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EDITORIAL

THE DECISION OF THE MEDICAL COUNCIL OF INDIA

The recent decision by the Indian Medical Council about the propriety of having only one system of medicine, in India, namely the modern system appears to us as the most unfortunate decision ever made by an august body like the I. M. C. This decision betrays a totally unscientific attitude of mind, lack of logical sense and a spirit of dogmatism which can only be expected from a body with a biased outlook and without any knowledge in the theories and practices of other systems of medicine over which they appear to sit on judgment. It only goes to prove what G. B. S. wrote in his book "Doctor's delusions": "A little science is a dangerous thing and science in science-tight compartments is worse." The days for one system of medicine are still far off as it has got to be a synthetic system of medicine which will accommodate and rightly assess the different methods of approach to the study of diseases and drug-actions and consequential therapeutic practices—as are evident in so-called Allopathy, Homœopathy and the Indeginous systems of medicine. Realising the unten-

ability of its previous attitude this official body has given up the cry for synthesis in medicine and is bent on finding a solution by cutting the Gordian knot with the advocacy for the teaching of the so-called modern scientific medicine only to the exclusion of teaching all other systems of medicine in the under-graduate courses. They have contradicted themselves by accepting the fundamental differences in the theory and practice between modern medicine and other systems of medicine, current in the country; and at the same time, recommending the studies of the other systems of medicine only at the post-graduate level—which are not extensions of the modern system but supplantations of it. The post-graduate course of any subject implies a more intensive and specialised study of the said subject in continuation and in furtherance of the course of study which a candidate has already undergone in his under-graduate course. Logic demands that their recommendations should have been for the starting of completely separate institutions for different systems of medicine which have come to stay in the country. This apparently simple expedient of adding the other systems to the modern system as conditions for qualification is impracticable psychologically, physiologically and economically; and this serves as a convenient handle for strangling the other systems and to induce them to die out by a rapid process of attrition in near future. Be it remembered that the bulk of any branch of medical profession is maintained by the graduates in that line and not by a few gifted post-graduate scholars or converts from other schools of profession. What is called the scientific progressive medicine seems to be largely dictated by the hygiene of the pocket and the guild-mentality of trade cum profession.

Medicine is primarily an art. The science of medicine implies the science of Man. As Man is complex and presents multiple aspects, the approaches to the study of Man are necessarily diverse and relative. Accordingly the systems of medicine are bound to be different and each has

justified its validity by the mere fact that they have stood the test of time in spite of modern-medical-system-ridden State apathy and in many ways, active antagonism.

In the absence of a comprehensive and synthetic *one system* of medicine it is the bounden duty of the Govt. to provide facilities for each system to flourish and develop its potentialities to the fullest extent according to its own distinctive genius. A man in the street knows it; and due to pressure of public demand the Govt. had to institute Enquiry Committees for Homœopathy and the Indegenous systems of medicine. The Health Ministers being representatives of the people accepted 'in toto' the respective Enquiry Committee Reports. In their third conference the Health Ministers passed some healthy resolutions recommending separate institutions and graded medical teachings for different systems of medicine. And these resolutions have been flouted by the I. M. C. and the cause is not far to seek.

The Indian Medical Council has acknowledged the therapeutic efficacy of other systems of medicine; but it surpasses our understanding as to why they decide on a policy which will eventually lead to their extinction instead of their development—if it be not out of dogmatism, sectarianism or out of any consideration of vested interests.

We appeal to our Govt. and to the people at large to be alert that these valuable heritage of man's conquest over disease be not lost through such sinister moves and short-sighted and misguided policies of a sectional body like the Indian Medical Council which, as constituted under the Indian Medical Council Act 1933 (as modified up to the 1st September 1949) has certainly gone beyond its jurisdiction in passing resolutions regarding systems of medicine other than the modern scientific medicine (vide Act No. XXVII of 1933, The Preamble and Section 2nd). Let not dogmatic scientists don the garb of catholicity of views to hoodwink the public, misguide the Government and to sound the death-knell to all progressive spirit of inquiry

into the great experiment which mankind has attempted upon itself, called Medicine.

If the Govt. accepts the recommendations of the I. M. C., healthy progress of other systems of medicine will be nipped in the bud for want of adequate human materials; but those systems following the law of demand and supply would nevertheless persist in an undesirable condition, practised in a clandestine way by untrained men outside the pale of state control—which is certainly not the avowed object of the Govt. for the good of its people.

B.K.S.

A LETTER OF THE GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL

Much publicity has been given by a section of the Homœopathic Press to a letter from the Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of W. Bengal, Medical and Public Health Department,—to the Asst. Secretary to the Govt. of India Ministry of Health, New Delhi, The said letter expresses the view of the W. Bengal Govt. regarding the decision of not accepting medical certificates from Vaidis, Hakims and Homœopaths *at this stage*. This is neither a circular letter to the public and the profession nor a statutory order by the local Govt. It is just an expression of the opinion of the local Govt. with reference to the correspondence going on between it and the Central Govt. The subject of granting privileges to the Registered Homœopaths of issuing medical certificates for acceptance by the state is still under consideration of the Central Govt. It is not a fact that the said privilege was granted to the Homœopaths after the establishment of the General Council and State Faculty of Homœopathic Medicine, W. Bengal and is now going to be withdrawn by a recent revision of decision by the local Govt. The whole subject of State Recognition of Homœopathy on an All-India basis by a central legislative enactment is still a thing of the future.

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