

TALENT IN MEDICINE

The medical profession is not different from other workforce sharing with them all common interests, hobbies and talents. The majority of these activities are unrelated to medicine. Many are musicians, performers, artists, writers, critics, astronomers, photographers, etc not to mention their excellence in the world of sports. On the other hand there are also instances when the practice of these activities take the form of applied interpretation of what they know in human pathobiology and the concerned function. Thus some may be historians of clinical practice, clinical pharmacologists of locally used herbs, or clinical therapists of locally practiced folk medicine.

This section of the Bahrain Medical Bulletin will be devoted to "Talents in the Medical Profession" to show and exchange with others common interests and applied experience. Contributors are therefore welcomed to submit their presentation. This issue contains three poems titled "Learning all the time!", "Switch it Off" and "Sultans and Kings".

The Chief Editor

Learning All The Time

Knowledge is now expanding at such a fast pace,
To keep up-to-date is not unlike a race.
What was known as true when you entered medical school,
If you repeat it while leaving, you may be called a fool.

Even if you know today what all is there to know,
By tomorrow new studies make a mockery of all you know.
So, it's important to keep one's eyes and ears always open,
Let the old practices pass and imbibe the new fashions.

These are the days of practicing "Evidence Based Medicine":
Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) and Meta-analyses based medicine.
You can't base your practice on a Professor or a teacher's advice,
You must learn to educate yourself of what's latest in your science.

You must also know what we don't know for sure,
Ask relevant questions, look for or set up a RCT and explore.
All new treatments must pass through this route,
You accept them only if p is < 0.001 , for sure and absolute.

Learning must never be over, we must learn all the time*,
It's a sign of life; it keeps us in tune with our times.
Life is being on a cycle, you stay upright as long as you pedal,
You fall into oblivion if you stop to grow, learn or pedal.

But all said and done, learning is nothing if not fun,
If you take it as a burden, your problem- you'll be undone.

Let's labour to learn and also labour to spread what we learn,
A lit candle lights another, that's how our luminous world runs!

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**It's good to talk: Thoughts for new medical students at a new medical school.
Richard Smith, Editor BMJ. BMJ 2003, 20 December; 327: 1430-1433.*

Switch it Off

Have you ever noticed when you try to sleep?
A flood of random thoughts, into your mind creeps.
That train of thoughts becomes an unending chain,
That prevents relaxation and is dear sleep's bane.

Then you feel the tension in the muscles of your head,
As if restless thoughts have gone berserk in your head.
The vacillations go on and on until you put your foot down,
Say 'No' to all thoughts and visions in your throbbing crown.

When thought ceases, tension ceases, muscle relaxation ensues,
As the mind ceases, the world ceases, a quiet sleep ensues.
So then, which is the best thought, may I ask my dear?
'No thought' is the most relaxing thought, it's very clear.

If you can 'switch off' your mind as you lay your head on the bed,
And 'break off' with the living now, dead past and the days ahead.
If you can let go of your ego and the little hurt fearful self,
You'll instantly relax, sleep will take you in its lap itself.

Well, don't be afraid of switching off and breaking off,
Don't you worry, the world will be there when you wake up.
You'll be there too and will hopefully have a full day,
To tackle all problems in a fresh, relaxed and happy way.

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Sultans and Kings*

So you were their leader, began the battle cry!
Did you then, oh liege, bring back to us the Holy Turf?
Flower'd in resplendent colours, the city of our dreams,
Where marble is lustrous and cool, where maidens are moulded by deity.
Even Byzantium pales in comparison.

Did you then, Oh Brother! bring back some relics?
Of the Hebrew Prophets, of our own Dominus too.
Sepulchers and Patriarchs were waiting for you,
To liberate and orchestrate the pogroms of war,
Speak, my dear blood, this is your podium – your acting stage.

Dear heart, why do you silence yourself?
Yes, heart, that is your name prefer'd?
Extolled and eulogized for centuries to come.
What is all the commotion, what exactly have you done?
Oh, lion-hearted king!

I have not achieved, yes you are right.
But the chivalry I faced, that is enough for me.
The fact that I have met him in battle, and survived,
Is satisfaction itself, a tribute to me and mine men.
I am scarr'd with dreams of his face.

Yet even a lion-heart, ignorant of fear,
Can be reduced to rubble, and return free hand.
An extraordinary mortal,
Ayyubi!
He is a man inspired by God's grace.

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** The poem relates a hypothetical (yet probable) conversation between two kings of England – Richard I, The Lion-Heart (1189-1199) and his brother and protagonist John (1199-1216). Despite investing significant proportions of his country's resources in the war effort to recapture Jerusalem, King Richard failed. In large part this was due to the sheer brilliance, and military genius of his adversary Salah-al-Din Ayyubi ("Saladin").*