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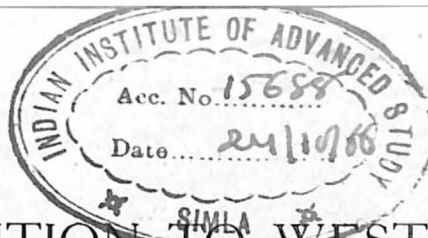
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INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO WESTERN MEDICINE

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I have been asked to write something about the contribution that India has made within the last twenty-five years to Western or Allopathic medicine. As every one knows there are many ways in which the contributions to medical progress made by a country can be presented. The method of presentation will necessarily vary with the object with which it is done as well as with the type of person for whom it is written. I am told that the majority of the readers of of this article will be students of the university classes and the object of this article is to show the students what some of the great medical men of their country have done towards the progress of medical science in general and the alleviation of human suffering in particular. That being the case I feel that the best method of presenting the subject I have agreed to write upon would be to say something about a few of the great men of medicine of the last twenty-five years, about the diseases they fought and conquered and of the value of their contribution to western medicine, to our country and to our people.

When one goes through the pages of history one is constantly reminded that genius is not a monopoly of any one country or race. All the world over, for centuries past and in every race, men of genius have been born. India is no exception to this. Our country can justly claim that within the last twenty-

five years it has produced as many eminent men of science as any other country in the world has done. And just



DR. K. V. KRISHNAN

as she has produced Tagore in literature, Raman in physics, Ramanujam in mathematics, Ray in chemistry, Radhakrishnan in philosophy and Bose in botany, she has also produced men of exceptional genius in medicine. There is no student of tropical medicine, there is no educated citizen in India who has not heard of Ross, Rogers, Haffkine, Mc Carrison or Brahmachari. These great men, through their wonderful originality, powerful imagination, well-balanced judgment, inexhaustible energy, supreme intelligence, and brilliant leadership, have fought and conquered malaria, cholera,

dysentery, leprosy, plague, kala-azar and dietetic diseases. They have helped to reduce considerably, sickness, suffering and death of millions of our people and have successfully led the country towards health and happiness. Be they by birth Indians or Britishers it matters not. All that concern us is that they have lived amongst us as one of us, partaken of our joys and sorrows, studied the problems that most concerned our well-being without fret or frown, and solved them through their selfless labours and brilliant genius. Whatever their caste or colour may be they are really and truly the sons of the land and their achievements are the achievements of our country. Not only will the names of these great sons of our great country loom large in the history of western medical progress but their contribution will be shown as India's share to world progress. To this brilliant band of men who had given us their best and shown us the way to health and happiness we owe a deep debt of gratitude. Their achievements are glorious and their name and example will ever be an inspiration and guidance to the young aspirant of this country.

The late Sir William Osler one of the greatest allopathic physicians of modern times stated that malaria was the greatest destroyer of the human race. This disease which is widely prevalent in many parts of the world, is the greatest scourge of India. A glance at the report of the Public Health Commissioner to the Government of India reveals that India is the most malarious country in the world and Bengal is the most malarious province in India. This disease is responsible directly or indirectly for the death of over one million persons in India every year and it is the cause of sickness in over 100 millions of our people. The estimated economic loss to the state according to Sir Andrew

Balfour is nearly thirty crores of rupees per annum. Furthermore it is the chief cause of retardation of development and progress in economics, agriculture, industry and politics. Up to the middle of the 19th century our knowledge of this important disease was utterly imperfect. Even the cause of the disease was unknown. In 1810, Laveran a French army surgeon working in Algeria



SIR RONALD ROSS

discovered the cause of malaria and showed it to be a protozoan parasite that lives and multiplies in the red cells of the blood. While Laveran's important discovery helped to distinguish the disease from other similar diseases and paved the way for further fruitful research, it neither lessened the suffering of the many thousands attacked with it nor prevented the spread of the disease to the healthy. In 1898, Sir Ronald Ross while working in Calcutta made his marvellous discovery that malaria was transmitted from person to person through the bites of mosquitoes. This led to the realisation that if the numbers of these insects were kept down or if they were prevented from biting healthy persons in some way as for example through the use of mosquito-nets,

