

VAN DIE REDAKSIE : EDITORIAL

GENEESKUNDIGE ALMANAK : AUGUSTUS

Toe dit nog die sesde maand was, is dit Sextilis genoem, maar later is die maand na keiser Augustus vernoem. Hierdie maand was vir hom beslis 'n besondere maand: Dit was die maand waarin hy tot die konsulaat verkies is, waarin hy drie maal 'n triomf kon vier, waarin die getrouheidseed van soldate op die Janiculum aan hom oorgedra is, waarin burgeroorloë beëindig is, en die maand waarin hy Egipte kon onderwerp. Die benaming van Julie/Augustus na keisers skep 'n presedent toe oorweeg is om November na Tiberius te vernoem. Diè gedagte is gekortwiek toe die destydse keiser gevra het: „Wat sal julle doen, eerwaarde Vaders, as julle dertien Caesars het?”

In hierdie maand van 1807 is 'n administratiewe mylpaal bereik toe 'n proklamasie (18-8-1807) neerlê dat in Suid-Afrika, geen apteker onder enige voorwendsel as geneesheer, chirurg of vroedvrou mag praktiseer nie op gevaar af dat sy permit om te praktiseer ingetrek mag word. 'n Skedule van gelde is vasgestel, en die *Pharmacopoeia Londonensis* is aangewys as die enigste erkende farmakopie vanaf Januarie 1808.

2 Augustus 1887. Paul Klemperer gebore te Wene. (Sien Maart se aantekeninge.)

5 Augustus 1914. Alfred Hegar oorlede. (Sien Januarie se aantekeninge.)

9 Augustus 1867. Lister publiseer sy klassieke artikel in *The Lancet*: „On the antiseptic principle of surgery”.

10 Augustus 1786. Jean Guillaume Lugol gebore te Montauban, Tarn-en-Garonne. (Sien aantekening by Junie.)

13 Augustus 1826. Laënnec oorlede. Skrywer van onder meer *A Treatise on the Diseases of the Chest and on Mediate Auscultation* in September 1818.

16 Augustus 1893. Jean Martin Charcot oorlede. Internis te Salpêtrière en skep aldaar die grootste neurologiese kliniek van alle tye. Onder sy beroemde studente was ook Sigmund Freud. Charcot het baie na Napoleon gelyk, en het ook 'n venynige sarkasme aan die dag gelê, veral op enige teenspraak, waaraan hy 'n afkeur gehad het. Hy was nietemin baie simpatiek teenoor die armes. Onvermoede werker wat dikwels eet en slaap ontbeer het as hy geïnteresseerd geraak het in 'n probleem. Hy het dikwels ook vergeet om gelde in te samel, maar dit was ook nie eintlik nodig nie vanweë sy ryk eggenote. Was ook 'n kunstenaar, en lief vir groot onthale aan sy luukse woning. Ontwikkel angina pectoris op die toppunt van sy roem, in 1890, en is drie jaar later skielik oorlede.

16 Augustus 1816. Johann Jakob Guggenbühl gebore. In 1836 op reis deur 'n Switserse kanton word hy getref deur die baie kretins wat hy op straat teenkom. Open 'n tehuis vir agterlike en swaksinnige kinders met behulp van finansiële steun verkry van die Staat. Eintlik net vir kretins, maar later ook ander ingeneem. Inspireer ander tot soortgelyke werk, bv. mej. White wat in 1846 'n skool vir idiotiese kinders open te Bath. Verwerf internasionale roem teen 1851 en vereer deur verskeie geneeskundige verenigings en akademies. Protes dat sy instituut, Abend-

berg, nie genesing bevorder nie lei in 1853 tot 'n kommissie van ondersoek, wat die klag ondersteun en daarop wys dat slegs 'n derde van die pasiënte kretins is. Die inrigting is gesluit, maar op daardie stadium is reeds oor die hele wêreld mense te vind wat uit sy visie die idee laat voortleef en ontwikkel. Hierdie kortsigtige optrede word vergeelyk met die doodvonnis op Sokrates uitgespreek.¹

