

EDITORIAL : VAN DIE REDAKSIE

TRIBUTE TO DR. ALAN WILLIAM SICHEL

At the conclusion of the meeting of the Head Office and Journal Committee of the Medical Association of South Africa, held on Wednesday 10 July 1963, Dr. Sichel stated that since it was his last meeting as a member of the Head Office and Journal Committee and as its Chairman for some 14 years, he wished to express his thanks to all the members of the Committee both past and present who had done so much to assist the work of the Association and had made his duties as Chairman easy and pleasant. He also expressed his appreciation to the members of the Association's staff for their loyalty and cooperation.

Replying to Dr. Sichel, Dr. Arthur Landau said that he could not allow the occasion to pass without referring to the long and faithful service which Dr. Sichel had given to the Association from the time when he returned to South Africa in 1921. Dr. Landau said: 'This is the last meeting at which Dr. Sichel will officiate as Chairman of the Head Office and Journal Committee and the Management Committee of the Benevolent Fund, and it marks one of his last functions as a Federal Council member. This is not merely a retirement from Federal Council at the end of a period of service of an ordinary Federal Councillor. It marks the end of a period of service of a Federal Councillor who has worked harder and longer for the good of the Medical Association than any other Federal Councillor in its history. During the many years of his term of office he guided the profession in many capacities and for a very long time indeed.

'Dr. Sichel has been a member of the Association, I think, from the day he arrived back in Cape Town from Edinburgh in 1921, and has been a Branch Councillor since 1923, acting as its Honorary Librarian for 14 years. In 1933 he became Organizing Secretary of the Congress held in Cape Town, and in 1941 President of the Cape Western Branch. He has been a Federal Council member since 1935, that is 28 years, and was elected a member of the Executive Committee of Federal Council in 1941. In 1945 he was elected President of the Medical Association of South Africa and remained President for six years up to 1951. At the end of 1951 he was appointed Chairman of Federal Council, and held that office until 1957. He has been Chairman of the Head Office and Journal Committee for 14 years.

'One thing which is quite unique in the history of Federal Council is that he was not only elected President of Federal Council in 1951, but also President of the British Medical Association, to which our Association is affiliated. This is a unique distinction. He also received the Gold Medal of the Association in appreciation of his outstanding services to the Association and to the profession.'

Dr. Landau continued: 'We, your colleagues on this Committee, should like to record our sincere congratulations on all the honours which the Association has bestowed on you and which you have so richly merited, and we should like to say to you that the Association will always be in your debt. You have not always had a

pleasant or rewarding job, but you never flinched from what you knew to be in the best interests of the Association and of your colleagues.



Dr. Sichel

'I know Mrs. Sichel will be very pleased to see more of you than in the past. Through you we should like to thank her for the part she has played in always assisting you in your service to the Association, trying as it must have been for her on many occasions. We wish her well, too. 'Federal Council will be the poorer for your absence from its meetings and for no longer having available your wise counsel based on many years of experience and on clear and logical reasoning in the numerous problems placed before Council. You always seemed to be the man who found the correct solution to our problems. Although you are retiring from active participation in the affairs of the Association, we know that you will always be ready to give us your advice and help in the many problems that still lie ahead.

'On behalf of the members of the Head Office and Journal Committee, I should like it minuted that we move a unanimous vote of thanks to you, Sir, on the occasion of your retirement as a Federal Councillor and as Chairman of the Head Office and Journal Committee and the Management Committee of the Benevolent Fund, and record our very deep debt of gratitude for and appreciation of your many years of untiring endeavour and achievement in the service of the Association and of the medical profession generally, without any thought of personal reward except the satisfaction of the knowledge of a job well done. We wish you well for the future and express the hope that you may be spared in good health for many years together with your gracious lady, Mrs. Sichel.'

There is little we can add to this fine and well-deserved tribute to Dr. Sichel, a man who has given more than 40 years of unstinted service to the Medical Association of South Africa. On behalf of the Association we associate ourselves wholeheartedly with the sentiments so ably expressed by Dr. Landau.

