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THE PROBLEMS OF HOMŒOPATHIC PRACTICE IN THE PRESENT AGE OF STATE INSURANCE, HEALTH SERVICE SCHEME ETC.

DR. J. N. KANJILAL, M.B., CALCUTTA

Anybody connected with any of the homœopathic teaching institutions is noticing with great worry and apprehension a gradual reduction in the number of candidates seeking admission in such institutions. This applies especially to the day-section of the colleges where only whole-time homœopathic students are usually admitted. The students attending the night sections are generally part-timers having some other profession or employment. They study Homœopathy not so much for their basic career in life, but for various other motives and purposes, e.g.,—scientific interest, humanitarian motive or a source of income pastime in retired life, etc.

Another noticeable fact is that the relative percentage of Bengali students is diminishing more remarkably than the students coming from other provinces.

There may be various factors responsible for this formidable trend in Homœopathy, especially in West Bengal, the Mother Province of Homœopathy in India, nay Asia, but the following seems to be the most potent of them demanding urgent consideration:

1. As compared with Allopathy, Homœopathic practice although requiring far more personal merit, labour and time per

case, has ever been less lucrative. But this fact did not so long deter the recruitments of a fair number of students and many of them sufficiently talented, for Homœopathy, for two main reasons—(a) the joy of success in curing all-rejected "incurable" cases; (b) the income, poor as it ever was, did not usually fall short of the bare cost of living. To-day although 'the joy of success' remains much the same, inspite of hard competition with the flood of new inventions in allopathic therapeutics in last few decades—but the crux of the problem is that this joy is failing to compensate for the fast increasing deficit in domestic budget. So the guardians, however much they may love Homœopathy, are feeling timid to hazard the economic career of their wards by sending to homœopathic institutions.

As our Authorities are proving impotent to control the steeply rising cost of living, they should at least try to mitigate the financial crisis of the poor homœopaths, whose service to the people cannot be ignored, by providing suitable employments, or else they will be quite reasonably held responsible for wiping out this indispensable section of society.

2. Upto a few years ago, in the field of general practice, homœopaths had to face open and fair competition with the allopaths. But since the institution of Employees' State Insurance Scheme, exclusively manned by allopaths, the employees have been deprived of the choice of the system of treatment they prefer, and homœopathic physicians (as well as other non-allopathic physicians) have lost a major part of their clientele. This unreasonable or rather malicious and inequitable attitude of our Democratic Government towards its tax-payers must be removed if Homœopathic Practice is to be saved from financial disaster.

3. Authorities of many other States (eg. A.P., Kerala) are gradually seeming to wake up to the dire reality of our country, and slowly taking up more accommodative attitude with respect to Homœopathy (and other non-allopathic systems). That may be one of reasons why homœopathic institutions are getting relatively more recruits in and from these States. Whereas the West Bengal Government is obstinately maintaining an unrealistic and inconsistent attitude towards Homœopathy, notwith-

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