

## In Honour of Professor Raymond Arthur Dart

# AN INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF MAN IN AFRICA

By PHILLIP V. TOBIAS.

*Chairman, Committee to establish an Institute for the Study of Man in Africa.*

Few readers of this Journal will not know something about Professor R. A. Dart who has held the Chair of Anatomy at the University of the Witwatersrand for 35 years. There will be some who will have known him as professor and dean, anatomist and anthropologist, teacher and administrator; while others will no doubt have appreciated him as leader and pioneer, prophet and prehistorian, soldier and actor, support of the lame duck—literally and figuratively—, councillor and friend. When he retires from the university staff at the end of 1958, physiotherapists will undoubtedly be at one with the medical and associated medical professions in experiencing a sense of loss and in wishing him many years of healthful, happy retirement.

It would fill many pages of this Journal to sketch, even in outline, all that the medical, dental and associated professions owe to him in South Africa. But members of the South African Society of Physiotherapy will need no reminding of the large part Professor Dart played in initiating and shaping the first South African academic courses in Physiotherapy. Perhaps, however, one may refer here to the stimulation Professor Dart has given to great numbers of his colleagues and the students who have passed through his hands. It is as a maker of men that he gave his finest gift to a young country: in which the medical, dental and nursing professions were budding and those of physiotherapy and occupational therapy not yet conceived; in which research was emerging from its cocoon and, in which the immense fruits of the sub-continent were awaiting the fertilizing impacts, not only of practitioners and scientists from abroad, but of our own graduates, equipped and inspired to promote the advancement of knowledge.

Among the members and research students of his department, who have subsequently achieved distinction, may be mentioned the late Dr. Gordon Laing, the late Professor L. R. Shore, Professors Alexander Galloway and Lawrence H. Wells, the three Gear brothers, Professors Joseph and Theodore Gillman, Dr. J. S. Weiner, Dr. G. W. H. Schepers, Dr. Tillie Dreyer, and Professor J. C. Middleton Shaw. The first Dental Faculty in South Africa stems directly from Dart's appointment of Professor Shaw as a Senior Lecturer in Comparative Odontology in the Department of Anatomy.

It is with such thoughts in mind that a group of medical and dental men, past and present students of Professor Dart, have conceived the idea of commemorating his work by the proposed establishment of an Institute for the Study of Man in Africa.

### Objectives of Institute.

Briefly, the objectives would be as follows:—

*Primarily*, the Institute would aim to advance the study of the living peoples of Africa in health and disease. This would embrace the bodily structure, function and pathology; diet and nutrition; tropical diseases and other medical problems; physical anthropology, heredity and racial composition; the climatic adaptations of man at the Equator, in the Tropics, and in the Sub-tropics, in the forests, deserts and mountain regions; dental eruption, attrition and decay. So much for the physical well-being of the people. This leads on to the psychological and social make-up of the peoples of Africa, their attitudes towards illness, as part of their general pattern of cultures, including also art, music and languages, tribal and kinship structure, and population problems.

*Secondly*, the Institute would try to foster the study of Man's ancestry in Africa—the fossil men, their evolution and migrations and hybridisations, the animals and plants and the changing climates associated with them. Included

here, too, would be a study of their way of life, stone and bone implements, burial customs and artistic creations.

South Africa would seem to be ideally situated for the establishment of a continentally-important Institute of this character and, within the Union, no better position than Johannesburg could be found. Here, within a narrow radius, are to be found the fossil ape-man, the *Australopithecinae* from Sterkfontein, Taungs and Makapansgat; the Bushmen, those living fossils whose straggling remnants occur at Lake Chrissie to the east and in the Kalahari to the west, of Johannesburg; both rural Bantu tribes and urbanized, detribalized Africans undergoing acute cultural contacts in their hundreds of thousands; Coloured and Asian peoples; and White South Africans of varied national origin and all economic brackets. Thereapart, the facilities existing at the University of the Witwatersrand, both material and personal, as well as the programme of such researches already being carried out from this institution, would make it an obvious choice as the seat of the proposed Institute. Nevertheless, although it is proposed that the Institute be established within the framework of the University of the Witwatersrand, a cardinal aim would be to co-operate fully with and to extend all the Institute's experience and facilities to, other universities and research institutes which pursue similar research objectives. The Institute would thus come to assume a national character, in much the same way as other specialized research institutes at various South African universities.

### Functions.

#### 1. Research.

From what has been said, one of the foundations upon which the Institute would rest should be *Research*. Twofold in character, research would be both in the laboratory on the accumulated materials, and in the field. It is envisaged that the Institute would promote a series of multi-purpose field expeditions, in which the combined efforts of physical and social anthropologists, linguists and ethno-musicologists, medical and dental scientists, and others, would be pooled. It is to be hoped that the establishment of the Institute and the inauguration of its research programmes would attract many more young men and women into these vital fields than is the case at present. In this way, personnel trained in field survey methods would be produced, to the benefit not only of South Africa, but of the African continent, which is sorely in need of such investigators everywhere south of the Sahara.

