

## A CENTENARY

This year and the following will mark the foundation, a century ago – of several National Dental Organizations.

It is not customary for this Journal to seize such an opportunity to devote leading articles commemorating such events and certainly not in another language. However, this year the dental profession of the United States of America will observe the fact that in 1859 26 dentists at Niagara Falls founded an Association, which – in the course of a century expanded to a membership of 90.000, and it is for this jubilee that we want to make an exception. It is not for the fact that by its membership the American Dental Association is by far the largest Society of dentists in the world, that we are paying special attention to this centennial, but it is because we are of the opinion that not only the American members have to be grateful for the activities of their professional organization, but that Europe in general and the Netherlands as one of the countries of that Continent, have very special reasons to make our American confrères aware of our feelings of friendship and appreciation.

History shows that American Dentistry started with the work of French odontologists who accompanied Lafayette's Army, later joined by some British colleagues and we can only state that these few pioneers in a short time, did more for the progress of their profession than their contemporaries in the „civilized” countries they had left.

Already in 1839 we find – printed in Baltimore – a monthly Journal, the „American Journal of Dental Science” and up to 1859, when „The Dental Cosmos” was founded, there were no less than 35 dental periodicals, spread over the various States.

In 1839 there were already many State Dental Societies and we also know that in that same year the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery was chartered and then and there began the dental educational system for which America has become so deservedly famous.

Dr. C. A. HARRIS of Baltimore tried in vain to organize a dental school in connection with the University of Maryland. He did not succeed in convincing the medical faculty of the usefulness of such a project and, together with some friends, he then founded the first dental college in the world, the *Baltimore College of Dental Surgery!*

This started the movement for dental education on an autonomous basis

and to-day America can be very proud of what this system has done for the advancement of dentistry and thus for the benefit of mankind.

It is a great temptation not to write more about this development, but space forbids and therefore I will restrict myself to the relations this country had and has with American Dentistry.

A regular dental school in the Netherlands started only at the end of the 19th century, so that most of the dental practitioners had to go abroad for their studies, to Great Britain, France, Germany and if possible, to the United States of America. It was the time when in nearly all of the capitals of Europe Americans were the leading dentists and when they retired and returned to their native land, younger men took their places. The degree „Doctor of Dental Surgery” was regarded both in the dental world and among the patients as the highest standard in Dentistry, and therefore quite a number of students and young practitioners went over to the States in order to obtain this highly coveted title.

In 1908 there were so many Dutch students in Philadelphia that they founded „The Holland Dental Society of the University of Pennsylvania”. Also the „Chicago College of Dental Surgery” and Chicago’s „North Western” were often chosen, the reason most probably being that the Deans of these institutions: EDWARD C. KIRK, TRUMAN BROPHY, G. V. BLACK (in later years his son ARTHUR BLACK) were very well known in Europe and had many friends in Holland.

In 1873, during a meeting at Rigi Mountain (Switzerland) the Americans, practising in Europe, founded „The American Dental Society of Europe”.

Up to the present day their annual meetings belong to the best that are held in Europe and as every year another country was chosen, it means that this Society with guest-speakers from the States, has brought „American Dentistry” through the whole of Europe and many friendships were born in this way, which have lasted for life.

That was the reason that when in 1900 the Fédération Dentaire Internationale was founded in Paris at the time of the International Dental Congress, the international spirit was already alive and therefore we find as presidents and secretaries of the various Commissions, the names of BROPHY, BRYAN, CARR, DONALLY, KIRK and MAC MANUS.

In 1914, during the London Congress, the first World War broke out and the Congress had to be stopped, after electing TRUMAN W. BROPHY as President of the F.D.I.

When in 1918 the war was over, feelings were so difficult to appease that the first opportunity for an international gathering was in 1920 in

Paris, on the occasion of the celebration of the 40th jubilee of the Ecole Dentaire de Paris.

There it was decided to try to revive the F.D.I., but the next year the Secretary-General, FLORESTAN AGUILAR (Spain), had to report that this still seemed impossible. Then in June 1921, Dr. EDWARD C. KIRK visited Holland, accompanied by Dr. CHARLES TURNER. With a few Dutch colleagues it was decided to try to arrange an inofficial meeting in September. A cable was sent to Dr. BROPHY in Chicago, and the President – then 72 years old – cabled back and would take the boat and be at The Hague for three days, as he had to return immediately!

The meeting under BROPHY's leadership proved a great success and it was decided „to go on as before” and have the first official post-war meeting in Madrid in 1922. Dr. KIRK brought the invitation to hold the next Congress in Philadelphia in 1926, and the big attendance there, also from Europeans, offered a wonderful opportunity for most of them to get acquainted with American organization and American hospitality.

At the annual meetings in Europe we had the pleasure of always seeing a great number of American confrères, so that it cannot be wondered at that friendships grew continuously.

This Journal more than once was honoured by the contribution of papers from prominent Americans and as a typical proof for their interest we can record that in 1928, when a case of Hemihypertrophy was published, we got a letter from Dr. KIRK, the Editor of the Dental Cosmos, saying that he felt sure that with the help of extra-oral X-Rays one might detect a supernumary tooth in the lower jaw. These X-Rays were taken and finding a supernumary premolar, it was proved that Dr. KIRK had been right!

During the Second World War, Holland for five years was isolated and when the hostilities were over, the writer had the opportunity of visiting the States a few months later. He was received with all the hospitality he had met with before and was introduced into the meeting of the Board of Trustees, where it was resolved to help put the Fédération Dentaire Internationale on its feet again by holding the next International Congress in Boston in 1947.

At the same time plans were made to show the Dutch dentists what had been done in the dental field during the years of war and isolation and in the summer of 1946 Professors from Philadelphia, New-York and Baltimore came to Amsterdam for six weeks to give postgraduate courses, which are noted in Dutch Dental History as the „Ivory Cross Expedition 1946”!

Also everything possible was done in the first year after the war to send instruments and dental materials to the Dutch dentists, which they could not obtain otherwise and those who had personal friends over there were heaped with gifts that were very welcome in a country where nearly every conceivable necessity was either ruined or stolen.

Since then several of our teachers and practitioners have gone to the States to study American Schools, methods and research and all of them – on their return – told of the extreme kindness with which they were received and were shown what was most interesting.

Those who had the opportunity of visiting Chicago, also were always guests at the Central Office and were full of admiration of what they saw of an organization of nearly one hundred thousand members.

In concluding, our congratulations go to our American confrères and friends and not least to the men at the top of their Association, who are directing the work which is carried out to the admiration of their colleagues abroad!

Next to the publication of the „Journal of the American Dental Association” there are Councils on Dental Education, on Dental Health, Dental Research, Dental Therapeutics, Dental Trade and Laboratory Relations, Federal Dental Services, Hospital Dental Service, International Relations, Journalism and Legislation, not to forget the work the A.D.A. has done for the improvement of dental help in Army, Navy and Air Force.

Those who follow the annual publications of these various Committees will appreciate not only the work that is done, but especially admire the logical planning which results in continuous improvements of the matters in study.

In September the Centenary will be celebrated by a Congress to be held in New York, which undoubtedly will be the largest international dental Assembly ever held and representatives of most of the countries of the world will bring the warmest congratulations from their respective communities.

The best wish this Journal can extend is that the A.D.A. will be able to continue in the future its excellent work, which is not looking for quantity but for quality, a quality which is highly esteemed by everyone who has followed its splendid history!

Amsterdam, January 1959

CH. F. L. NORD