

they have failed in Rural health centres in West Bengal. I am afraid that these auxillary health personnels will behave as doctors and will automatically take up Homœopathic system of treatment as is done by large number of passed and unpassed compounders in the country.

I humbly suggest that at least for this State these auxillary personnel should be given additional training in Homœopathic system particularly in the art of its Therapeutics.

Trained as they would be in the present day accepted methods of preventive medicine particularly in the branches of "Notification," "Isolation," "Quarantine" and "Disinfection", They would be definitely an asset to the countryside if they are given training in the Homœopathic system. All these can only be achieved if they start a Homœopathic Board to regularise the education and practice of Homœopathy in the State.

I must sound a note of warning that such a Board must have homœopaths in it and representatives of Legislators, University and the municipality.

It must not be subservient to the allopathic State Council—to allow homœopathy to develop in its own genius.

Last of all the State should have also its own pharmaceutical manufactories.

Gentlemen, forgive me for taking so much of your valuable time and allow me to wish that Homœopathy and Homœopaths may have a glorious time in this State.

A NEGLECTED SYSTEM

Presiding recently over the annual conference of the Orissa Homœopathic Association at Cuttack, Dr. J. N. Mazumdar, Vice-Chairman of the Homœopathic Enquiry Committee, Government of India, observed with justifiable pride that even the most expensive homœopathic treatment

was certainly cheaper than the most ordinary treatment by any other system and as such, it was only homœopathy that could be made available to the poverty-stricken masses of the country. Yet, the irony of the matter is that, homœopathy has so far remained a grossly neglected system—neglected by Government and by people in general alike. Of course, large masses of poor people have recourse to homœopathic system of treatment but that is, more or less, in the nature of Hobson's choice on their part; in other words, they take to this system of treatment obviously because they are compelled by their poverty to do so. But the question is, why should it be so? The matter calls for careful scrutiny in the interest of not only the large number of practitioners of this system but what is far more important, in that of the vast masses of poor people of this ill-fated country.

The comparative negligence that is now shown to the homœopathic system of treatment is evidently due to the widespread impression in public mind that this system is not sufficiently efficacious. Experience has, however, very often told a different tale—it has actually been found that homœopathic treatment can perform miracles in at least certain types of diseases. The impression about lack of efficacy of the homœopathic system of treatment is also belied in another way. There are eminent practitioners of this system, though their number is still very small, who have been able to build up extensive practice, which is almost on a par with that of their counterparts in the allopathic system. This could have been hardly possible if the homœopathic system had been basically worthless or defective.

Still, there can be no denying the fact that homœopathy has not so far found a respectable status for itself. A little bit of probe will reveal that its present sorry state is primarily due to the fact that the Government have hitherto accorded only a step-motherly deal to it. The whole system is now in a mess—training in it has remained deplorably

unorganised for lack of Government patronage and duly qualified trainees have received no official recognition. The inevitable outcome of all these has been that homœopathy has often become the refuge of quacks with the result that the duly qualified practitioners have sometimes been lost in the rabble. Certainly such a state of affairs can neither augur well for the system nor be conducive to the benefit of the country's teeming masses.

In his speech Dr. Mazumdar expressed satisfaction that the Central Government and many of the State Governments had now become alive to the beneficial effects of the system. This is also proved by the appointment by the Government of India of a Homœopathic Enquiry Committee. So far so good. But the mere appointment of the Committee is no guarantee that all is going to be well with homœopathy in the near future. What is needed first and foremost in the matter is that the Government must be prepared to shed its step-motherly attitude towards the system and must demonstrate their genuine sympathy for it by reorganising its training and recognising its qualifications. The essential precondition of reorganisation of its education is that it must be placed on a scientific basis, of course, in so far as that is deemed consistent with the peculiar genius and technique of the system.

It should be borne in mind in this context that apart from anything else, homœopathy has still an important role to play in our country, so far as providing medical facilities to her teeming millions is concerned. The primary reason for it is that this system of treatment is by far the cheapest, the benefits of which can be made available to the poor folks. There is also another aspect of the matter, for which speedy improvement of the homœopathic system is called for. The implementation of the Bhole Committee's report regarding provision of medical relief for the country's teeming masses will remain a mere desideratum for yet a long time to come for the simple reason that it would hardly be possible to trun out qualified allopathic physi-

cians in requisite number in the near future. The gap can be filled up by qualified homœopathic practitioners. This important aspect of the question should also receive due attention of the authorities.

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CLINICAL EXPERIENCES WITH NATRUM MURIATICUM

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Case histories found in our publications, together with my own experiences, have convinced me that no remedy deserves a thorough clinical study more than *Natrum mur.* In fact, even our best provings need supplementing by clinical observations, as it is these observations that enable us to eliminate the furtive element of arbitrariness from our prescribing. This applies to *Natrum mur.* in an especially high degree and is the reason for this study.

The consideration that not all people can assimilate all the sodium chloride contained in their food was my starting point. That part which is not assimilated is eliminated either by kidneys and other organs of excretion or it is retained and accumulated in the extracellular spaces and blood plasma. Whether eliminated or retained, in both cases the cells of the organs and tissues suffer from salt inanition. Where the elimination of salt is normal, the plasma and the extracellular spaces also suffer from deprivation of salt. Dehydration of the tissues and hypochloraemia result. When, on the other hand, the elimination is inadequate, overhydration and hyperchloraemia are the result. In the presence of too many chlorides, water is attracted and turgor of the tissues maintained or increased; in their absence water is lost with depletion, dehydration and emaciation following. Consequently we have two types of cases. One