#### 2. Education Conservation.

Aside from research, there are two other basic functions of the Institute, namely *Education* and *Conservation*. The educational function would be both an intra-mural one, in relation to students and trainees, and extra-mural, in relation to the public. Conducted tours of the Museum for high school pupils and other organised groups, recitals of African music, films and illustrated talks, would all help to educate the public in the problems of Africa and her peoples. The possible integration of the Institute with the proposed civic developments in the Braamfontein area of Johannesburg might lead the Institute to be seen as a great civic asset, in the fulness of time to become a national prestige point.

#### 3. Africana Museum.

The third function of the Institute would be to serve as a museum and conservatory for Africana, especially those material objects, weapons and instruments, and recordings, which over large areas of the continent are rapidly vanishing

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courses in Biology and Chemistry have been arranged to prepare them for the course in Physiology followed by the medical students. A special course in Anatomy for the Physiotherapy students has been organised. Elementary Physiotherapy Techniques are being taught from the beginning but the students will not start treating patients until the 2nd year. During the 2nd and 3rd years lectures in Elementary Pathology, Medicine and Surgery will be given by members of the Teaching and Consultant Staff of the University and Groote Schuur Hospital. The examinations like those for membership of the Chartered Society, are to be taken in three parts. Part I will consist of (a) Chemistry and Biology after 6 months; (b) Physics and Anatomy at the end of the 1st year; and (c) Physiology in the middle of the 2nd year. Part II will be very much the same as the Intermediate Examination of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy and will be taken in the middle of the 3rd year and Part III at the end of the 3rd year.

Modifications will no doubt have to be made as the years go by. If the Medical School is able to increase its staff, more special courses in the basic sciences may be arranged. More teachers of Physiotherapy are urgently required and it is hoped that a course for physiotherapists interested in teaching will soon be arranged. I shall be more than interested to hear from anyone already qualified or who would like to train for a teaching certificate in physiotherapy. Cape Town is a lovely place and its inhabitants are most friendly!

In conclusion may I take this opportunity of thanking the South African Society of Physiotherapy and the individual members who may have sent me good wishes for the future of the School.

I hope that ultimately Cape Town will be making a really worthwhile contribution in Physiotherapy not only to South Africa but to the world.

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### NEW PREMISES

Medical Distributors (Pty.) Ltd. of Johannesburg have moved into modern and spacious premises at 252 Jeppe Street, where they are occupying half of the first floor of "Cape-York," an imposing new building extending from Gold to Nugget Streets.

The entrance is on the ground floor (3rd shop from the corner of Gold Street). An attractive staircase, the walls of which are decorated with Art Work by Ernest Ulmann, depicting scenes from Medical History, takes the visitor up to the modern showroom and offices.

All old and new friends of the firm are cordially invited to inspect the new premises. Parking for visitors will be available in the basement as soon as the building is completed.

The Johannesburg headquarters are under the personal supervision of Mr. H. J. Kretchmer who has been connected with Physiotherapy in South Africa for over 20 years.

The Cape Town Agency of "Dismed" is in the hands of Mr. H. E. Lewy, 216/217 Boston House, Strand Street, who is well known to all Physiotherapists in the Cape Province.

### Prof. Dart Fund.—Continued from Page 5.

before the onslaught of detribalizing and civilizing influences. These objects, and symbols need to be protected, enshrined and perpetuated, before it is too late. Already several large and valuable collections exist on the Witwatersrand and the nucleus of a museum is at hand without much searching for and amassing of new materials. To give one example: in the Department of Anatomy at the University of the Witwatersrand, is a unique collection, built up over 30 years by Professor Dart and his staff, of 600 life-masks and 500 death-masks, representing many African tribes and races from Cape to Cairo. Adequately displayed against a background of regional maps and illustrations, this collection alone would provide a magnificent starting point, to which would be added the collections of Bantu cultural material, musical instruments, African music recordings, the skeletons, dental impressions, photographs, fossils and implements, disease and diet records, and many other categories of objects. Finally, the museum should serve as a clearing-house for information, statistics and publications on all the fields which it will handle.

### Ambitious Project.

The project is an ambitious one, but the organisers believe it is not out of proportion to the stature of the men whom it will commemorate—and certainly, it is in keeping with the magnitude of the problems of man in Africa. Already the proposal has received the support of the Medical Graduates' Association, Dental Graduates, the Convocation, Students' Representative Council, Students' Dental and Medical Councils, the Occupational Therapy Society, as well as of a number of professors and university staff members most closely concerned. I am pleased to say that the Central Executive Committee of the S.A. Society of Physiotherapy has offered its support to the proposed Institute.

### Fund Raising.

As the first step towards the realization of this objective, it is proposed to raise a sum of £10,000 from past and present students and colleagues of Professor Dart. Once this sum is to hand, the appeal will be extended to the large financial trusts and research foundations from whom it is hoped that the greater part of the funds will be forthcoming. Perhaps one may take advantage of the hospitality of the *Journal's* columns to issue an appeal to physiotherapists throughout South Africa and elsewhere to see this proposed Institute a project worthy of their support and to contribute accordingly. Cheques should be made payable to the Raymond Dart Institute Fund and should be sent to the Medical Graduates' Association, 14a Kotze Street, Hospital Hill, Johannesburg. Bankers' stop order forms are obtainable on request from the same address.