these persons would never contract the disease. Therefore Ross's discovery of the mode of transmission of malaria was immediately acclaimed as one of the greatest discoveries in medicine. Through the application of this discovery in the field it has been possible to solve the malaria problem in many countries of the world and to reduce considerably the extent of spread of the disease in every community. It is no exaggeration to say that Ross's discovery apart from saving innumerable lives has also made practicable the development of large areas in tropical countries which were previously uninhabitable due to intense malaria. According to General Gorgas of the United States of America, it was Ross's discovery that made the construction of the Panama Canal possible. The Panama Canal Zone was one of the most malarious areas in the world and previous to the success of the American people, other nations had failed due to intense malaria to construct the Canal. The almost complete eradication of malaria from that area to-day is one of the most glorious triumphs of preventive medicine. Many such examples of successful control and eradication of malaria are to be found in several parts of the world. One and all of them are standing monuments to Ross's wonderful contribution to preventive medicine. The benefits that India has reaped through Ross's discovery are also enormous. If India has not been able to obtain the maximum benefit and completely eradicate the disease it is due at least in part to her own lack of effort. Ross has shown the way and it now remains for India to apply the knowledge and root out the disease. Whatever the successes or failures may be Ross's memory will ever remain green in the mind of every inhabitant of India. He is a true son of India having been born at Alnora in the Kumaon hills and having served the country as an officer of the Indian

Medical Service for over twenty years. He died in 1933 after serving the land of his birth in a glorious manner, and leaving behind him a record worthy of her great past. He received many honours from all over the world including his home country and obtained the much coveted Nobel prize.



SIR LEONARD ROGERS

Every resident of India knows that cholera, dysentery, and leprosy are diseases of major importance on account of their wide prevalence and on account of the heavy toll of human lives that they collect from year to year. It is estimated that while cholera and dysentery are jointly responsible for 2 to 10 lakhs of deaths every year, leprosy is the cause of sickness and suffering in 5 to 10 lakhs of persons in the country. Sir Leonard Rogers of the Indian Medical Service who worked in India between 1893 and 1921, devoted his time and energies to researches on the treatment of these diseases. His achievements in each disease are best dealt with separately.

The treatment of cholera twenty-five years ago was most unsatisfactory. Rogers who was working in Calcutta at the time not only saw numerous cases

occurring all around him but also the utter helplessness of the situation. The medical profession had no remedy to offer and could do but little to save the sufferers. Without despair he fought bravely and elaborated a system of treatment which is the best available even to-day. He showed that repeated small doses of potassium permanganate by mouth, helped to destroy the germs of cholera and to neutralise their poison; that intravenous injections of saline to replace the fluid lost by vomiting and purging materially helped the patient to rally round and fight and conquer the disease and that pituitrin injection by maintaining the blood pressure and the strength of the patient was a valuable adjunct to treatment. It is now universally recognised that by following the line of treatment laid down by Rogers it is possible to save the lives of thousands of cholera cases which would otherwise be lost.

As regards amoebic dysentery it was through Rogers' efforts that we have an improved method of treatment for the disease to-day. For centuries this disease was treated by a drug known as ipecacuanha. On account of the bitter taste of the drug and the vomiting and discomfort that it induced its use was very much restricted. Rogers who had learnt of the isolation of the alkaloid emetine, the active principle of ipecacuanha, used it for the first time in India and showed that injections of the hydrochloride of emetine produced rapid cure without much discomfort. He was thus responsible for creating a favourable opinion for this drug, and for its extensive use and popularity.

Rogers' greatest achievement however was with regard to leprosy. Until recently the treatment of leprosy was unsatisfactory. The Ayurvedic physicians of old

used chaulmoogra oil in the treatment of the disease. They generally administered the oil by mouth and it being a nasty drug, caused great discomfort. The sufferers from this horrid disease were loathe to take the oil and it soon got very unpopular. In 1916, Dr. Heiser tried the oil in the Philippines by intramuscular injection. This in many instances led to severe reaction, painful swelling and other complications and the patients refused to submit to the treatment. In 1917 Rogers working in Calcutta prepared a soluble sodium salt of the fatty acids of the oil and used it by intramuscular and intravenous injections. This method caused very little pain and trouble and the improvement was marked. Further studies showed that given in this way the drug caused extensive destruction of the leprosy germs and rapid disappearance of the nodules and ulcers of leprosy. The drug is now widely used throughout the world and many thousands of sufferers have greatly improved through its administration. By this brilliant discovery alone Sir Leonard Rogers has earned for himself a world wide reputation. He is undoubtedly one of the outstanding men in medicine within the last twenty-five years and he has notably contributed to the reduction of sickness and mortality throughout the world. He received the Knighthood and Fellowship of the Royal Society in recognition of his remarkable services. He will ever be remembered as one of India's premier workers who has added greatly to the reputation and achievement of the country.

