

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE MOVEMENT

(BY E. P. RASIAH,

Hony. Secy. Jaffna Dt. Community Centres' Union)

COMMUNITY Centres are meant to be common meeting places, where people living in their vicinity, could come together on an equal footing to participate in social, recreative and educational activities, as individual members, following particular habits and pursuits or on the basis of their common needs and interests as human beings, living in the same locality.

It must be borne in mind that "a Community Centre is not an educational centre, nor a sports club, nor a Health Centre, nor a citizen's centre nor a political club; yet, it may be all these things but not deliberately and self consciously" It is a place where the people of its neighbourhood find an opportunity for that varied exercise of mind, body and spirit in a social medium, without which life must remain incomplete and abnormal.

A community centre is not intended to serve as 'a substitute for home, church or other traditional rallying-point of social life, nor is it intended to supersede cinemas, theatres or concert-halls'; but it is only intended to supplement the facilities already available. Therefore, everything possible should be done to dispel that "institutional atmosphere" which is sometimes likely to repel young and old alike.

While most social organisations tend to draw people on a corporate basis with a team-spirit behind them, in the case of community centres, however, members are expected to meet more or less as individuals rather than as members of a group or party.

These Centres should, therefore, be so conducted as to be open to all residents of that locality, even though in practice, all may or may not actually turn up and use them regularly.

In Jaffna, there appears however to be a tendency to organise Community Centres mostly for the purpose of drawing Govt. grants. Centres so started manage to exist so long as the grant lasts and then die unwept and unsung. All those interested in this movement should do

everything in their power to discourage this tendency.

Human Beings have more than a common social nature. Each man should be free to share the gifts of God and Nature to think, speak out his thoughts with ut fear and act as he likes. As individuals they are in a greater or less degree differentiated and whether they do or do not gravitate to a Community Centre will depend on what takes place in that Centre; and that, in its turn depends partly on the policy of that Centre and partly on the easy compatibility of different interests within the same institution and partly on the degree to which social mixing is made possible by the elimination of caste prejudice and communal considerations and social restrictions.

Here the fact should be emphasised that those who are responsible for planning the programme and activity of a Community Centre, should not forget the needs of the less gregarious person, who, though temperamentally indisposed to join clubs and societies will perhaps be glad to drop in to read chat or even "just sit, watch and listen."

Care should also be taken to give facilities to the older folks too, for social amenities are increasingly required by the aged, whose needs are not so much for "uplift", as for cheerful society in congenial surroundings.

There are others, who have plenty of spare time. It will be admitted by all that it is one thing to have spare time and quite another, to know how to use it wisely. Therefore facilities should be found to this class also, so that they may, instead of wasting their spare time, spend it usefully reading or listening in our Community Centres.

Apart from Social and recreative activities, educational activity too has been included as part of the programme of work of these Centres. By education is meant not the education of the class-room, but education in the sense of putting people in the way of bringing out their latent talents and inherent abilities for the better use of life, outside working hours, so that they may get a good ground

Sanskrit Conference

The First Sanskrit Conference under the auspices of the North Ceylon Sanskrit Association will be held at the Parameshwara College Hall, Tinnevely on Saturday, the 17th January, 1953 with Prof O. H. de A. Wijesekera, Professor of Sanskrit, University of Ceylon, in the chair at the morning session and with Hon. Mr. S. Natesan, Minister of Post and Information, as Chairman at the afternoon session

ing in correct citizen-ship and thus employ those talents to the good of mankind.

"Neighbourhood does not of itself, necessarily constitute a social bond; but if, by grouping its leisure activities round a recreative and educational centre, a neighbourhood can develop into a socially conscious community, learning through managing the affairs of their centre, to participate intelligently in the work of local and national government, then education for democracy will have made a real advance"

For the future growth of Community Centres, politics must be kept at arm's length for it is said that when political passions become heated, they tend to split even communities. Therefore, the presence of political party organisations in a Community Centre is little likely to assist in welding a neighbourhood into a community. Entry of politics into the Community Centre movement, therefore, seems a real danger that should be avoided by all means possible.

Everywhere the greatest need is for ample and congenial premises where men, women and even children, especially of the lower income groups can congregate, spend their leisure in reading, create their own social life and develop their own potentialities. These potentialities already exist here widely, but at present they are largely undeveloped because there is a dearth of common meeting places (Reading Rooms) which could become equally available to all.