On a more personal level, we in the editorial office of the *Journal* will miss Dr. Sichel's firm hand at the helm; as Chairman of the Head Office and Journal Committee for so many years he has always shown a full understanding of our problems and has always given us his strong and sincere support when we have needed it.

We can think of no more suitable message to Dr. Sichel on this occasion than the words of the poet, T. S. Eliot:

'Not farewell traveller,
But fare forward'

DIE ROL VAN DIE ALGEMENE PRAKTISYN IN MEDIESE OPLEIDING

Die veranderende aard van die algemene mediese praktyk dwarsoor die wêreld het almal wat ernstig dink oor die welsyn van pasiënte te staan gebring voor die vraag: wat is die toekomstige rol van die algemene praktisyn? Hierdie vraag word elke dag van groter belang, aangesien die verhouding van algemene praktisyns tot spesialiste gedurig aan die verander is. In ons land is die gemiddelde syfer ongeveer 4 algemene praktisyns tot 1 spesialis, en in sommige stedelike gebiede is die syfer selfs 2:1.

Daar is diegene wat dink dat die algemene praktisyn, soos ons hom in die verlede geken het, heeltemal sal verdwyn en dat alle mediese dienste verrig sal word deur spesialiste as enkelinge of as groepe. Hierdie opvatting is onrealisties en nie van toepassing op ons omstandighede in Suid-Afrika nie. Dat spesialiste op alle gebiede 'n al belangriker rol sal speel in die toekoms is vanselfsprekend — dit hang saam met die groot tegnologiese en wetenskaplike ontwikkelinge van die jongste tyd. Maar dat die algemene praktisyn gedurende geslagte nog onmisbaar sal bly, is net so waar. Die versorging van siekes, wat selfs aan ernstige toestande ly, in hul huise in die dorpe en op die plase in die platteland, maak die voortbestaan van die algemene praktisyn gebiedend noodsaaklik. Die vraag wat in hierdie verband dus altyd belangrik sal bly, is hoe die opleiding van die algemene praktisyn op die beste manier by sy besondere omstandighede aangepas moet word.

Een van die eerste punte van bespreking wat in hierdie verband gewoonlik genoem word, is die vraag of daar aan ons mediese skole 'n leerstoel in algemene praktisynswerk ingestel moet word. Vorige ervaring in hierdie opsig was nie altyd te gelukkig nie, veral omdat dit so moeilik is om 'n dosent in algemene praktisynswerk se gebied af te baken. Nogtans egter bly die hele vraag belangrik.

Afgesien van die instelling van 'n leerstoel en spesiale professoraat in algemene praktisynswerk, kan daar egter met groot voordeel gebruik gemaak word van die dienste van spesiaal-toegeruste algemene praktisyns. In ons eie land (en veral in Kaapstad) is die Fakulteit Kaap de Goede Hoop van die Kollege van Algemene Praktisyns besig om 'n besondere belangrike bydrae op hierdie gebied te maak. In samewerking met die owerhede van die Mediese Skool van die Universiteit van Kaapstad neem lede van die Fakulteit deel aan die voorgraadse opleiding van mediese studente — 'n ontwikkeling wat nie sterk genoeg aanbeveel kan word nie.

Die Kollege van Algemene Praktisyns, soos ook die

Universiteite deur middel van spesiaal-beplande opknappingskursusse, kan voortdurend 'n bydrae maak tot die kennis van geneeshere wat alreeds in die praktyk staan. Omdat daar so baie en sulke groot wetenskaplike ontwikkelinge is wat gedurig besig is om plaas te vind, sal opknappingskursusse en die pogings van organisasies soos die Kollege van Algemene Praktisyns van al groter belang en betekenis word in die toekoms.