Kala-azar is a disease closely resembling malaria and prevalent in India, China and Southern Europe. In the past it has been responsible for the sickness and death of several thousands of people of these areas. In 1903, Col. Donovan of the Indian Medical Service

working in Madras discovered the cause of the disease and showed that it is a protozoan parasite living and multiplying in the white blood cells of the body. While Donovan's discovery helped greatly to differentiate the disease and to undertake further investigations on treatment and mode of spread of the disease it did not alleviate the suffering of the many thousands who were attacked with it. Even less than fifteen years ago kala-azar was a dreaded disease, its treatment was unsatisfactory and its death rate very high varying from 75 to 95 per cent. In India alone there were over 150,000 sufferers in the provinces of Assam, Bengal and Madras and every unfortunate person who had contracted the disease knew very well the inevitable doom that awaited him at the end of a year or two of illness. In the year 1921, Sir Upendra Nath Brahmachari working in Calcutta



SIR U. N. BRAHMACHARI

discovered, for the cure of the disease, a marvellous remedy. This remedy which is extensively used is now recognised as the best available and it is able to cure completely over 95 per cent. of the cases in less than six injections and within a few weeks time. In order to get a true

idea of the value of Brahmachari's outstanding contribution to medicine one has only to compare the gloomy picture of twenty years ago with the bright picture of to-day—a picture which clearly shows, that kala-azar is no longer a terrible disease, its victims are fewer, its treatment is easy, successful, and readily available at a cheap cost for all and death is not its necessary end. There can be no doubt that this change in the picture of kala-azar is largely due to Sir Upendranath's discovery and therefore so long as kala-azar exists Brahmachari's name will live. In 1934 he received his Knighthood in recognition of his services to his country and to suffering humanity. It is for every resident of India to think of him with gratitude and pride as a true and mighty son of the land who has helped to obtain for himself and for his country a place in the forefront of the medical world.

Plague is a much dreaded disease. It is primarily a disease of rats and from infected rats the germs of plague are transmitted to man through the rat fleas. If there are no rats, and no fleas, there is no plague. In many western countries through a vigorous campaign against rats and fleas followed by a wholesale destruction of these pests plague has been more or less completely stamped out. But in India it is still an important cause of sickness and death in several provinces and the estimated average of annual deaths from plague is about one lakh. Of the many measures taken for protecting the individual against plague, vaccination is an important one. The vaccine used for inoculation was first prepared and employed in India by Haffkine in 1816. Haffkine came out to India in 1893 as a voluntary worker after having gained considerable experience in the Pasteur Institute, Paris, in the manufacture and use of bacterial vaccines. First of all he prepared a vaccine

against cholera and later turned his attention to the manufacture of plague



W. M. HAFFKINE

vaccine. Both these vaccines proved successful in reducing the sickness and mortality due to these two diseases. The vaccines have now been in use in India for over thirty-five years and during this period several million doses have been used with great benefit. Their value is beyond question and they are relied upon chiefly for protecting individuals against the disease. Through their administration many thousands of lives have been saved. In appreciation of the valuable services of Haffkine to India and to perpetuate his memory the Government has named the Vaccine Institute in Bombay the "Haffkine Institute." This institute is a standing monument to the great name of Haffkine.

