



Personal From Your Chief Editor

1972 Volume 4 Issue 1

The Chief Editor

It is apt, in this time of the year, when Caduceus begins a new volume, to discuss and contemplate upon the various aspects of her role in the Medical Society and of her significance to medical students. I shall not dwell in detail on all facets, as so many are established firmly enough to have taken their place in the connotations carried by the word Caduceus.

Caduceus shall endeavour to whip up interest among medical students of their society which is plagued by capito-colonialism, of their country (China, if you still have any doubt) which is marred by ideological differences, and of this world which is torn by superpower politics. This may come as a shock to the medical profession in general and medical students in particular, for, intoxicated by the false divinity of the knowledge they have good command of, they have, from time immemorial, displayed a fierce identification with their art to the extent that they have lost their perspective in society. They consider themselves medical men first and last, that their responsibility to society ends, with all sincerity, in the curing of the ill. The idea of being a member of society never lives more than a fleeting existence in their mind.

Out of human love we come to this Medical School to be apprenticed to the art of healing and we cannot afford to defeat our own purpose by adopting a worldview as narrow as that, and thus losing sight of our position as a man, not only as a physician, in society, particularly in the grim face of social injustice in this Colony, and during the critical period of reconstruction of our fatherland, China. The whole medical profession needs desperately a reassessment of its role in society, in its reforms and betterment. We must recognize the importance of the traditional social role of the medical profession to serve the people, to ameliorate their welfare, so that when we claim contribution to our brothers we shall be modest. We must also recognize the cruel fact that the traditional medical profession as a social force, quite contrary to the aspirations of its many individual members, constitutes a major preservative for the system, so that when we set out to change the system, we must first overhaul the medical hierarchy.

The fuming lines of above will no doubt raise the eyebrows of a formidable number of medical students who see virtue only in academic studies, sports events, social activities, etc. They will find the new emphasis unpalatable, which is only natural and which I cannot care less.

A newspaper, and Caduceus is doubtlessly a newspaper though the interval between issues is protracted to one month, rests on the tripod of editors, readers and contributors. Caduceus is blessed with the fact that the three are but one: we are all fellow students in the same Medical School. It is truly your newspaper. Caduceus is not just an Editorial Board to see to it that it remains in circulation, but because of your active participation, each and everyone of you, as editors, readers and contributors. Yes, as editors. Caduceus shall not bar anyone genuinely interested from taking part. At any time in the year when you feel like it, you can always turn up and work with us for a couple of issues and then quit as you please. There is no obligation for you to last the whole term, no awkward elections, no formal meetings, no past experience needed. What matters is the zest to work, the fervour to devote and the will to persevere. It is the truest of democracy, participatory democracy, one of the dearest fruits of the American New Left experience.

Our editors shall not be (or should I say, should not be) monstrosities hidden in some distant closed closet churning out four pages every month for you to throw into the wastebasket. They all are your fellow students and I shall instruct them to be talent scouts to mix with you soliciting articles and other contributions. People, people. It is the common people that make things work. And it is the common medical student that Caduceus is for.

Apathy breeds bureaucratism. Bureaucratism engenders apathy. The two among themselves form a vicious cycle. Whether or not Caduceus shall be just another printed sheet thrown at you by some mysterious who-knows-from-where busters depend on your active participation. And I beg of you. Write! Contribute to Caduceus! I dread to think of receiving no support from you: your indifference and detachment will turn me into another bureaucrat, which is the last thing I want to be. Please, have mercy on me, and on yourself.

When next year this time another Chief Editor is writing his “Personal,” when next year this time I am packing my bags and find that all my avowed

objectives have fallen through, I shall not be sad as I have known enough failure to be saddened. And if you are already laughing at my naïveté, I do not care as I know I have made the right start.

You may say I'm a dreamer

But I'm not the only one

And I hope someday you will join us

— John Lennon