for the University Diploma in Nursing. During the centenary reunion the visiting medical staff have offered an interesting and instructive postgraduate refresher course for nurses.

In this special issue of the *Journal* a number of articles are published to commemorate the *centenary of the hospital*. These include articles on the history of hospitals in Durban, the changing face of medicine, and reports on research work carried out at the hospital.

HOSPITAAL EN GEMEENSAP

'n Hospitaal staan soms in 'n heel besondere verband met die omgewing wat deur hom bedien word. Orals oor die wêreld is daar voorbeelde van sulke hospitale, en in ons eie land is daar ook verskeie hospitale wat op so 'n spesiale verbondenheid van gemeenskapsdiens kan roem.

In Kaapstad kan ons byvoorbeeld die Somerset-hospitaal noem. Hierdie hospitaal het op 18 Augustus 1959 sy honderdste verjaardag gevier. Die Somerset-hospitaal is die direkte afstammeling van die eerste hospitaal in die land wat in 1656 deur Jan van Riebeeck gestig is. Gedurende sy hele geskiedenis het die 'Somerset' 'n spesiale plek ingeneem in die gemeenskapslewe, nie net in Kaapstad nie, maar ook wat betref die hele land. Dit is so omdat die eerste twee dokters wat in hierdie land gekwalifiseer het, nl. wyle dr. L. Mirvish en dr. J. B. Solomon, hul kliniese werk in hierdie hospitaal geleer het, en omdat 'n groot aantal uitstaande dokters in die mediese geskiedenis van ons land, met dié hospitaal geassosieer was.

Die Addington-hospitaal in Durban, wat vanjaar in Junie sy honderdjarige bestaan herdenk, is ook so 'n hospitaal. Die Addington-hospitaal is weer die direkte afstammeling van Natal se eerste regeringshospitaal wat in 1861 op 'n erf in Smithstraat gebou is, teen 'n onkoste van ongeveer £800. Sedert daardie tyd het die 'Addington' steeds gegroei en nog altyd 'n dinamiese rol gespeel in die mediese beroepslewe in Natal en in die gemeenskapslewe in die algemeen. Vandag is die Addington-hospitaal 'n trotse, moderne inrigting wat mediese dienste van alle soorte op die hoogste vlak aanbied, en wat ook geleenthede daarstel vir doelgerigte wetenskaplike navorsing. In hierdie spesiale uitgawe van die *Tydskrif* plaas ons 'n aantal artikels waarin die rol wat die Addington-hospitaal vandag speel, duidelik weerspieël word.

In 'n land soos Suid-Afrika is dit egter nie net spesiale groot hospitale met opleidingsgeriewe wat belangrik is nie. Oor die lengte en breedte van ons land is kleinere hospitale versprei, waarin ons mense behandel en verpleeg word. Hierdie hospitale staan oor die algemeen na aan die hart van die mense wat hulle bedien.

Ons weet dat verskillende punte van kritiek teen die bestaan van die kleinere hospitale geopper word. So word daar, byvoorbeeld, aangevoer dat daar nie verpleegsters genoeg is om in die personeel-behoefte van soveel hospitale te voorsien nie. Daar word ook van tyd tot tyd twyfel uitgespreek oor die wenslikheid dat algemene praktisyns, byvoorbeeld, groot operatiewe prosedures op die platteland onderneem.

Hierdie argumente het wel trefkrag. Maar, ons het daar geen twyfel aan nie dat ons plattelandse gemeenskappe nog baie jare lank hierdie soort hospitaaldienste nodig sal hê. Dit is maar menslik om jou dierbares so na as moontlik aan die huis te hê as hulle siek is.

Wat wel gedoen moet word, is om 'n radikale landswye propagandaveldtog op tou te sit met die doel om soveel moontlik verpleegsters te werf. Daarby moet die opleidingsgeriewe en huisvesting en besoldiging van verpleegsters op die hoogste moontlike vlak geplaas word. Verpleegsters is mense wat die gemeenskap in die werklikheid dien met hul 'lewensbloed'. Die gemeenskap is as 'n ereskulde aan hulle niks minder nie as die 'beste' verskuldig.

Ook moet daar stappe gedoen word om dit moontlik te maak vir meer praktisyns om chirurgiese en mediese hospitaalwerk op 'n bevredigende vlak te doen. Daar is orals oor ons land algemene praktisyns wat as modelle van verantwoordelike geneeshere kan dien. Maar, terselfdertyd laat ons opleiding, veral wat betref geleenthede vir nie-spesialistiese nagraadse studie, nog veel te wense oor. Dit is om hierdie rede dat ons die pogings van ons Bloemfonteinse kollegas om meer en beter nagraadse studiegeleenthede daar te stel, nog altyd volmondig ondersteun het.

Van die groter hospitale in ons stede, of hulle nou ook al private hospitale of regeringsinrigtings is; van die opleidingshospitale aan ons universiteitsentrums; en van al die baie kleinere hospitale op ons plattelandse dorpe bly die volgende nog altyd waar: 'n hospitaal is so goed of so swak soos die ondersteuning wat hy van die gemeenskap kry waarin hy funksioneer.