

### *News, Notes and Queries*

efficiency the now frail document was found in the library which he founded there, and a photostat copy sent to me. The first few lines were at once reassuring!

Whereas by Indenture dated this Day John White the Son of The Reverend Mr. John White of Blackburn was bound an apprentice to Mr. Charles White of Manchester Surgeon for the Term of Seven Years from the date hereof. Nevertheless it was agreed before the Execution of the said Indenture, and it is hereby also declared and agreed between and among the said Parties, that the said John White the apprentice shall be at Liberty at the Expence of his Father, or at his own Expence to go and reside the last year of the said Term where and with whom he shall please uncontrolled by and without any Restraint from the said Charles White his Executors Administrators or assigns, The said Indenture or any Thing therein contained to the Contrary notwithstanding—Witness their Hands the sixteenth Day of June 1775.

Signed in the Presence of  
Jo. Chippindall  
16 June 1775

J. WHITE  
J. WHITE  
C. WHITE.

Young John White was then only sixteen years old. Born when his father was Chaplain to the Garrison at Gibraltar, he was known as 'Gibraltar Jack' in the family circle. After his long apprenticeship to Charles White, he set up as a country doctor at Alton within easy reach of his uncle at Selborne. He moved soon afterwards to a practice in Salisbury, where he was surgeon to the Infirmary. Later he spent some years in the East Indies.

Of any meeting between Gilbert White and Charles I found no real evidence. But it is certain that the apprentice John would appreciate and remark upon their similar interests, for few had known and shared his uncle's interests as he had. Charles was adding to his notable collection of trees at Sale, and now John would see him recording their growth—with the scientific accuracy of Gilbert's own observations at Selborne. (They each planted the new *Luccombe* variety of oak in the 1770s.)

But of course their mutual interests would have extended far into the realms of natural science, and each would have been complemented by the other's lively mind. Alas for the family papers lost in the war!

ROBERT C. CASH

## MEDICAL HISTORY IN MODERN INDIA

[Dr. Douglas Guthrie, who has recently returned from a visit to India, where he met India's leading medical historians and saw the chief centres of teaching and research in the history of medicine, has contributed this note at our request. Ed.]

PERHAPS in no other country is an interest in the history of medicine more keenly felt than in India today. Since 1947, when India's 400 million inhabitants emerged as an independent nation, this interest has grown and extended, having already existed during many centuries. We of the West are accustomed to regard Greece as the original home of much of our culture, and as the main source of our medical knowledge. India has quite a different history and heritage. The Hindu god of medicine, Dhanwantari, takes the place of Aesculapius in the Indian mind, while Hindu physicians trace their medical ancestry back to Charaka and Susruta, and accord to such sages the honours which we attribute to Hippocrates and Galen.

When viewed in a modern light, the divergence between the medical history of Greece and that of India becomes much wider. Greek Medicine survives today only as a dim conception, taking no prominent place in current medical practice. Ancient Indian Medicine, on the other hand, is still a living reality, which may be seen at

work in many hospitals and medical schools scattered throughout the country alongside the more modern scientific institutions, while in rural districts the prevailing medical practice is still of the indigenous variety.

This co-existence, in the India of today, of two distinct 'systems' of medicine—ancient and modern, indigenous and scientific, Ayurvedic and Western—is indeed a strange phenomenon.

To apply the name 'Western' to modern medicine is surely rather a misnomer, so much of our knowledge having originated in the East, but the word Western is firmly established in the Indian vocabulary. The more correctly named Ayurvedic Medicine is the system established many centuries ago, which persists up to the present time. One of the oldest source books on Hindu Medicine is the *Atharvaveda*, which is the fourth of the 'Vedas', or Sacred Books of Wisdom, and dates from about 1500 B.C.

Along with the Ayurvedic system there is often combined the so-called Unani Medicine, derived from Greek and Arabic sources. The relationship between Greek and Hindu Medicine is still very obscure, as also is the chronology of the latter. The dates ascribed to Charaka and Susruta can be regarded only as approximate. Nevertheless, although the medicine of ancient India is still so uncertain in its records, it cannot be brushed aside as wholly obsolete in the light of modern knowledge. Its longevity alone entitles it to consideration even in this scientific age.

Ayurvedic, or, as they are called, Integrated Medical Schools and Hospitals throughout India are sponsored and financed by the Governments, both local and central, and there can be no doubt that with such support, indigenous medical institutions are making an important contribution to the health and welfare of the country. Already, many such schools have been 'up-graded' so as to form extra-mural appendages to various universities and medical schools. Ayurvedic remedies are being subjected to expert scientific investigation, and although it may be that some of the vegetable derivatives are found to be inert, this line of research may yield interesting results. Undoubtedly, such interchange of opinions between the two schools of medicine in India is much to be desired.

