

The following is the text of the speech of Dr. H. Lweno, the Director of Administration and Hospital services, Muhimbili Medical Centre, delivered at the closing ceremony of the 5th Annual Scientific Conference of the TDA at the Msimbazi Community Centre on 23rd February, 1985. The emphasis centres and revolves around "ETHICAL CONDUCT WHILE DOING OUR CLINICAL WORK". Dr. Lweno's appeal is directed to all practising members of the Dental and Medical professions. — Editor

ENLIGHTENED CONDUCT AND BETTER TASTE AND SENSE IN LIFE

Dr. H. LWENO

Thank you very much for honouring me with the invitation to perform the closing ceremony of your fifth Annual Scientific Conference. Judging from your programme I can see that you must have had three very useful and educative days of scientific exchange, and sharing of clinical experiences encountered in our country.

Firstly, I shall start by giving a short introduction about myself. I am an anaesthetist. For those of you who specialise in facio-maxillary surgery we must have shared the same roof at one time or the other when you did surgery in the theatres.

Secondly, it suddenly dawned upon me that I can now consider myself an elder in medicine in Tanzania. I have now been in Medical practice for the last twenty years. Except for such senior colleagues like Dr. Pin Ibréck; Dr. Vedast Kyaruzi; Dr. Benjamin Akim; Dr. Swedi Mwanemwa and Dr. Patrick Mwanukuzi I do not think that there could be many more than ten or so Tanzanian doctors more senior than my batch who qualified in 1964. So I feel time has at last come for us to strike caution about the honour of our profession in Tanzania.

When I received a copy of your Scientific programme I scanned through its pages. Something caught my attention. There and then I decided to speak to my colleagues about a subject which has always worried me as a senior member of the profession. I shall quote what was written on the second page of the cover of the Itinerary. "There is always need of persons not only to discover new truths, and point out when what were once truths are true no longer, but also to commence new practices, and set the examples of more enlightened conduct, and better taste and sense in human life". I do not know where the organising committee got the quotation from. But

it is appropriate all the same. How I wish all Associations could make a point of reminding its members to be, and remain, of good conduct if our profession is to remain an honourable profession; and maintain the respect which we as individuals are privileged to have from Society.

For quite a long time now our numbers have increased, and so have our problems between colleague and colleague; and colleagues and the general public.

This in a way was to be expected. But what worries me is that we seem to be developing a new syndrome. A syndrome of accepting falling standards in our conduct, taste, and sense in human life.

This worries me a lot

— For how else can we explain the careless drunkenness of members of our profession? We are so careless that some members get drunk in public, daily, and misbehave openly. Some even fight in public. Maybe the Medical Council of Tanzania should be awakened from its deep sleep or at least strengthened.

— We have members of the profession whose manner of dressing leaves much to be desired quite apart from economic bottle necks of the times. Think of the doctor who dons a ward round with bleached jeans and training shoes.

This is informality stretched to a breaking point.

— Members of the profession nowadays speak openly against their colleagues in the profession. We are forgetting our ethics. How can a colleague hear the name of another colleague being slighted in public and keep quite about

it? Some members even burst out laughing at dirty diatribes hurled at the expense of their colleagues. This is scandalous to the profession.

Dear Members of the Executive Committee of the various Medical Associations in the country, I would appeal to you to keep on reminding your members that they belong to an honourable profession. The public gives us respect as a privilege and not as a right.

In ancient India there existed two great Hindu doctors, Charak and Susruta. Susruta had said, "The doctor should resemble the God Dhavantari. He must be dressed in clean clothes; be clean shaven and cut his nails. He is to wear a white robe, go shod in sandals, with a staff or sun shade in his hand, showing gentleness to everybody and a benevolent look".

This was about 1500 BC. Mark you, even then a doctor had to stand out as something serene and special in public.

I feel I must not end my appeal without quoting from the works of the father of medicine, Hippocrates. "For the physician it is undoubtedly an important recommendation to be of good appearance and well fed since people take the view that those who do not know how to look after their own bodies are in no position to look after those of others. He must know how and when to be silent, and to live an ordered life, as this greatly enhances his reputation. His bearing must be

that of an honest man, for this he must be honest towards all people, and kindly, and understanding. He must not act impulsively or hastily; he must look calm, serene and never cross; on the other hand, it does not do for him to be too gay".

Thank you very much for honouring me with an invitation to come and perform the closing ceremony of your conference.

(The quotation to which Dr. Lweno made his reference to in his speech is by John Stuart Mill).
— Editor.

What is the meaning of human life, or for that matter, of the life of any creature? To know an answer to this question means to be religious. You ask: Does it make any sense, then, to pose this question? I answer: The man who regards his own life and that of his fellow creatures as meaningless is not merely unhappy but hardly fit for life.

— Albert Einstein

All persons possessing a portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust, and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great Maker, Author and Founder of society.

— Edmund Burke

Our doorbell went wrong the other day. I phoned the electrician but he never came, so I phoned him again and asked him when he was coming. He said, "I've been. I rang the bell twice but nobody answered".

MY wife didn't come home for two days. I told the police. We worked out an identikit picture of her. And the neighbours got back their pug dog which had been missing for a month.

I didn't enjoy my honeymoon one bit. I didn't mind carrying my bride over the threshold, but when I had to do the same for her mother, that was too thick.

For Harold it was love at first sight — and you should see the sight he married.

Two bosses were talking in their club. 'Did you take my advice about kissing your secretary when she least expected it?' asked one. 'When?' queried the other. as he nursed a very black eye, 'I thought you said WHERE!'



Two businessmen were relaxing in the club house after a round of golf. 'Don't know why you don't sack your secretary', said one. Her typing is atrocious and she spends more time on your private phone than you do. Take away her gorgeous hair, her beautiful eyes, her sensuous lips, her lovely figure, and what have you got?'

The other businessman grunted, and said, 'My wife'.