

## **CURRICULUM FOR HOMŒOPATHIC EDUCATION**

The West Bengal State Homœopathic Federation did a yeoman's service by holding symposia on uniformity of Curriculum and Syllabus for Homœopathic Education in India. The Federation has published its conclusions and suggestions, the summary of which was published in the last issue of our journal. This is a very vital subject as the different homœopathic institutions springing in different States have varying curricula and syllabuses and have no uniform standard of education. The duration of courses also varies from State to State. This is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. This is partly why some states do not recognise the registration or diplomas from the other States. For the good of homœopathy and the practitioners of this branch of medicine it is very urgent that we join our hands and lay down certain basic standards. We understand with satisfaction that the Homœopathic Advisory Committee is also paying a lot of attention to this problem and trying to evolve a solution of the vexed question.

Actually the Medical education in general is quite a problem all over the world. The past few decades have added so much to the medical subjects that it has become practically impossible for a medical student to keep pace with them. To teach the basic minimum out of this bewildering maize is quite a problem. The Homœopathic education is all the more complicated because of such a difference of opinion about the relationship of auxiliary subjects with the so called purely homœopathic subjects. On one hand the demands on a homœopathic physician are so many in a large town that unless he is well versed in general medical subjects he cannot hold his own in the profession as a whole. On the other hand to be really efficient in Homœopathic prescribing, one has to devote proportionately a long time to the study and practice of the art & science of Homœopathic prescribing against that of the allopathic medicine. We have to decide how much of the auxiliary subjects shall be taught to the Homœopathic

students, keeping in view:—(a) their being accepted by the Government as eligible for services, (b) their capability later on to obtain higher qualifications and (c) their being able to give sufficient time to the study of Homœopathic Materia Medica, Philosophy and Repertory. These are conflicting demands but we have to strike a happy compromise somewhere.

Unfortunately at the present moment there is practically no opening for the Homœopathic physicians in the Government health services or schemes. They have to depend on their own private practice or a few private charitable institutions.

Hence we cannot afford to have a long and costly Homœopathic medical course. This will not encourage many students. Already the best boys go to the official medicine. Until there are better opportunities for the homœopathic graduates, one has to have short diploma courses with opportunities and facilities for higher qualification. This moreover will encourage quite a proportion of diploma holders to go and settle amongst the rural communities. The Bengal Homœopathic Federation has outlined different courses. We fully agree with them that as far as possible we should have separate Homœopathic institutions manned by instructors who are trained in homœopathic methods and are at least familiar and convinced of the Homœopathic methods. It is only in this congenial atmosphere that the homœopathic medicine will develop its own peculiar genius. We broadly agree with the division of the courses, although details will have to be worked out differently in certain respects. There will be difficulties, for example, in dovetailing the licentiate course with the graduate course. How and what part of anatomy and physiology will be taken up by the students of the graduate courses will be quite a problem. Will they have to take up subjects all over again or study only the parts not done before? In spite of their desire to correlate the anatomy, physiology and pathology with the human body as a whole and to the symptomatology of the Homœopathic materia medica, the details they have worked out do not fulfil it. We believe that in the Homœopathic institutions, there should be greater effort in correlating these subjects. Instead of treating these compartmentally and disjointedly we may as far as possible teach in the same lecture practice of medicine, Materia Medica, Physiology, Anatomy and

Pathology. The Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology are the only stepping stones for the understanding of medicine and *Materia Medica*. We do not have to turn out Anatomists and Physiologists. For example in a lecture on *Bryonia* when we talk of stitching pain in the synovial membranes, pleura and peritoneum, we talk of a few abstract terms for the uninitiated. The students are made to learn these by heart; they have no conception of those things. It is at that stage that a short talk on anatomy (structure), physiology (function) and pathology (change in tissues in sickness) should be given and demonstrated. This way the *Materia Medica* and the dry bones of other subjects will begin to live and will not be forgotten. Similarly the relevant part of practice of medicine will also be taught about the same time. This is a very new and bold approach but we feel that ultimately this is the correct one and will automatically limit the teaching of unnecessary details and theoretical parts which are useless burdens for a student who aims to be a clinician primarily.

In this monograph they have aptly pointed out that the auxiliary subjects are independent sciences. "They are no monopoly of any particular medical system. These studies supply us with a multitude of scientific facts but each system of medicine has its own interpretation and its own way of utilising and applying the principles evolved out of these facts for the purpose of healing the sick. Hence it is clear that the mode of pedagogy in a Homœopathic institution regarding medicine proper as well as auxiliary subjects must be different from that in an institution of the allopathic system of medicine."

We shall have to fumble our way to the correct methods of teaching our students. We require teachers who combine imagination of higher order with sincere zeal for imparting this type of education.

—*Homœopathic Sandesh, Sept., '64*

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