"...From the point of view of educational and sociological significance to the people, Second only perhaps to the system of formal schooling. There is no segment of the

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Indian Information

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS IN SRI LANKA

A planned deliberate attempt to squeeze out as many people of Indian origin in Ceylon as possible may be the object, according to informed circles in Delhi, of the recent series of economic and administrative measures taken by the Government of Ceylon.

Denial of Rice Ration

The latest measure in this series is the denial of rice ration books to the members of this minority except on the production of documentary proof of residence in Ceylon prior to November 1, 1949. Persons who obtained Temporary Residence Permits, producing documentary proof of continuous residence in Ceylon from 1944 to 1949, are also required to prove again that their entry into the Island was prior to November 1, 1949, to be eligible for new rice ration books.

This measure is expected to affect mainly the working class among persons of Indian origin. Denied rice from ration shops, they will be compelled to purchase rice at exorbitant prices from black market or starve. Apparently, the Ceylon Government expect that this move will drive out of Ceylon a large number of these people.

It is pointed out that such economic sanctions against a minority is unknown in any democratic country. In India, for instance, apart from Indian nationals, even a casual visitor is entitled to get his ration card and obtain foodgrains at controlled prices.

The Ceylon Government's declared reason for this measure is that Ceylon cannot afford to provide subsidised foodgrains to non-nationals. According to the Ceylon Government Food Department, only 20,000 ration card holders are expected to be affected by this measure

out of a population of nearly seven million. Although this figure may be an under-estimate, saving is not likely to be substantial and the measure is considered to be another move to undermine the confidence and cause alarm in this minority community.

Suspending Remittance Facilities

Another measure put into effect recently by the Ceylon Government was to suspend remittance facilities to those persons of Indian origin who have lapsed Temporary Residence Permits. The number affected is estimated to run into several thousands.

The Ceylon Government are already reported to be strengthening economic measures directed against the business sections of this minority with a view to shutting them out of the the Island's trade. Denial of social benefits such as educational and medical facilities is understood to be under consideration as the next step in this programme.

Informed circles are of the view that all these measures aim at reducing the number of persons of Indian origin in Ceylon who may acquire citizenship rights. The number of Citizenship applications pending before the Ceylon Government, since August 1951, stated to be over 230,000, each application being for a family of an average of 3½ persons. The recent amendment passed by the Ceylon Parliament to the Indian and Pakistani (Residents) Citizenship Act to overcome the effect of the Supreme Court's and the Privy Council's judgments and these latest measures are aimed, it is stated, to create a situation which will either squeeze from the

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NOTICE

The Office of the Hindu Organ and Intuathanam and of the Sava Prakasa Press will be closed on Wednesday the 14th instant for Thai Pongal.

Manager.



Hindu Organ

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, '53

Treasure These Thoughts

Till you love men so as to desire their happiness with a thirst equal to the zeal of your own, till you delight in God for being good to all, you can never truly enjoy the world.

RACIAL BARRIERS?

WE DO NOT SUPPORT those who persist in seeing discrimination in every action of the Government as much as we do not agree with those who set afoot mischief with a view to discrediting the administration. But certainly we are unable to understand the line of thought which was betrayed by the spokesmen of the Government during the discussion on two important questions in the House of Representatives last week. The Member for Mannar who has nothing in common with the Opposition and who ordinarily does not allow himself to be carried away by feelings of sentiment had some bitter comments to make about the administrative measures that have been adopted by the Department of the Food Controller in the matter of the issue of the thirteenth series of rice ration books particular with reference to the Indian population of this Island. This criticism that came from the mouth of one who has not made a hobby of taking the Government to task for every act of commission or omission makes a common observer feel that the machinery which has been set to distribute the new series of ration books is either defective or deceptive.

If the Government has decided to ignore the illegal immigrant as one not eligible to be treated as a citizen of this country it has but rightly done so. But if the administrative machinery, however, extends this prohibitive ef-

fort to affect those outside the category of the illegal immigrant then there must be justification for such action.