Writing in his book on *Hindu Medicine* as long ago as 1867, T. A. Wise predicted its continuance in the following words, 'As Hindostan becomes more settled under the British rule, a more intimate knowledge of the ancient Hindu medical works will prove that they contain much that is interesting and instructive'. A more recent pronouncement was made in our own time by that great scholar Henry Sigerist, who visited India shortly before his death. In the second volume of his *History of Medicine*, which was published posthumously in 1961, we find the following statements, 'Even in our days of crude materialism, India maintains its spirituality', and again, 'Western Medicine will succeed in India only if it is not applied mechanically, but is spiritualized so as to conform to the Indian mind'. With such a stable background, India's interest in medical history is not at all surprising.

Among those who have contributed lately to the history of Indian medicine are two distinguished men who were formerly officers of the Indian Medical Service, namely, Lt.-Col. B. L. Raina, Director of Family Planning, Ministry of Health, New Delhi; and Major-General B. L. Bhatia (M.D., F.R.C.P.), now living at Bangalore. Another leading authority on early Indian medicine is Dr. N. H. Keswani, Professor of Anatomy, All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi, who was for three years a member of the staff of the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, U.S.A. At Hyderabad, the Institute of History of Medicine which is a part of Osmania Medical College is doing good work under the guidance of Professor D. V. Subba Reddy. In that Institute, as also elsewhere in India, medical manuscripts, many of them written on palm leaves

and lent by families in which they have been heirlooms for generations, are being translated by scholars of Arabic and Sanskrit, a labour which may yet prove valuable.

In Delhi, not far from the All-India Institute, there has already been laid the foundation stone of an Institute of the History of Medicine which, it is claimed, will be the largest in the world. This ambitious project has the support of the Government of India, the World Health Organization and many professional bodies. It will include, besides offices and classrooms, a museum, a library, a botanic garden and a hospital with full clinical facilities. The aim of the Institute, as stated by the founders, will be 'to study and promote knowledge of the history of medicine, to undertake scientific appraisal of the various systems of medicine in India, and to attempt a solution of the intricate problems of the indigenous systems of medicine and the evolution of humane medicine'. It will be noted that the re-discovery of forgotten drugs of vegetable origin is only a part of the scheme. Such a plan surely deserves widespread support from all quarters.

Those who have taken the trouble to investigate the Indian Medicine of the present day are convinced that it must remain 'The Art', as Hippocrates called Greek Medicine, however scientific it may become under the influence of modern trends. Certainly nothing but the best in Medicine will satisfy India's aspirations.

A noteworthy sign of recent progress has been the action of the University of Edinburgh, which is about to co-operate by sending a team of experts to pursue teaching and research at the Medical School of Baroda, and thus to strengthen the efforts of their Indian colleagues.

If wisely guided, Ayurvedic Medicine, despite its shortcomings, may also have some contribution to make to the new Indian Medicine of tomorrow.

DOUGLAS GUTHRIE

### HUGHLINGS JACKSON MEMORIAL PLAQUE

On the occasion of the recent meeting of the Association of British Neurologists at Harrogate, a visit was paid to Providence Green in the village of Green Hammerton, Yorkshire, where Dr. Macdonald Critchley, President of the Association, unveiled a plaque commemorating John Hughlings Jackson, the Father of British Neurology, who was born there on 4 April 1835.

Members of the Association then proceeded to York where an address of welcome was delivered by Dr. Harold Royle, President of the York Medical Society. He traced Jackson's interest in neurology to the time of his apprenticeship, from 1851 to 1855, to Dr. William Charles Anderson of York, a founder member of their Medical Society and lecturer in surgery and midwifery at the York School of Medicine (1834-1859) in whose house, now the headquarters of the Society, they were meeting. Thomas Laycock at this time taught on nervous diseases at York Medical School and Jackson had the inspiration provided by his lectures. Doubtless he was also influenced by the great interest in mental diseases at York in the first half of the 19th century which stemmed from that centre of humane and progressive care of the mentally ill, the Quaker Retreat. It was at this time too, that Jackson and Jonathan Hutchinson, also a surgeon's apprentice in the city, started their lifelong friendship.

In reply, Dr. Macdonald Critchley summarized Hughlings Jackson's contribution to neurology, and told of how he stressed the importance of minute painstaking clinical observation and the exact chronicling of clinical data which, when distilled by that master mind of reflective and yet visionary cast, became the foundation of what is neurology today.