



ACADEMY OF MEDICINE, SINGAPORE

PATRON: PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

**ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR LIM SHIH HUI
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Induction Comitia 2012 of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore

23 August 2012, Thursday, at 1800, HPB Auditorium Level 7, Health Promotion Board

Our Guest of Honour, Dr Amy Khor, Minister of State for Health;

Mrs Tan Ching Yee, Permanent Secretary for Health;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

A very good afternoon to all of you.

Today, we are celebrating 3 significant events; 2 are historical milestones in your career, and 1 for the Academy. These events are Induction Comitia, Graduation of Staff Registrars, and a Tribute to Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome.

I shall first touch on the relevance of the Academy's Annual Induction Comitia and Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome.

55 years ago, the Academy was founded by Professor Ransome with the main mission of advancing the art and science of medicine in Singapore, through training and education. From a pioneering group of 34 founding members with no College or Chapter in 1957, Academy has now evolved into the biggest specialist organization today with more than 2,400 fellows in 8 Colleges and 4 Chapters. Without Professor Ransome, there will not be an Induction Comitia today. However, his contributions were more far-reaching than just creating our Academy. I shall elaborate later.

A total of 75 new Fellows will be inducted this evening; the highest number since 2007. For the new inductees, please accept my heartiest Congratulations! You are now part of us, helping the Academy to preserve and advance our medical profession!

The Induction Comitia today is to recognize your tireless effort, accomplishments and clinical maturity. You will be challenged to lead by your wisdom, your understanding of humanity and, increasingly, by your ability to innovate and to communicate, as you deliver the necessary care to your patients. The

Induction Comitia will also remind you that you have a duty in nurturing and inspiring the next generation of specialists for the future.

As Fellows of the Academy, I have no doubt that you will maintain your clinical competency by actively taking part in your continuing professional development programme. What you need to pay particular attention is to continue to maintain a high standard of professional and ethical practice which is expected of you by the Academy and our profession.

Despite the recent publicities of several medical professionals in the media, I strongly believe that the majority of doctors, especially Fellows of the Academy, have a high standard of medical professionalism. Medical professionalism establishes the trust that enables the physician to exercise his or her expert professional authority. The use of this professional authority must be held in the best interest of our patients. Trust is at the heart of the healing relationship and the core of our medical profession; and trust is predicated on the integrity of both the individual physician and the profession as a whole.

At this juncture, I would like to mention Sir William Osler, a Canadian-born British Physician. He was one of the most esteemed physicians in the history of medicine. He was remembered as a great medical educator of his time, and for the humanism he brought to the practice of medicine. This humanism is perhaps best exemplified in one of his memorable quotes: "The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade; a calling, not a business; a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head."

Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome had many similarities to Sir William Osler. He was British-born, and taught and practiced Medicine in other countries, which included Singapore for more than 30 years. He is celebrated today not only for his contributions to the advancement of medicine and medical education in Singapore, but also for the humanism he brought to the practice of medicine. He was always available, not only to the rich but also to the poor, to the mighty as well as to the common. Incidentally, he is the first physician in Singapore with a strong interest in Neurology. You will hear more about Professor Ransome from Prof Anantharaman later in our tribute to the man and his legacy.

As some of you may know, there is an ancient couplet in Sanskrit, which says, "A physician is the elder brother of Yama, the Lord of Death, because Yama takes away only your life but the physician takes away your life and all your money!" Perhaps I am giving an extreme example which is probably very rare now a day. However the incidence of doctors in Pakistan went on strike last year resulting in death of patients should constantly remind us to exercise both our head and heart, like Sir William Osler and Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome. Not to take advantage of or exploit the patient-physician relationship but to conduct our lives and maintain this relationship on the highest level.

Last but not least, I congratulate our 17 graduates of the Staff Registrar Scheme programs. You should be proud of your achievement to have fulfilled the stringent requirement to obtain the SRS Diploma. Today will mark the commencement of yet another life-long learning journey, and I wish you all the best in your career advancement.

Let me say in conclusion that this evening will not be quite complete without the presence of our Guest of Honour, Dr Amy Khor, and many of our guests here. Thank you all, for gracing this very special occasion.

I wish everyone a pleasant evening.