The suspicious mind of the food control authorities has made them act indiscreetly and discriminatingly. The barriers at Madhu Road and Manakulam according to the spokesmen of the Government Benches have been due to a feeling of strong suspicion in the minds of the authorities that rice has been smuggled out of the Island from the Northern Ports. But curiously enough the Government is unable to establish the fact of the smuggling of rice. Instead a party majority has been made use of to establish parliamentary support for the erection of the barriers. In similar manner an intransigent attitude has been revealed in the routine administration of the Food Control Department in the matter of the distribution of rice ration books to those who were duly enumerated on the 28th November 1952 but have been placed on the 'black list' on suspicion. Hitler did inhuman things because he had begun to suspect the victims of his revenge. So did the despots of old and that is the tale in the Communist countries today. Yet Sri Lanka priding on what she calls her balance of mind which helps her from not falling easy prey to disruptionist groups nor becoming pawns in the Anglo-American chessboard and occasionally speaking of Human Rights, has a conscience to introduce discriminative administrative acts on mere suspicion.

We need not carry the argument any more than emphatically protest against the continuance of the 'barriers' at Madu Road and Manakulam and the delaying tactics that are being adopted to inconvenience legal immigrants who are on the suspect register.

T. C. Chairman Elections

Unanimous Choice

Mr. S. Kirupamoorthy was elected Chairman of the Kankasanturai Town Council. Mr. P. Sinaidurai was elected Chairman of the Manipay Town Council.

There was no contest either at Manipay or at Kankasanturai for the Chairman ship.

MAKE SCIENCE RELIGIOUS AND RELIGION SCIENTIFIC

FOR HUMANITY TO ESCAPE EFFACEMENT

MODERN experimental science is a child of Europe. It was born when Galileo questioned and subjected to experimental test Aristotle's centuries-old axiom. Aristotle had laid down that if two different weights of the same material were allowed to fall from the same height, the heavier would reach the ground before the lighter, proportionately to the difference in weight. Aristotle himself was a careful observer. It is strange but true that he never tried the experiment to test the axiom he had laid down. It is stranger still that up till 1952 no European philosopher before Galileo had thought of testing Aristotle's axiom by actual experiment. One morning, while professor of mathematics at Pisa, Galileo mounted the famous Leaning Tower, carrying with him a ten pound weight and a one-pound weight. In the presence of a gathering of professors, priests, philosophers, and students of the University of Pisa, he let the weights go from the top of the tower. The two weights fell together and struck the ground at practically the same moment. Yet such was the spell cast by Aristotle's genius over the minds of Europeans that though they saw the two weights strike the ground together, they persisted in maintaining that Aristotle was right and Galileo was wrong. After this, things were made so unpleasant and hot for Galileo that he ultimately resigned his post and left Pisa.

The Galilean Theory

In September 1952 Galileo was lucky to be appointed professor of mathematics at the University of Padua. Here he was free to teach and make experiments. Students from all over the continent began to flock to Padua. Galileo was very original and rational. At Padua he began to specialize in astronomy. From a mathematician he grew into an astronomer and an experimental philosopher. Before Galileo, Ptolemy's system of cosmogony held the field in Europe. According to Ptolemy the earth was the centre of the universe and the other heavenly bodies revolved round the earth.

His system came to be known as geocentric. Certain other philosophers, particularly the Pythagoreans, disagreed with Ptolemy and held that the universe was heliocentric. According to this system the sun was the centre of the universe with the other heavenly bodies revolving round it. For a long time the heliocentric system had no following in Europe. It was revived by Copernicus, but it was left to Galileo to put the heliocentric system on a sound footing and convince those who were open-minded that Ptolemy had been wrong. In 1613 Galileo drew the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities in Rome to the discrepancies between the heliocentric system and certain passages in the Scriptures. In 1616 the Holy Office in Rome characterized the proposition that the sun is immovable in the centre of the universe and that the earth has a diurnal motion of rotation as heretical. Galileo was admonished by the Pope Paul V not to 'hold, teach, or defend' the condemned doctrine. Galileo published his *Dialogue on the Two Principal Systems of the Universe* in 1632 and upheld the heliocentric system. This brought him immediate recognition and fame in the learned world, as also ecclesiastical censure. He was cited to Rome by the Inquisition. The Inquisition examined him under menace of torture. Galileo recanted and was sentenced to incarceration at the pleasure of the tribunal and by way of penance was enjoined to recite once a week for three years the seven penitential psalms.

