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## EDITORIAL

### THE HOMŒOPATHIC ACT AND HOMŒOPATHY IN WEST BENGAL

The West Bengal Homœopathic System of Medicine Act 1963, has come into force since August 1, 1964. This event is of vital importance for Homœopathy in West Bengal, the fosterland of Homœopathy in Asia since the very life-time of Hahnemann. Until this event Homœopathy was thriving spontaneously all over West Bengal from the biggest cities to the furthest villages and spreading mainly from here to all the corners of India and most places of Asia, with all the merits and demerits of spontaneous growth. Now that Homœopathy has come under the control of the State machinery, its spontaneous growth will be out of the picture, and what to speak of its growth and spread its very life and existence will depend upon the *integrity, sincerity and prudence* of the human element of the State machinery, that is, the members and officials of the Council of Homœopathic Medicine.

The problems, on the successful solution of which, the destiny of Homœopathy as a distinct system of medical science and profession, will depend, are as follows:—

1. *The problem of Homœopathic Education*: In dealing with this vital problem, certain irrefutable facts should be kept constantly in the mind—

(a) In the homœopathic profession there has always been a large number of most successful homœopaths, or even homœopathic stalwarts, who had never any institutional training in Homœopathy or in any system of Medicine.

(b) A large percentage of the institutionally trained homœo-

paths have turned out as pseudo-homœopaths or vitiators of homœopathic practice.

The basic reason for these two paradoxical phenomena must be clearly understood. The basic reason is, that Homœopathic Medicine is mainly an art. And as such, it has more or less an existence considerably independent of the ancillary sciences. The amount of knowledge in these subjects, indispensably required by a homœopath for building up his proficiency in his art can, to a considerable extent, be acquired by him from various sources, even without going through any medical institution. Of course, for further development of his art, he must have to peep into "what, why and how" of the facts and phenomena he has to deal with; and in the process he has to go deeper and deeper into the various branches of science connected with his art; and this comprises practically all the branches of science—beginning from Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics upto Social Sciences, Astrology and what not, and nay, even beyond the limits of the established sciences (Radiesthesia, Dowsing, etc.). The more he has grounding in the general sciences as well as medical sciences the easier and safer will be his progress towards these ranges of knowledge. But in all stages, at every step the sciences must have a direct subservient explanatory relation with the observed facts and phenomena of the art. If at any stage the science supersedes or overshadows the art, the latter is bound to be crippled and doomed. But that is precisely what has happened in most of the homœopathic teaching institutions of the present age, resulting in rare production of true homœopaths.

For avoiding this danger, our authorities are requested to be meticulous in the formation of sufficient grounding in the Homœopathic art in the basic, i.e. Diploma Course, with minimum burdening with the ancillary subjects; and pay more and more attention to the latter subjects in the Graduate and Post-Graduate courses, in order to develop further and further grasp on the background and elements of the art.

(c) For various reasons, the economic condition of our vast country is wretchedly poor. And there appears no ground to hope that the situation will sufficiently improve earlier than some decades. In such a situation the requirement of our country is the

production of vast number of fairly dependable physicians at minimum possible cost of time and money, providing at the same time full scope for limitless qualitative development only to the deserving candidates.

All these requirements can be fulfilled by adopting the suggestions of the West Bengal State Homœopathic Federation regarding Homœopathic education, including the A.H.M.P. Course.

2. *Homœopathic Teaching Institutions*: Simple formulation of the courses will serve little purpose, if not substantiated by establishment of large number of Homœopathic teaching institutions, all over the country-sides under sponsorship or aid of the Government.

3. *Problem of Registration of Practising Homœopaths*: This being the first time when the homœopathic profession is going to be regularised, it is essential that each and every *bona fide* homœopath gets an opportunity to come under official control and care as a last chance.

A *bona fide* Homœopath, under this category, should be defined as any person who practises Homœopathic system of Medicine on Hahnemannian principles, on honorary or professional basis, as a part-time or whole-time practitioner for at least 3 years.

The examination for testing the *bona fides* of the candidates should be as easy as possible and completely free from all sorts of irregularities and nepotisms. The examination centres should be arranged as conveniently to the rural homœopaths as possible.

4. *Problem of Employment*: In the present age of official interference and control of the medical profession, all sorts of discriminatory attitude against Homœopathy should be thoroughly abolished. Registered Homœopaths must be provided with equal scopes with the registered practitioners of any other system of Medicine—in the field of E.S.I. Scheme, Rural Health Scheme, as well as of General Medical Services.

There are other vital problems of Homœopathy—like Homœopathic Research, Homœopathic drug manufacture, etc.—but they require more elaborate discussion in separate articles.

5. *Problem of elimination of irregularities and vices*: This is the most vital problem of the present age. But much may be

achieved in the way of solving this problem if the council function in the following line:

(i) The Council should act democratically, conscientiously and with foresight, scrupulously avoiding party politics and other considerations in the supreme interest of Homœopathy.

(ii) The whole council should keep strict vigilance over the activities and records of the office of the Council.

(iii) Proper weightage must be given to the opinions, views and suggestions of Homœopathic Associations, on any matter concerning the different functionings and activities of the Council.

(iv) Each and every member of the Council instead of indulging in stoic indifference and passivity, must exert all his energy and capability in discharging his responsibility as a member of a body highly vital for the destiny of Homœopathy.

(v) All the Homœopathic Associations should keep alert vigilance to see that the Council (with its officials and members) acts properly in the sole interest of Homœopathy and nothing else.

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