17 Augustus 1798. Thomas Hodgkin gebore te Pentonville. Sonder klaarblyklike rede deur sy tydgenote as mislukking beskou en misken. Was tog besonder talentvol en biograwe meen dat as sy aansoek om 'n aanstelling by Guy's Hospital geslaag het die geneeskunde deur sy invloed baie sou gebaat het. Die onsuksesvolle aansoek het hom baie ontmoedig, en ook in die private praktyk het hy maar 'n powere bestaan gemaak—in so 'n mate dat hy later die geneeskunde geheel en al laat vaar het. Hy was tog een van die eerstes om, op 'n tydstop toe die stetoskoop in Engeland as 'n „new-fangled contrivance” ongewild was, die instrument te gebruik. Sy beskrywing van die siekte wat sy naam dra is eers 33 jaar na sy publikasie deur Sir Samuel Wilks herontdek.

19 Augustus 1819. William Thomas Green Morton gebore. Hy sou in 1846 die eerste eter-narkose toedien en sodoende 'n pionier van die anesthesiologie word.

20 Augustus 1915. Paul Ehrlich, Nobel-pryswenner van 1908 oorlede. (Sien ook Maart se aantekeninge.) 'n Ontdekker van beginsels met 'n wye en diepgaande invloed op die geneeskunde. Hy het die Nobelprys met Eli Metchnikoff gedeel, wat veral om sy studies oor fagositose bekend is.

21 Augustus 1883. Sikloon tref Rochester, Minnesota. Dr. William W. Mayo, die plaaslike praktisyn, lewer nooddienste, en uit waardering beloof die nonne van die klooster van St. Francis die hulp om die St. Mary-hospitaal op te rig. Dit vorm die eerste eenheid van die later so beroemde Mayo Clinic.

22 Augustus 1864. Die voorstel van J. Henri Dunant om 'n permanente hulpvereniging te stig wat onmiddellik kan optree in tye van oorlog en nood, word ingesluit in die Konvensie van Genève, en dit is dan ook die geboortedatum van die Internasionale Rooi Kruis.

23 Augustus 1768. Astley Cooper gebore te Brooke in Norfolk. Beroemde chirurg wat die vlam van Hunter se idees verder kon voer. Hierdie rol van Astley Cooper word na verwys in die Hunter-gedenklesing van 1921, toe Sir Charters Symonds na Cooper se werk as volg verwys: „After brief life men die, and like runners in a race hand on their torch to another.”

26 Augustus 1910. Friedrich Daniel von Recklinghausen oorlede te Strassburg. As assistent van Rudolf Virchow beskrywe hy neurofibromatose asook die beensiekte wat sy naam dra, osteitis fibrosa cystica generalisata. Dit is eers etlike jare na sy dood aangetoon dat die toestand aan hiperparatiroidisme te wyte is.

31 Augustus 1821. Hermann Ludwig Ferdinand Helmholtz gebore. Hy maak sterk aanspraak op die titel „be-

roemdste wetenskaplike' van die vorige eeu. In die geneeskunde is hy miskien minder bekend nog as in die fisika, wiskunde en filosofie waartoe hy ook bydraes van onskatbare waarde gelewer het. Nietemin sou sy werk oor die fisiologie van visuele funksie en gehoor reeds voldoende wees om sy naam te verewig in die annale van die geskiedenis. Sedert sy beroemde werk *Die Behoud van Energie* wat opgesom kan word in sy eie woorde: 'Die Energie der Welt' is konstant, 'die Entropie steigt immer', was hy agtereenvolgens professor van fisiologie, anatomie en patologie aan die Berlynse Akademie, en die Universi-

teite van Königsberg, Bonn en Heidelberg. Vanaf laasgenoemde verskyn sy *Sensasies van Toonhoogte* en *Fisiologiese Optika*. Die laasgenoemde studie hernieu sy belangstelling in die fisika en op grond van latere studies word aan hom 'n professoraat in fisika aangebied; later word hy Direkteur van die Nasionale Laboratorium vir Fisiese Navorsing te Charlottenburg. 'n Laaste bydrae tot die geneeskunde kan vermeld word: In 1851 ontdek hy die oftalmoskoop.