One shrewd writer has made the following comment on Galileo's recantation:

'Had Galileo but added the courage of the martyr to the wisdom of the sage, had he carried the glance of his indignant eye round the circle of his judges, had he lifted his hands to heaven and called on the living God to witness the truth and immutability of his opinions, the bigotry of his enemies would have been disarmed, and science would have enjoyed a memorable triumph'. Probably the bigotry of his enemies would have sent

him to the stake, but he would have been spared eight unhappy years and would have passed out of life with his name unsullied and science would indeed have enjoyed a memorable triumph. The victory was with science in any case; it would have been a more glorious victory had Galileo stood true to his innermost convictions.

Religion Versus Science

From the fourth century onwards Christianity became very chary of opinions contrary to the orthodox doctrines. Various heresies emerged which endeavoured to open up more or less dangerous divergencies from the main stream of Christian religion. The Church tried to put down these heresies. This tendency on the part of the Church gradually culminated in the Inquisition. The Inquisition dealt with the detection and punishment of heretics and all persons guilty of any offence against the Catholic Church.

Galileo was not alone in receiving attention from the Church. Because of his eminence among the learned, his personal contacts, and his recantation, he escaped with a light sentence. Men of letters and books could not escape the watchful eyes of the Church. Religious censorship was complete over the minds and manners of Western man. Many a Calvin, Luther, and Wycliffe had a busy time of it all their lives trying to shake off the chains of this intellectual and religious slavery.

One might ask why has there been conflict between the Roman Church and science? It is mainly due to the difference in the approach of the two towards truth. While for the Church truth was revealed once and for all time, for science there is no finality and truth is being rediscovered every day. Accepted axioms in science are constantly under the fire of criticism and are being subjected to experimental tests. They are being reviewed and reassessed. No doubt science accepts many things on authority, but no authority is incapable of erring in science. Science knows no diplomatic immunity. It is on account of this approach towards truth that science was and is progressive while the Church was more or less static.

Modern science was
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MAKE SCIENCE RELIGIOUS AND RELIGION SCIENTIFIC

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thus born within the four walls of ecclesiastical bigotry and orthodoxy in Europe. Science is experimental and rational. The final appeal in science is to experiment and reason. In the Semitic religions,—particularly Christianity,—the final appeal is to the Scriptures. Christian cosmogony has proved inadequate in the light of discoveries made by modern explorers and scientists. Christian ecclesiastics held on to the Scriptures and the result was a conflict between science and religion in Europe. This conflict could be resolved. Although strictly speaking the proposition has just been talked out, in fact science firmly holds the field now. In discarding outmoded beliefs in religion, the Europeans have thrown out religion altogether—core, accretions, and all,—like the unwary nurse who threw out the baby also along with the bath-water. The present-day agnosticism and atheism in the world are the net results of this tug of war between science and religion in the middle Ages.

The Hindu System

There is nothing in Indian history to compare with the persecution of Galileo in Europe. Things in India have been very different. Heresies there have been, but there has been no persecution of heretics. The majority of the Hindus always accepted the authority of the Vedas and have been known as the 'Astikas'. Others who challenged the Vedas and did not accept them have been known as the 'Nastikas'. The extreme heterodox views were held by the Charvakas. The intrepid Charvakas openly rebelled against the Vedas and wanted to discard them completely. Perception was the only source of knowledge to these people. The teachings of the Charvakas have been preserved. They are a complete denunciation of the Vedas, their authority, and the religion they taught. Other heterodox creeds were Jainism and Buddhism. They were allowed to flourish. Hinduism, from the earliest times and down to the early centuries of the Christian era, was progressive. That is the main reason why there was no clash between orthodoxy and advanced heretical thought in India. Proof

for the progressiveness of Hinduism is to be found in the Vedas and the other Hindu scriptures. The hymns of the oldest scripture, *Rg Veda-Samhita*, indicate that the early Aryans were polytheistic and they believed in a plurality of gods and goddesses. The hymns were recited by the priest to propitiate the gods for his own benefit, but more often for the benefit of the Yajaman. According to one author, the Rig Vedic atmosphere was surcharged with a spirit of bargaining between gods and men. The polytheism gradually evolved into the elaborate ritual of the *Brahmana*. In the *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads* there is a rising wave of protest against this ritualism. The systematization and classifica-

[Prabuddha Bharata]

tion of the early Rig-Vedic gods led to the more logical monotheism. From monotheism to the sublime monism of the *Upanishads*, the transition is believed to have taken place through the conception of the *Rta*.

