

12. D. T. Pulford—Homœopathic Mat. Medica of Graphic Drug Pictures & Clinical Comments.
13. A. C. Selmon—Health & Longivity.
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AN ADDRESS*

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I am grateful to you for inviting me to inaugurate the XIII All India Homœopathic Medical Conference of your Association. I have come here not that I have anything of importance to communicate to you on matters concerning the practice of Homœopathy which you are likely to discuss in the course of this Session. I am here because the inauguration provides with an opportunity of publicly declaring my faith in Homœopathy and my keen appreciation of its great value to the people of the country in the fight against disease. It is my earnest desire to render such assistance as I can in the advancement of homœopathy.

There still exist people who can see no good in homœopathy and believe that whatever cures it may have achieved are of an automatic character or due to auto suggestion. They are not prepared to accept that a few grains of milk sugar with hardly a trace of any drug in it can possess any curative effect. They are greatly amused when they are told that the fainter the trace of this drug—to the extent that it becomes altogether imperceptible—the more powerful becomes its action in counteracting or eradicating disease. They may be excused if they are not acquainted with the working of the mysterious forces of nature which science is endeavouring to comprehend and reveal, more and more, every day. But what shall we say of those who, taking their stand on the scientific method, deny

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any virtue to homœopathy on such grounds, in these days of atomic energy. I am sure that in course of time they will come to see how simple material substances unfold their great dynamic possibilities when dealt with according to the homœopathic principles and what the dynamic responses of the human organism can be to the action of such substances. It appears to me that it would be difficult to deny to Homœopathy a scientific basis in the face of the rigorous techniques of observation and repeated experimentation which form its foundations. I am told that advances in physics and other sciences and researches in the spheres of medicine itself furnish growing confirmation of the validity of the fundamental truths of homœopathy.

To those who claim the support of the scientific methods in their judgements I ask how far it is consistent with either the scientific spirit or the spirit of humanity to ignore the evidence that millions of cures effected before our very eyes, under the most varied conditions, bring to us.

What I have said here about Homœopathy also applies to Ayurveda.

To those who assert that the indigenous systems and homœopathy have no right to live, because they are outside the modern scientific system, may well be asked whether they have themselves arrived at a stage when they can cure all ailments to which man is liable and specially, in the case of India, whether they are able to extend their ministrations to all the people in the country who are in need of medical help. It is obvious, therefore, that, by our laws or otherwise, we should not do anything which will restrict the range of relief now available to people, till we can replace it by something of superior efficacy within their reach.

We cannot turn away from the truths established by science and we should welcome the efforts of the scientific world to extend our grasp of the working of the human constitution and the disorders to which it is subject. There should be no hesitation in discarding any dogma or doctrine which in the fullness of scientific light is found to be false or untenable. But it would be the height of folly to reject the accumulated

knowledge of generations which has stood the test of experience; simply because science has not arrived at a position that it can give its own positive verdict on its merits. And why should it be assumed that, in dealing with the human system, no approach other than that adopted by what is known as the modern system of medicine is either possible or can yield as good or better results in certain conditions. The human organism is amenable to a variety of influences, operating on principles, which, though distinct, are not necessarily incompatible. There can, thus be several different techniques of cure, of which both the range of usefulness and the inherent limitations should become a matter of scientific study.

I have ventured to put this forward as a layman's view of the various systems of medical treatment which are in vogue in the country at the present moment. It is the viewpoint of the common man who does not want to shut out any avenues of help and who would insist that medical trade unionism should not obstruct the practice of the healing art. What I have said here is not in conflict with the oft-repeated observation that there can be but one science of medicine. It does not follow that what the modern system is not able to assimilate ceases to have place within the pale of scientific knowledge. Science only proclaims its own incompleteness while it has not found a way to reconcile these various approaches in the attack of disease which stand on sure ground and have established their right to exist. Truth has many facets, and science is capacious enough to accommodate them all, each in its own place. One is therefore specially struck by the catholic outlook reflected in Ayurvedic literature which recognizes and provides latitude for every conceivable therapeutic principle.

I may here add the plea that Homœopathy, Ayurveda, Unani, Nature Cure, etc., should not succumb to the same temptation of arrogating to themselves the monopoly of truth and wisdom. I shall also take the liberty of pointing out that if any of these systems cherishes the belief that it is already perfect and the last word has been said on the subject, it would be exposing itself to great risks. The requirements of

modern man in respect of his health are going to be very exacting and any system which fails to remove its accretions and weak elements and does not constantly strive for improvement will certainly lose ground.

