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EDITORIAL

HOMŒOPATHIC CONFERENCES

Homœopathy in India, to-day, is entering into a new epoch of life. It is coming out of its phase of spontaneous growth, and is entering into the phase of organised growth, with legal status, under official control.

There is a basic qualitative difference between these two phases of life. We referred to this difference on a number of occasions; but we want to emphasize it again, because if at any moment we forget or undervalue this difference, the result will be disastrous to Homœopathy.

In the phase of spontaneous growth in any part of the world, especially in the U.S.A., Homœopathy flourished and extended itself inexorably, in spite of severe opposition and attempts at suppression, as a force of Nature. But as soon as it came under official control, real danger to its life began. From this lesson of history, one may conclude that legal status and official control of Homœopathy should be avoided and fought against.

But this conclusion arises from a superficial approach to the problem. Official control is an unavoidable necessity in any sphere of social life, in the present age, owing to various factors, of which the following are the most important—

(1) Spontaneous growth has its natural limits. The really well-bred elements of the growth may be stifled and crowded out by wild adventitious growths, as is happening in case of Homœopathy in India to-day. Really, Homœopathy is almost on the point of being supplanted, to-day, by various forms of pseudo-

homœopathy in the form of so-called specifics, patents, antibiotics, injections etc. This internal danger is, like miasmatic diseases, far more disastrous than the external danger coming from the opponents.

(2) In the present phase of economic crisis, the spontaneous sources of nutrition and growth of Homœopathy are drying up. Most of the glorious homœopathic teaching institutions run and maintained by philanthropic individuals in India, are now non-existent, and the few that are still surviving are barely breathing with great difficulty. Their place has been taken by mushroom institutions, whose main business is to sell false diplomas to innocent Homœopaths, thus bringing disrepute to the whole homœopathic society. This unwholesome business cannot be stopped without State control. And, moreover, today Homœopathic education and research is not at all possible without substantial State help.

(3) This is an age of State control and management of all social affairs including those of health and medicine. In this age, the scope for free competition in the field of practice is fast getting curtailed. In such a situation the Homœopaths will be totally ousted from practice, if they fail to secure official recognition and care.

So, the question of opposing State control and supervision of Homœopathy is totally irrelevant. But, how to obviate the harmful aspects of State interference?

The danger of State control of Homœopathy arises from two main sources, viz.—

(1) The authorities and personnel of the Government are, as a rule, overwhelmingly under the influence of traditional ideas about Medicine, and more or less under the grip of the dominant School.

(2) Weakness and shortcomings of the homœopathic society itself. Whatever may be the personal attitude of the authorities or of the officials in a democratic Government, the ultimate rulers of the State are the people themselves. Whatever benefit any section of the people can derive from the State ultimately depends upon its *qualitative* strength. The more a particular section of people is conscious about their own real interest, the more they

are united and organised, the more benefit it can derive from the State.

According to official estimate, there are about 60,000 Registered Homœopaths in India; and there must be far more than double this number of Homœopaths who are still remaining unregistered, who will get registration before long. So the total number of Homœopaths practising in India to-day must exceed two lakhs. No practitioner can thrive unless he has at least 200 clients under his hand. Thus we see that, there are at least 4-crores of people in India whose life and interest are deeply connected with the destiny of Homœopathy. If these 4 crores of people are sufficiently conscious about their real interests and move unitedly to achieve those interests, no force on earth can prevent them from realising those objectives.

This fact is being spontaneously and instinctively realised by the Homœopathic masses in India. That is why we are finding, in last few years, frequent Homœopathic conferences on local, State or All India basis. Not to speak of the West Bengal State Homœopathic Federation which has been holding its Conference every year since its inception, absolutely democratically and gradually drawing vaster and vaster masses of Homœopaths, but even those older Associations which had seemed to have been hibernating for years, are waking up and are holding their lively conferences. The peculiarity of all these Conferences are as follows:—

(1) The number of their participants is far unequal to any before, and the number is fast increasing every year.

(2) Each of the Conferences provides free scope for venting all sorts of views however divergent on all the aspects of Homœopathy. Then only those views that are accepted unanimously or by the overwhelming majority, are passed by the Conference. The real advantage of this method is twofold, (i) The real truth becomes more sharp and clear and more thoroughly realised by Homœopathic masses, (ii) the opportunists and vitiators of Homœopathic society become more and more clearly exposed and isolated, so that ultimately they may be totally ousted from Homœopathic forum and society.

(3) The Conferences bring regularly and sharply before the

public as well as the authorities, the basic facts about Homœopathy and what are the real needs and demands of Homœopathy at a particular time.

But, one great weakness is still persisting. Most of these Conferences are being held under the auspices of separate isolated Homœopathic Associations. Unless and until this basic shortcoming is removed, not only nothing substantial for Homœopathy will be achieved, but moreover, various alien and detrimental directives will be imposed on it, in all its spheres e.g., education, research, practice, business etc. It is high time that, all the Associations on State and All India Basis must unite with each other to form one All India Association or Federation. The differing view points should be discussed and synthesized inside the united organisations. And conferences should be held at various levels on local, regional, State or Union basis, under the auspices of this United All India Organisation, functioning thoroughly democratically, so that ultimately one voice should emanate from the whole Homœopathic Society of India.

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