Nobody in Hindu India was ever persecuted for his religious or secular beliefs. Hindus had realized early that no two persons were alike in their intellectual makeup. Accepting this basic truth, which modern science has recently discovered through the sciences of cytology and heredity, ancient Hindus never interfered with the intellectual or spiritual growth of anybody. This is the main reason why religious persecution which was the rule in the Middle Ages in Europe, was unknown in India. As a result of this tolerance, India became a land of many faiths and Hinduism a confederation of many creeds.

Religious teachers, with a few noble exceptions, have been parochial in their outlook and have generally claimed infallibility for their own creed. Science and scientists have abjured political and racial and racial barriers. It must be confessed that more often than not so-called religion has divided man from man. It is to the credit of modern science that, during the few centuries it has been at work, it has brought different races of mankind physical-

Exemplary Conduct

Lost Purse Returned

On the 11th inst Mr. V. Sanmuganathan of the Hindu Organ office had the unpleasant surprise of finding when he got down at Chankanai from the Valigamam West Omnibus Co. Bus bound for Jaffna that his money purse containing Rs. 50/- in cash had been missing during the course of his bus journey between Tholpuram and Chankanai. Immediately he rushed back to the Bus line and made enquiries about the particular Bus No. CE 3568. To his pleasant surprise he was told that the conductor of this bus one Mr. Subramaniam who found the purse in the bus had handed over the same to the office of the company. Mr. Sanmuganathan expresses his feelings of gratitude to the company and desires that publicity be given to this piece of news as such exemplary conduct must be made known to all.

Change of Name

I, Sinnappu Alfred of Chavakachcheri presently of Anna Theatre Mannar do hereby inform the public and the Government of Ceylon that I was always known and called as Sinnappu Thirugnanam and shall hereafter go by the name of S. Thirugnanam and shall sign all documents as S. Thirugnanam.

S. ALFRED
Chavakachcheri
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ly and economically very close together. Political and religious orthodoxy have to cope with what science has already accomplished.

The novelty of science has not worn out. How can it wear out? With newer and newer discoveries being made every day, the sense of awe intensifies. Atomic discoveries and their application in the second world war have horrified mankind. While the war lords of the two blocs are secretly increasing their piles of atomic bombs, advanced thinkers throughout the world are devising ways and means to check this prostitution of science. With advanced science tending towards metaphysics, there is a ray of hope. Humanity can yet escape total effacement, which is staring it in the face, by making science religious and religion scientific.

Hypnotic Cure of Diseases

British doctors are becoming more and more convinced that the outlook which divides Man into body and mind and keeps them in separate compartments is wrong.

For years now, psychiatrists have agreed that purely physical treatment—electric shocks and insulin injections for example—can go a long way towards curing mental illnesses.

Now a group of doctors is springing up which believes that a mental treatment—hypnosis—can effect similar cures for many of the physical diseases.

Their work is explained by Dr. A Philip Magenot, a Harley street physician, who is president of the Medical Hypnosis Association, in his book, *Hypnosis in Medicine*.

He tells of a nine-year-old girl who was cured of bronchial asthma when her doctor hypnotised her and offered to buy her illness for sixpence.

The girl was told that she would never have a severe attack again because she had sold so much of her asthma.

The suggestion was made to the girl during two periods of hypnosis a fortnight apart. A month after the second session, an X-ray photograph taken at a London hospital showed the girl's lungs to be clear.

Two years later she was still healthy and had been untroubled by asthma in the interval.

Mr. S. M. Kandiah M. B. E.

Mr. S. M. Kandiah from Kayts who holds the responsible post of Deputy Harbour Master Selangor (Port Swettenham) Malaya has been one of the recipients of New Year Honours.

He became the Deputy Harbour Master after long meritorious service as a member of the General Clerical Service in Malaya.

Economic Sanctions In Sri Lanka

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Island a substantial number of these applicants or render their applications invalid.