1. Kanner, L. (1959): Bull. Hist. Med., 33, 489.

A EUNUCH TAKES THE GOUT

Hippocrates stated: 'Eunuchs do not take the gout, nor become bald', and McFadzean¹ reminds us of this at the beginning of an account of a eunuch who did suffer from gout. Galen disagreed with this to some extent, stating, according to Adams:² 'while it was true in Hippocrates' time that eunuchs did not take the gout, in his (Galen's) time they were exposed to the disease because of their indolence and effeminacy'.

McFadzean proceeds to describe the case of a 70-year-old irascible Chinese man 'who appeared to be of great age, yet, paradoxically, conveyed also an impression of youthfulness'. There was no doubt that he had gout, from the site of the pain, the history of acute attacks, the subsequent deformities, and the presence of ulcerative tophaceous lesions. A scraping from the tophi contained needle-shaped crystals which gave a positive murexide test.

Likewise, there was no doubt of his eunuchism. He had been deprived of all genitalia at the age of 12 and his urethra was buried in a mass of keloid tissue. He had in fact suffered from intermittent obstruction of urinary flow which had been relieved by the passage of bougies ever since his youth. He had apparently never received androgens.

An interesting point was his ear involvement. He suffered attacks of severe pain associated with deafness affecting both ears. There was an acute inflammation of

the right ear involving and obstructing the external meatus and other parts. Apparently the older generations of Chinese clear wax from their external auditory meati with little spoons usually made of ivory, bone, whale-bone, or silver. Exceedingly painful attacks of acute 'otitis externa' with an inflammatory reaction involving the auricle occur in sufferers from gout who do this. The attacks respond rapidly to colchicine and no longer occur after stopping the practice. McFadzean's patient used the ivory spoon.

Regarding the eunuchism, in Imperial China only the imperial household and the households of the eight hereditary princes were allowed by law to have eunuchs. The patient must either have seen service or was being trained for service in one of these households, for the operation was performed five years before the overthrow of the Imperial Dynasty. The operation was performed as follows: After the application of tight bandages round the 'hypogastric' and inguinal regions, and the bathing of the penis and scrotum with a hot decoction of pepper pods, 'all the parts are swiftly swept away by one stroke of a sickle-shaped knife, a pewter plug is inserted into the urethra, and the wound is covered with paper soaked in cold water and firmly bandaged'.

1. McFadzean, A. J. S. (1965): Brit. Med. J., 1, 1038.

2. Adams, F. (1849): *The Genuine Works of Hippocrates*. London: New Sydenham Society.

BRONTE-STEWART RESEARCH PRIZE

An In Memoriam notice announcing the premature death of Dr. Brian Bronte-Stewart at the age of 44 years, an ex-student of the University of Cape Town, was published in the *Journal* of 31 July 1965. In the same issue of the *Journal* a letter was also published by a number of eminent friends and colleagues of the late Dr. Bronte-Stewart in which they announced their intention to establish a memorial prize for the most original research work done at the University of Cape Town Medical School by a man or woman aged 35 years or under. This prize is to be called the 'Bronte-Stewart Research Prize' and will be awarded once a year provided there is work of sufficient merit.

The late Dr. Bronte-Stewart had always been an outstanding student, and it was obvious to everybody who knew him that in addition to this he had special qualities of leadership. After completing his training as a specialist physician he embarked on a career of research work which not only enhanced his own stature as an academic and research worker, but also reflected favourably on the medical school where he was trained and the system of medicine generally in this country.

Dr. Bronte-Stewart's great potentialities were recognized at an early stage by eminent scientists elsewhere in the world, and it is a fitting tribute to his qualities that he was invited to accept the directorship of the Atheroma Research Unit maintained by the Medical Research Council of the University of Glasgow at the Western Infirmary—a post which he held with great distinction until the time of his death.

In proposing the establishment of a memorial prize, Dr. Bronte-Stewart's colleagues felt it was their wish to place on record their recognition and appreciation of his outstanding research qualities and that they would also like to pay tribute to a great South African who has achieved international recognition for his research work before he was 35 years of age.

Colleagues who would like to contribute towards the capital sum for establishing this prize are invited to send their contributions to the Registrar, University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch. Cheques should be made payable to the University of Cape Town and marked 'Bronte-Stewart Research Prize Fund'.