I may assure the friends who have assembled here that the approach of the Government of India to the question of the health needs of the people is not of a restrictive character. For many years past, indigenous systems and homœopathy suffered neglect and the fact of their survival is itself a tribute to their vitality. After independence the claims of these systems have been pressed on the attention of Government and there has been growing recognition of the important place they occupy in the life of the nation.

The Planning Commission considered the question of Homœopathy some time ago and made the following recommendations:—

- (1) A Central Council of Homœopathic Medicine may be formed;
- (2) The course in the colleges may be common during the first two years and students will then learn homœopathic philosophy, materia medica and therapeutics and allied subjects in three years;
- (3) Suitable colleges among the existing ones may be upgraded and standardised, and the question of starting new institutions may also be considered;
- (4) Facilities for homœopathic research may be provided;
- (5) A Central Homœopathic drug manufactory and laboratory for standardisation of drugs may be opened at Lucknow.

The matter has subsequently been considered by the Central Health Council, and by an *ad hoc* committee consisting of representatives of the Homœopathic profession and the Ministry of Health. The whole question of education and regulation of the indigenous systems of medicine including Homœopathy was also considered by the Dave Committee. Some matters of policy common to Ayurved, Unani and Homœopathy were also discussed among experts on these

systems of medicine at a conference convened by the Planning Commission in May, 1956. In pursuance of the various suggestions and recommendations of these bodies, action has been initiated in several directions. The Government of India have approved the syllabus drawn by the *ad hoc* committee on Homœopathy for a five years' degree course.

Statutory Councils for Homœopathy have already been set up in Bombay, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra. In West Bengal also, Homœopathic practitioners are registered. It is expected that other States will also bring in suitable legislative measures to promote the practice of Homœopathy on sound lines.

As against a provision of Rs. 37.5 lakhs made by the Central Government in the First Five Year Plan, the Second Plan provides Rs. 1 crore at the Centre and Rs. 5.5 crores in the States for developing indigenous systems of medicine. Homœopathy comes in for a share. The programme under the Second Five Year Plan includes upgrading of five Homœopathic Colleges, several research schemes and the preparation of a pharmacopœia. All the schemes for development and research in the Homœopathic system of medicine are first scrutinised by an Advisory Committee on Homœopathy. Out of the budget provision of Rs. 6.60 lakhs made during 1956-57 for this system, the Government of India have sanctioned grants amounting to Rs. 2,47,910/- to the following institutions :—

- (1) Government Homœopathic Hospital, Sion, Bombay, for upgrading as an All India Post-Graduate Training Centre for Homœopathy.
- (2) Calcutta Homœopathic Medical College, for upgrading to the Degree standard.
- (3) The Andhra Provincial Homœopathic Medical College and Hospital, Gudivada, for setting up of 10 research beds.
- (4) The Midnapur Homœopathic Medical College & Hospital, Midnapur for setting up of 10 research beds.
- (5) D. N. De Homœopathic Medical College & Hospital, Calcutta for setting up of 10 research beds.

The budget provision proposed for 1957-58 is Rs. 8.15 lakhs.

I understand that there are certain differences of opinion, amongst Homœopaths regarding the regulation of practice and standards of training in Homœopathy. I hope that the need for some regulation is accepted both for the sake of the prestige and progress of Homœopathy and in the interest of the vast number of patients who receive treatment at the hands of Homœopaths. It is being said that, in the case of the bulk of Homœopathic practitioners, their qualification for the practice of Homœopathy is based on no more than a Corresponding Course. Whatever might have been the circumstances responsible for this situation in the past, I am sure you would not be content with this state of affairs now. Any homœopath who has pride in the practice of his profession would insist that a person who sets himself as a homœopath is, in reality, effectively equipped for that calling.

I hear there are divided counsels among Homœopaths in relation to various questions affecting the profession. It is my humble advice that in order to serve the best interests of the system, Homœopaths should try to arrive at a common understanding with regard to all important issues. But it is my special appeal to them that they should make united efforts to evolve high ethical standards of professional conduct and remove from their ranks the stigma of bogus degrees and diplomas. No good Homœopath needs these adventitious aids and those who bolster up their names in this manner do no good to themselves but cause serious harm to the profession.

While control has its uses, it is obvious that the positive approach to the problem is the creation of educational facilities of the requisite standards, on an adequate scale, in which the State has the obligation to give all the help it can. I may assure you that in this and other matters of Homœopathy, Government will pay sympathetic attention.