The Government of India are gravely concerned at these developments which affect a minority in a neighbour State whose only outlet in the event of being squeezed out is India. A number of Notes have been exchanged and the entire correspondence between the two Governments is expected to be published shortly.

WANTED

Wanted Ceylonese lady graduates to teach English, History, Government and Domestic Science. Special posts and vice principalship to suitable candidates. Apply to Manager Vada: Hindu Ladies College, Point Pedro. (M. 216. 9, 13 & 16).

ORDER NISI

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF JAFFNA

Testamentary Case No. 1526

In the matter of the estate of the intestate estate of the late C. M. Dharmalingam of Stanley Road, Jaffna

Deceased

Dharmalingam Sivaprasadam of Manipay Petitioner

Vs.

1. Ponnampalam Arumugam and wife, 2. Kanmany of Kalpaturu Gardens, Maho, 3. Theivanayagampillai Thambirajah and wife, 4. Puspa-vathy of Stanley Road Jaffna Respondents

This matter coming on for disposal before K. D. de Silva Esqr, District Judge, Jaffna on the 1st October 1951 in the presence of Mr. E. M. Mathiapparanam Proctor on the part of the petitioner and the affidavit and petition of petitioner having been read: It is ordered that letters of administration be issued to the petitioner as lawful son and heir of the abovenamed deceased unless the abovenamed respondents or any other persons shall appear before this court on 2nd November 1952 and show sufficient cause to the satisfaction of this court to the contrary.

The 1st day of October 1952

Sgd. K. D. de Silva
District Judge

Time to shew cause extended to 19-11-53.

Intld. G. S.
D. J.

(Q 136 9 & 13)

ANCIENT GLORY OF AYURVEDA

Full System of Medicine and Surgery

THE doctor, honoured by the title of *Prana-charya* or life's ministrant by Vagbhats, occupied the most important place in ancient Indian society, from the period of the *Rig Veda* right down to the epic age. The height of his influence was marked in the time of the Buddha - down-to-Kanishka, when fabulous medical fees were paid to Jeevaka and other Buddhist *chikitsakas* by rich merchants and kings. The science was glorified as an *Upanga* or accessory of the *Atharva Veda*; later it was glorified into an *Upaveda* and the *Puranas* narrate a fabulous story of the origin of this science in the *Kshe-rasamudra-mathana* where *Sudhapani Dhanvantari* (holding *amrita kalasa* in his hand, was extolled as Vishnu's incarnation. Charaka's treatise was translated into Arabic in the 9th Century A. D. and through it into Latin and Yuan Chwang, Hiouen Tsang and other Chinese pilgrims popularised this science in China, Japan and elsewhere. Even Alexander is reported to have taken some Indian physicians along with him to Greece. Pliny complains that Roman gold was drained to buy Indian drugs and spice.

The first votaries of this science, the *Ashvins*, were awarded a divine status in the *Rig Veda*. One of the *Rig Vedic* mantras (x-9-16) advised a king to appoint a physician who could heal diseases, and to keep him always near him. Rudra was glorified as the best of the *bhishaks* and the divine physicians are spoken of as having restored sight to the blind with their *soma* juice and having enabled the lame to walk. They restored youthful vigour to the old and decrepit *Ushavara* and provided an iron foot to the beautiful maiden *Vishpala* who lost her leg in a battle. Anatomy is studied in the *Atharva Veda* and the *Shatapatha Brahmana*. The Lord was glorified as a *Vaidya*, *Vedyo vaidyah* *sadayogee* in the *Vishnu-sahasranama*, where again a little later, He is referred to as *nirvanam* (the cure), *bhishajam* (the medicine) and *bhishak* (the doctor). The term *vaidya* was synonymous with any scholar in the two epics, The *Mabha-*

bharata Shantiparva, 85th *adhyaya* (verses 6 and 7) prescribing the qualifications for an assembly member refers to him as an efficient Brahmin *Vaidya* or scholar, adept in all *vidyas* or scientific lore. Charaka attended on the queen of Kanishka at her delivery. Bimbisara, the Mauryan Emperor, had Jeevaka, the famous physician (who attended on the Buddha also) in his court. Ancient kings took them along with them in their military expeditions, besides having them regularly in their pay to superintend their kitchens.