In few countries of the world does the problem of diet and disease impress one so much as in India. It can scarcely be questioned, however scanty the details, that a deficient or defective diet can never lead to the full development of a healthy body. Fortunately owing to the development of various economic

measures and transport organisation the spectre of real famine on a large scale is, one hopes, a thing of the past. A bare sufficiency as regards quantity only is probably now within the reach of the masses in our country. Man, however, does not live by bread alone and an ill balanced diet, although adequate in quantity, may and does lead to great physical deterioration. A poor physique, incapacity for sustained work, decreased resistance to disease and early death are but a few of the sequelæ which exist in India to-day. In contrast to this is the new knowledge that the soil of India does and can produce all the essentials of a diet complete so far as one knows. The bringing to light of this knowledge and its clear and simple exposition has been the life work of Sir Robert McCarrison. Sir Robert's early work was on goitre, a disease of the thyroid gland and leading in many cases to a condition of mental deficiency in the offspring. This disease is prevalent not only in India but also in Europe and the New World. He showed that this disease was produced among other things by the drinking of polluted water. With the courage of his convictions he produced goitre on himself by ingesting the residue left on a filter after filtering grossly polluted water which was being drunk by the villagers in an endemic area. A certain type of stone in the kidney and bladder has been shown by McCarrison to be due to a deficient intake of vitamin along with an excess of calcium and phosphorus in the diet. Other inflammatory diseases affecting the lungs, eyes and certain parts of the alimentary canal have been shown by him to be due to an ill-balanced diet associated with a deficiency of vitamins. The advocacy of an increased consumption of whole grain products, vegetables and fruits has been urged by McCarrison as a prevention against such diseases. Sir Robert McCarrison has been no scientific recluse presenting his discoveries to

learned societies alone. His conclusions can be both understood and applied in



SIR ROBERT MCCARRISON

large measure by the poorest in the land. His work has been incorporated in a small brochure—already translated into Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Kanarese, Tamil and Malayalam—in which it is clearly and interestingly set forth how to procure a complete diet by means of Indian food-stuffs alone. Sir Robert has not been without honour outside of India. His work on goitre alone has won him clear

recognition abroad. France, Switzerland, Austria, the United States and England have each individually given him some mark of their appreciation. It now remains for India to propagate and apply this knowledge—the fruits of a lifetime's labour in the laboratory and the field.

By way of conclusion I wish to add that to the above list of great men the names of many more could be added. Those mentioned are but a few among the many who have laboured hard for Indian's health and welfare. There are several more who have served our country in an excellent manner and notably contributed to lessen the suffering and sickness of the masses. Their share in the medical progress of our country is certainly not a negligible one and no account of medical progress would be considered complete without a record of their achievements. But as this is but a brief sketch and as it would be impossible to enlarge it further, I wish to express the indebtedness of the whole country to every member of the glorious band of research workers whose name has been missed and who has contributed to the progress of medicine and the welfare of the nation.

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WHY DO CHILDREN LIE ?

By K. D. GHOSE, M. A. (OXON), DIP. ED. (OXON), BAR-AT-LAW,

Professor, David Hare Training College, Calcutta

'Hyperbole is exaggeration without intention to deceive'. That is a definition that might not be accepted by a court of law but it is certainly one that



K. D. GHOSE

furnishes a clue to one of the two major motives from which children tell lies. It is out of their desire to impress that they make frequent excursions into the realms of fancy. They exaggerate so that some attention may be paid to their experiences. This can hardly be called lying. When a child comes in running, almost breathless, with excitement and tells you that he has seen a whole pack of dogs fighting in the street and you know he had seen only three or four, you certainly do not regard that as lying. You know definitely what is at the bottom of this overstatement. It is his excitability of

imagination, his desire to impress you with what he has seen and the fact that seeing three or four dogs at once has given him the impression of a great number that are really responsible for the hyperbole in which he indulges. You feel he is afraid that unless he tells you he has seen a great number, you would not believe he has seen more than one or two. Similarly when a grown-up tells you that he has caught a fish as big as his side-stretched hands could make it, you know he is not telling you a deliberate falsehood, but he is very anxious you should believe that he has caught an unusually big fish and like the child of the pack of dogs, is diffident that unless he exaggerates, you will not realise how big it was.