Die plasing van studente of jong gegraduatees by ouer praktisyns is ook al beproef. Die sukses van 'n onderneming van hierdie aard hang veral af van die persoonlikheid en instelling van die ouer praktisyn. As hy iemand is met wysheid en gesonde verstand, kan hy 'n groot bydrae maak tot die opvoeding van sy jongere kollega. Gedurende hul studentejare dink studente hoofsaaklik aan pasiënte as individue. Hoe om die pasiënt as mens en as lid van 'n hele gesin te versorg, ten spyte van die eise van 'n besige praktyk, is iets wat slegs met ervaring en toeligting deur geskoolde persone kan kom. 'n Bedrewe praktisyn kan dus baie doen om die nuweling in te lig en te help wat betref algemene mediese probleme en praktiese en geregtelike strikvalle wat so dikwels in die daaglikse praktyk voorkom.

Ander probleme wat van besondere belang in die praktyk is en ten opsigte waarvan mediese studente min of geen opleiding kry nie, is sulke probleme soos: voorhuwelike raadgewing en geslagsvoorligting, die versorging van die sterwende pasiënt, die hantering van lang-uitge-rekte, chroniese siektestoestande, die voordelige gebruik van gemeenskapsdienste, psigiatriese probleme van die algemene praktyk, die beste gebruik van hospitaal- en laboratoriumdienste, die hantering van dranksugtigheid en ander vorms van verslawing, ens.

Om al die genoemde redes, en om nog baie meer, is dit noodsaaklik dat die opleiding van studente, om die beste soort algemene praktisyns te word, altyd in gedagte gehou moet word — sonder om afbreuk te doen aan die noodsaaklikheid om studente as wetenskaplikes en as toekomstige navorsers op te lei. Hierdie soort doel kan natuurlik bereik word deur die instelling van lesingreekse. Maar dit is nie voldoende nie. Miskien sal die beste oplossing wees om te begin met die aanstelling van algemene praktisyns as voltydse personeellede aan al ons mediese skole. Dit sal dien as aanmoediging om gesinspraktyk-programme in te stel en rigting daaraan te gee, en dit sal belangstellende studente ook die geleentheid gee om hulself te identifiseer met 'n algemene praktisyn wat wetenskaplik en prakties goed onderleg is.

RESIGNATION OF ASSISTANT EDITOR

At the meeting of the Head Office and Journal Committee of the Medical Association of South Africa, held on Wednesday 10 July 1963, Dr. R. L. Kleinman, Assistant Editor of the *South African Medical Journal*, tendered his resignation from this position as from the end of July 1963. Dr. Kleinman indicated that the reason for his resignation was entirely personal since he and his wife wished to settle in the United Kingdom. The Committee agreed that Dr. Kleinman's resignation be reported to the

Federal Council, and this was done at the recent meeting of Council in Johannesburg.

Dr. Kleinman filled the post of Assistant Editor with great distinction for a period of three years. In addition to his interest in Medical Association matters generally, he was an active member of many other national and local organizations. As a member of the Council of the Cape Western Branch of the National Cancer Association and of its Education Committee he made an important

contribution in this field of endeavour. He has also been a committee member of the University of Cape Town Medical History Club since the date of its inception.

Dr. Kleinman has been a member of the Medical Association of South Africa since he graduated, and before his appointment as Assistant Editor was a member of the Contract Practice Committee of the Cape Western Branch, chairman of the Newsletter Committee, and a member of the Branch Council of the Association.

Dr. Kleinman has had considerable experience of journalistic work. While at the University of Cape Town, where he obtained the degree M.B., Ch.B. with distinction in the first professional examination, he was a member of the Editorial Board of the University magazine *Varsity*.

During his student years Dr. Kleinman was University correspondent for several newspapers, and he has continued his connection with these papers by doing occasional reporting and writing articles on medical and other subjects. During the period June 1959 to June 1960 he was Editor of the *Newsletter* of the Cape Western Branch and, since 1960, Assistant Editor of the *South African Medical Journal*. He deputized as Acting Editor of the journals of the Medical Association for a period of four months during the Editor's recent visit to Europe, the United States and Canada.

Dr. Kleinman's departure will be a great loss to the Association and the *Journal*. We wish him every success in his future career.