Complete Hospital Facilities

Kautilya recommended that doctors should be sent right into the enemy's camp disguised as spies. If the *srotriya* Brahmin had a second spiritual birth, the properly qualified *Vaidya* was spoken of as having a third birth also after his *vidya samapti* or medical education according to Charaka. Kautilya recommends the construction of a *Bhaishajyagriha* or an *Arogyashala* (a hospital) and directs that it should be equipped with ambulance facilities and medical equipment at State expense. The Buddhists called it *Sotthisha'a* or *Svas-tishala* and Sushruta ordains that a surgical ward is to be equipped with medicines, necessary articles of diet, dissecting apparatus, and splints, apparatus to drain off blood in case of poisonous bites, suture materials and a surgical box. Medicines were to be gathered judiciously from vegetable, animal and mineral sources. A properly equipped nursing home is described in the 15th section of Charaka's first chapter. Sushruta teaches how a dead body is to be carefully dissected and directs a would-be doctor to learn by personal observation. Inexperienced students were first advised to operate on dummy models of human bodies. Legislative provision was made to punish inexperienced quacks and every medical practitioner had to be properly licensed by the King. Practical training and repeated recitation of lessons prior to qualifying for practice is emphasised by Sushruta. Ambulance facilities with mobile hospital equipment, trained doctors and sweet female nurses were to be available at short notice on the battlefield as Kautilya and Bhasa (in his *Pratijna*) testify to. The dumb patients, the cow and the horse, were not forgotten and Ashoka advised the friendly neighbouring kings in Persia, China, Burma, Ceylon, Greece and elsewhere to employ veterinary doctors to look after

horses, elephants and cows. Religious sanction was secured by *Smritikaras* like Yajna-vaikya, enjoying spiritual rewards in heaven for free nursing of the dumb animals. The *Hitopadesha* and Chanakya went a step further and advised people in general to live only in that locality where a doctor's service was easily available. The *Vaidya* easily became the *Kaviraja*, king among poets, who was definitely asked not to be a time-server or a flatterer. This *Kaviraja* is the name by which the doctor is known in the North even to-day. He was instructed to treat the patients as his own sons and particularly enjoined not to get irritated in any circumstances.

Emphasis on Surgery

Charaka's work was mainly *Ayurveda* while Sushruta's laid emphasis on surgery also. Hindu medical works deal with eight 'limbs' (*ashta angas*) as follows: *Shalya* or major surgery, *shalakya* or minor surgery, *kaaya chikitsa* or diagnosis and treatment of diseases *bhutavidya* or psychiatry, *kaumarabhritya* or pediatrics (diseases of children), *agadatantra* or toxicology, *rasaayana* or the chemistry of life-giving tonics providing us with recipes for health and longevity, and *vaajigarana* or the chemistry of aphrodisiacs. Operations were performed with instruments, alkalies or caustics, fires and with the help of *yantras*; gynaecology, obstetrics and modern surgical methods might be lacking but it is up to us to improve these aspects. Sushruta recommends in some cases stitching or suture; he also warns the doctor to see that the instruments were sharpened and properly preserved from rusting. A mobile organisation, similar to the one organised by the modern Red Cross Society, was to tour the state distributing free medicine and this was always praised as a work of piety and self sacrifice.

Why such a noble profession has now fallen on rather evil days after the days of Buddhist and Jaina supremacy is not easily understandable. Perhaps the popular mind revolted against the doctors particularly because most of the votaries happened to be Buddhists or Jainas. Touching the dead corpse was regarded as impure and touching all sorts of people was objectionable. The *Vaya Purana* has a ready deprecated the doctor as the most reprehensible member of society (*Jaghanyam chikitsitam*) and Manu declares that such people should not be invited either for *Davva* or *Pitrya* rituals. The inaccessibility of the medicinal plants or the secretive character of the doctor, refusing to divulge his precious knowledge, and the comparative royal indifference on the part of the foreign non-Hindu rulers might have contributed to the gradual neglect on the part of its votaries.

(From the Madras Hindu

The Community Centre Movement

(Continued from page 1)

population whether considered by age, religion, occupation, personal interest, sex, political belief, or social or economic level which the library cannot and should not reach; in this respect at least, the potentialities of the library are second to those of no other institution in the structure of society.

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