

ADDRESS TO DOCTORS VISITING THE UNIVERSITY, THURSDAY AUGUST 29, 1985.

Doctors make up one of the most prominent groups of humans, but I need to qualify this by saying, specifically, medical doctors. The importance of other doctors is often quickly dismissed. For instance, I can quote the first definition of a doctor given by the Concise Oxford English Dictionary.

It says:

" Doctor - teacher, learned man", but the illustration given in parenthesis is:

(who shall decide when doctors disagree?)

I suspect the implication is that doctors and learned men seldom agree, to say nothing of lady doctors and learned women! But the final comment in the dictionary is almost hurtful. It says, simply:

(archaic).

I did not, however, mean to tell you about the problems from which we academics suffer. I am really here to praise the medical profession, and I was commenting on how prominent you are. One only has to watch the television service to get an idea of how you are rated in the public media. All doctors are clean-cut, good looking, decisive men and women of action. In contrast, the last film I saw which featured an academic showed him using his library shelves as the repository for rather non-medicinal looking beverages! I suppose I shall have to admit it - medical doctors are more glamorous. That must not, however, put you entirely beyond our reach. By its nature a university should relate in some way to most sections of human society.

There are, of course, very close links between your profession and ours. I regret that Rhodes lacks a medical faculty, but would like to mention a number of areas of common interest. Besides the Sports Sciences Centre, the Locomotion Laboratory and the Computer-based Learning Centre from which you have just come, there are a number of teaching departments and research units engaged in research which is of relevance to your field. No doubt you are familiar with the work being done on drug formulation and dosage in the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences. In the Department of Microbiology, vaccination techniques and virology are being researched, and in the Department of Zoology and Entomology, virus-carrying mosquitoes are being investigated. The Tick Research Unit moved into the field of human medicine recently with a grant from the Medical Research Council to research bont-legged ticks which carry Crimean-Congo fever.

Then there is the area of professional services and general co-operation. One of your larger practices has looked after our students for years and one of your number serves on our University Council.

Having seen some of the common ground between Grahamstown medicals and Rhodes academics, I should like to say on behalf of the University, that we wish to strengthen the links between us and to offer you our help in any way possible.

Thank you for visiting us today, I hope we shall continue to see you on our campus.

D S Henderson
VICE-CHANCELLOR

DOCTORS MAKE UP ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT GROUPS OF HUMANS, BUT I NEED TO QUALIFY THIS BY SAYING, SPECIFICALLY, MEDICAL DOCTORS. THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHER DOCTORS IS OFTEN QUICKLY DISMISSED. FOR INSTANCE, I CAN QUOTE THE FIRST DEFINITION OF A DOCTOR GIVEN BY THE CONCISE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY. IT SAYS:

"DOCTOR - TEACHER, LEARNED MAN", BUT THE ILLUSTRATION GIVEN IN PARENTHESIS IS:

(WHO SHALL DECIDE WHEN DOCTORS DISAGREE?)

I SUSPECT THE IMPLICATION IS THAT DOCTORS AND LEARNED MEN SELDOM AGREE, TO SAY NOTHING OF LADY DOCTORS AND LEARNED WOMEN! BUT THE FINAL COMMENT IN THE DICTIONARY IS ALMOST HURTFUL. IT SAYS, SIMPLY: (ARCHAIC).

2

I DID NOT, HOWEVER, MEAN TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE PROBLEMS FROM WHICH WE ACADEMICS SUFFER. I AM REALLY HERE TO PRAISE THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, AND I WAS COMMENTING ON HOW PROMINENT YOU ARE. ONE ONLY HAS TO WATCH THE TELEVISION SERVICE TO GET AN IDEA OF HOW YOU ARE RATED IN THE PUBLIC MEDIA. ALL DOCTORS ARE CLEAN-CUT, GOOD LOOKING, DECISIVE MEN AND WOMEN OF ACTION. IN CONTRAST, THE LAST FILM I SAW WHICH FEATURED AN ACADEMIC SHOWED HIM USING HIS LIBRARY SHELVES AS THE REPOSITORY FOR RATHER NON-MEDICINAL LOOKING BEVERAGES! I SUPPOSE I SHALL HAVE TO ADMIT IT - MEDICAL DOCTORS ARE MORE GLAMOROUS. THAT MUST NOT, HOWEVER, PUT YOU ENTIRELY BEYOND OUR REACH. BY ITS NATURE A UNIVERSITY SHOULD RELATE IN SOME WAY TO MOST SECTIONS OF HUMAN SOCIETY.

THERE ARE, OF COURSE, VERY CLOSE LINKS BETWEEN YOUR PROFESSION AND OURS. I REGRET THAT RHODES LACKS A MEDICAL FACULTY, BUT WOULD LIKE TO

MENTION A NUMBER OF AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST. BESIDES THE SPORTS SCIENCES CENTRE, THE LOCOMOTION LABORATORY AND THE COMPUTER-BASED LEARNING CENTRE FROM WHICH YOU HAVE JUST COME, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF TEACHING DEPARTMENTS AND RESEARCH UNITS ENGAGED IN RESEARCH WHICH IS OF RELEVANCE TO YOUR FIELD. NO DOUBT YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE WORK BEING DONE ON DRUG FORMULATION AND DOSAGE IN THE SCHOOL OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES. IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY, VACCINATION TECHNIQUES AND VIROLOGY ARE BEING RESEARCHED, AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY AND ENTOMOLOGY, VIRUS-CARRYING MOSQUITOES ARE BEING INVESTIGATED. THE TICK RESEARCH UNIT MOVED INTO THE FIELD OF HUMAN MEDICINE RECENTLY WITH A GRANT FROM THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL TO RESEARCH BONTLEGGED TICKS WHICH CARRY CRIMEAN-CONGO FEVER.

THEN THERE IS THE AREA OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND GENERAL CO-OPERATION. ONE OF YOUR LARGER PRACTICES HAS LOOKED AFTER OUR STUDENTS FOR YEARS AND ONE OF YOUR NUMBER SERVES ON OUR UNIVERSITY COUNCIL.

HAVING SEEN SOME OF THE COMMON GROUND BETWEEN GRAHAMSTOWN MEDICALS AND RHODES ACADEMICS, I SHOULD LIKE TO SAY ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY, THAT WE WISH TO STRENGTHEN THE LINKS BETWEEN US AND TO OFFER YOU OUR HELP IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE.

THANK YOU FOR VISITING US TODAY, I HOPE WE SHALL CONTINUE TO SEE YOU ON OUR CAMPUS.

D S HENDERSON
VICE-CHANCELLOR