

THE HÄHNEMANNIAN GLEANINGS

Vol. XXX

MARCH 1963

No. 3

HOMŒOPATHY AND NATIONAL CRISIS

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Every evil has a salutary aspect in it, provided the victim is not devoid of vitality and dynamicity. The crisis imposed by the Chinese aggressors on our country with a vast population proud of milleniums-old history, tradition and culture, has starkly bared out certain basic deficiencies of our social order and administration, demanding immediate rectification. One of the most vital of these deficiencies is the Medical Administration of our country.

Unfortunately for us, our Authorities seem to have a peculiar tendency to borrow ideas from abroad and stubbornly strive to impose them on our country from top, instead of first assessing the inherent resources of the Nation and then trying to utilise them and to improve and enrich them, by borrowing according to necessity, ideas and materials from abroad. The same odd tendency manifestly prevails in the Medical Administration of the country. Our Authorities are frantically straining their nerves to increase the number of Allopathic medical graduates—who have already proved to be too costly for our vast rural areas—by increasing the number of Allopathic Colleges, or even by proposing the absurd device of reducing the number of years of medical curriculum to 3 only; remaining blind to the myriads of Homœopaths strewn all over the country from metropolises to the nooks and corners of villages, actually catering medical aid to vast masses of people, and that quite effectively, as otherwise people would have refused to

accept their service. As a matter of fact, it is these poor and neglected rural Homœopaths, who constitute the main force to fight the perpetual ravages of the various epidemics—like Cholera, Influenza, Eruptive fevers, Infectious diseases etc., in the 80% sector of our population—that is the village folk; and the percentage of cure at their hands matches quite creditably with that of the best I. D. Hospitals of the metropolises. So far as drug therapeutics is concerned, the working knowledge of these unsophisticated Homœopaths, in consonance with their own system of Medicine, is fairly dependable, although having enough scope of improvement; but on the score of basic knowledge in the fundamentals of Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology, and practical knowledge in Clinical Medicine, First Aid, Minor Surgery and essentials of Hygiene their grounding is far below the necessary level. But this lack can be easily overcome by only a little attention and deliberate organisational effort from the part of our State Government and local Self-Government bodies, at almost insignificant cost of money and time. We may suggest the following measures in this line:—

(i) The Health Department should formulate short courses of education, consisting of 10 to 20 lectures with practical demonstrations in each of the above-mentioned subjects, which are fairly common to all the systems of Medicine—Homœopathic, Allopathic or Aurvedic.

(ii) Touring medical teaching squads should be recruited from freshly graduated medical students—no matter whether Homœopathic, Allopathic or Aurvedic, or from enthusiastic qualified medical practitioners of respective localities, on reasonable allowances.

(iii) Rural or urban charitable dispensaries, health centres and hospitals, as well as the premises of recognised local Associations of Practitioners, should be provided with minimum essential medical teaching equipment (e.g. skeleton, models, diagrams, pictures, charts, clinical and laboratory instruments and apparatus etc.). All these institutions must be used as Primary Medical Education Centres for teaching the unsophisticated medical folk, who must, ofcourse, be registered beforehand on the basis of some minimum standard. Classes may be held at

night or any odd hour, so as not to much hamper the routine works of the institutions or of the learners. The education should be free or at very low charges, consistent with the poor financial condition of the village doctors.

If this simple and humble scheme is adopted and sincerely and seriously followed, all the so called quacks in all the systems of Medicine will surely turn into fairly dependable all-round practitioners in the course of a year or two, and thus the medical problem of our vast country will be eased out greatly. This plan is sure to succeed, we are confident, as it will be based on solid ground amongst the masses of people, and not imposed from top.

We earnestly hope that our Authorities (both Government as well as Local Self-Government bodies) will be sufficiently alert to their medical responsibility to the people—their electors, and pay due attention to this candid suggestion and simple scheme, especially in view of the present critical situation in the country.

Particularly with respect to Homœopathy—this being by far the cheapest, the most wide-spread, and quite dependable form of drug-therapy—our earnest appeal to the Government is that, they should help and encourage the manufacture of Homœopathic remedies as generously as possible, and should relax the import restrictions as liberally as possible.

And lastly, we wholeheartedly endorse the spirit, views and appeals of all the Homœopaths of West Bengal, as embodied in the resolution No. 1 of the 2nd Session of the W. B. State Homœopathic Practitioners' Conference recently held in Calcutta, viz.—“This Conference strongly condemns the Chinese aggression on our Mother Land and records its determination to sacrifice for the national cause, and resolves that the Government be requested to utilise the services of Homœopaths of West Bengal for this great cause, which they are ready to offer both as Indians and Medical Practitioners”. It is redundant to say that this potent resolution will remain sterile to a great extent so long as our Governments from their side hesitate to accept this extended hand of the Homœopathic Profession.