A good deal of this exaggeration is due no doubt to the child's natural sense of inferiority. He gets discouraged by the unceasing process of adult domination over his life. These 'grown-ups' are bigger, stronger, and (seemingly) all-knowing, all-powerful and most enviably free. In any conflict, he has to yield to their wishes; the only way he can escape this position of weakness and inferiority is by drawing liberally on his imagination and indulging in a fantasy in which there is no restraint in acting as he would really like to act. Thus when a child, not endowed with an overdose of courage and who had fled at the sight of the enemy will assert that he fought the bully in school and knocked him down, it is merely an indication of his innermost

wishes i. e. how he would really like to act and end his career of humiliation and disgrace were he not hampered by diffidence. An exact parallel is seen in the case of the clerk who after getting it hot from his boss in unprotesting silence goes outside and swaggers about his giving in back to him with absolute fearlessness. These are cases that are strictly psychological and are meant to offer soothing palliatives and compensations to the mind in a world that is full of cruelties and inhibitions.

This exaggeration which thus is the off spring of the child's natural sense of inferiority, in fact—the reaction to his will to power and has its roots in compensatory phantasy life, cannot rightly be regarded as lying. In fact, it is a factor that conduces to the mind's healthy growth in an unsatisfactory world. The only radical way to deal with it is for the adults to behave in such a way that the child will not be made mentally unhappy by an overwhelming sense of natural inferiority. That is far more important than whether or not children's statements are literal. In a world that offers the child more sympathy and understanding as also facilities for the exercise of his natural powers, the occasions on which the child will have to fall back on his fantasy life for, compensatory purposes will certainly grow rarer and the few over-statements that might continue will be explained by his natural excitability about which he has seen or experienced.

There is another type of lying which is positively harmful and thoroughly objectionable—the lying which is the outcome of fear. It is a thing for which adults have themselves to blame. They have made children cowards by their silly tyrannies and punishments and then they accuse them of lying without realising or even suspecting that they

themselves have crushed the springs of honesty and courage which alone in difficult or inconvenient circumstances enable a child to come out with the truth. Some of his perfectly natural actions frequently offend our cut and dried code of right and wrong and what is worse, our sophisticated moral sense and we pounce upon him with our whole armoury of prohibitions and taboos. What chance has the child to live his real normal life except by hiding himself and his activities under a smoke-screen of untruths and half-truths? What is surprising, however, is that adults knowing full well that they are as much warped from truth by moral cowardice, should not make an effort to save the children from this degrading mental state.

None of us would really like our children to lie through fear as fear is degrading and humiliating. What then should be our attitude towards those who instead of inspiring courage of conviction and conduct in our children demoralise them by the inoculation of a taunting sense of fear? Most decidedly—an attitude of angry contempt. Thus when my child lied to me, I should be angry not with the child but with myself; and if he lied to another person, I should be angry with that person for making a moral coward of him. It is the fear of punishment that makes the child lie about his activities. Do away with punishments and you will make it possible for your child to be truthful; truthfulness is a flower that can only blossom in freedom.

We have seen children lie for the same reasons that adults lie—either from motives of fear or from the desire to impress. Are they any bigger liars than we are? We know the answer, though very few of us have the honesty to

admit it in a straight forward way without a searching cross-examination.

How are our children to be made truthful ? By disposing of their natural sense of inferiority and banishing fear altogether and what is equally, perhaps more important, by being truthful ourselves not only in our relations with them but always. Parents lie to their children about the more fundamental things in life and still they expect truthfulness from them. They expect their children to realise the moral significance of truthfulness whilst allowing them to discover that they themselves tell lies in a most matter-of-fact way. The child is naturally truthful because he is naturally fearless. Lies in grown-ups and children are the outcome of fear of moral or physical cowardice. We shelter ourselves behind our civilized codes and pretend that *they* warrant our telling untruths under certain circumstances, but what is really the case is we lack the moral courage to face the possible difficulties and complications of telling the truth. Or we say that we lie in order not to have another person's feelings or susceptibilities. What we really mean is we lie so that we might not hurt ourselves. We find it too painful or inconvenient to disillusion or disappoint or offend another person—but we make the other person the justification of our moral cowardice. To be brief, we lie in order to avoid 'trouble' but as has been said, ideally we ought to have the courage of our conduct as well as of our convictions—the courage to face whatever consequences our actions may lead to. We lie because we are afraid and if we want our children to avoid our diseased mental state and cling to lovely things like honesty and truthfulness, we must not make them cowards.

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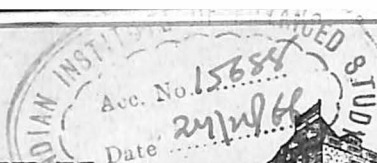
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