

School of Medicine in India.

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Before the advent of the English into India, our own system of medicine—the Ayurvedic system—wholly and fully served our purposes. It is a revealed system, originating as it did, from a class of people having the highest form of spiritual culture. They were the Indian Jogis and Rishis,—a class of God-intoxicated holy personages in the path of self-realisation. They had nothing at heart save and except doing good to all men and animals, the whole creation, *because* every thing is His creation. They loved God and His creatures and things. There was no self-love in them in the sense in which we understand the word to-day. Their heart would melt at the slightest ill of others, and during their ecstatic mood, the science and art of healing was vouchsafed unto them by Him who is the master, the creator and the Protector of all in the universe. Therefore it is that our Ayurvedic system is called the revealed system of medicine.

It was a time quite different from our own,—a time when there was “plain living and high thinking,” when morality and virtue were the common level, when the pure and selfless people would command the highest respect. People would be quite satisfied with the bare necessities of life, and luxury was quite unknown. The result was that there were very few illness that could afflict, and when men would unavoidably fall ill, fasting and regulation of diets generally could bring them round, in most cases. Medicines were used very few and far between, and that was so even in richer circles. People used to keep themselves within natural limits. The excesses were quite unknown at least among the ordinary class of people. In everything satisfaction and contentment used to keep up a general peace and order; they knew and were taught that there was a higher purpose of life, and that is self realisation, and for which only life was worth living.

In such a time and under such a circumstance it is quite obvious to see there were very few diseases, and if there were any, they were most simple. Irregular meals, over feeding or exposure might have caused disorders of the bowels, fevers and other indispositions, but, as have observed, a greater percentage of those was remedied through only diet-regulation, fastings and prayers. The Kabirajes—those that practised in Ayurvedic system of medicine,—also never encouraged constant use of medicine, but they used it only when they could not do without it. One thing, it should be mentioned, that was altogether quite unknown at the time, is what is called suppression of diseases, more on this later on.

There was a time when India rose to her highest culture in every department of life, and could teach the whole earth and she actually did so. There are authentic records, mostly by foreign travellers, to show that people from the other parts of the world would flock to our Universities for learning. Greece and Rome got their civilization from India. When India was in her highest glory, very few nations there were who could rise up to the level of mankind, the English people were not formed at all into a nation and were only wild savages. But this state of things cannot long continue, and India commenced to fall down. It would be quite out of place to dwell on how other nations could mark inroads into our country, but this much is sure that we through our degradation prepared the field for them to come into our country. The fabulous wealth and peace attracted various other nations to rob and plunder our country, and by and by it so happened that we invited the foreigners because we could not keep our unity intact or preserve our self-contained condition amongst ourselves. Indian people are proverbially simple and easy, and they were very easily persuaded to hand over the management of their own affairs to the foreigners. Be that as it may, it can never be denied that the foreigners got because they were deserving and we lost because we fell down from the height to which we had sometimes soared up.

When the English people came into our country, it was quite reasonable that they wanted to introduce their things here. We are interested here with medicine only, there is a short history which will clear as to how their system of medicine was readily accepted by our people and a system which was so pure and time-honoured was set at naught. There was in India an endemic fever that used to attack people every year during the months of September to November, and they had to suffer from it more or less. Those that had a good power of resistance would easily come out of it, and others had to suffer for one or two months. Here was the weakest point and quinine could very easily suppress those fevers within a day or two. A patient who would have to suffer for three weeks or so, could be easily brought round with one or two doses of the suppressive drug, and people through their simplicity thought it to have been a God-send. By and by our people saw that a few grains of quinine could do what our indigenous system of medicine could not at least within such a short space of time, and thus a taste for the foreign system was created. Not only that,—the missionaries would go about from village to village distributing quinine quite free of charge and people could not see through the trade-policy. Nor could they realise that the indiscriminate use of quinine far from being curative was badly suppressive or that it would entail endless miseries in the form of various other diseases which would follow.

The policy succeeded ; by and by a medical Institution was brought into existence along with the taste for western medicine. Now, the medical schools and colleges are as plenty as blackberries and are found in every district. The graduates coming out of these Institutions have kept up the smooth business in perfect order, and so everything goes on merrily well. By and by our Ayurvedic system of medicine was put into oblivion, and the western system is in full swing, and has therefore been designated as the "Dominant school of medicine."

If the merits of the Allopathic system is judged, it cannot be called a system or a science of medicine. However pompous be its pretensions, whatever be its embellishment, how gorgeous be its equipments, it is absolutely void of truth and essence. But it has got a great advantage over any other system, we mean, the state support. Though there are other systems of medicine prevailing in the country, viz., the Kaviraji, the Homœopathy, the Unani etc., but the state would not recognize any of them; and even a menial servant under the Government and quasi-Government department would not be allowed leave during sickness unless and until he can produce a certificate from an Allopath. The position is quite curious, but it is so. One may imagine that this state support must be on account of inherent superiority of the system, but a moment's scrutiny into its merits and character will belie the supposition,—not only so, it will be proved that the system is responsible for at least 80 per cent of the evils we are suffering from. It can *never cure*,—it can at best *suppress*.

(to be continued)

CALC. CARB. CONGENITAL CATARACT

A. A. PHONE, M. D.

An eight months' girl was brought to me with congenital cataracts pronounced incurable by allopathic eye specialists, who said nothing but operation could help her. She also was cross-eyed. She certainly can see now after three doses of *Calc. carb.*