

to be walked unnecessarily every day from corridor to corridor and much time is wasted that could be more profitably spent in attending to the patients. The nurse should be given an opportunity to state exactly what her requirements are.

One additional point should be stressed and that is the question of **part-time work for married nurses**. Married nurses can take a very effective part in supplementing all aspects of hospital work, domiciliary nursing and public health work.

Sir Arcot Mudaliar stated how deeply he appreciated the discussions in these groups on the many points that had been raised. He hoped that when the final report was ready it would be sent to all Member States, to as many nursing organizations as possible, and to the non-governmental organizations, so that it would arouse greater enthusiasm and further in this cause.

[Note. We hope to receive the Final Report on the Geneva Technical Discussion for publication next month.—Ed.]

Industrial Medicine — Its Religious Aspect

By

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"Everybody has forgotten religion, that is why everything is going wrong everywhere," was the lament of an illiterate Indian industrial worker dissatisfied with his working conditions as well as with affairs of his trade union. A world under the grip of a philosophy of hedonism cannot but be divided against itself, and such a division must create more and more emotional stresses amongst individuals and nations. The industrial worker cannot escape his share of them and the industrial psychologist is fighting heroically against them with objective methods of experimental science, but is not succeeding half as well as an Indian saint working subjectively through a religious philosophy of life.

Mahatma Gandhi was the founder and father of the Ahmedabad Textile Union. He picked up a rotting mass of the humblest and most depressed humanity and remodelled it in a

This thought provoking article written by Dr. Dastur, is one that we feel should be read by every nurse.

It has a message for all who work with people, both the sick and the well. There are few of us who do not need "a higher philosophy of life, a religious creed of truth, non-violence and service."—Ed.

shapely cast of human dignity. He taught a down-trodden people to stand erect again. This Union has today a membership of 65000 textile workers and has an annual income of 2½ lakhs of rupees. The association maintains about 20 centres which cater to the intellectual and social needs of its members by setting up libraries and reading rooms and facilities for physical culture and recreation. It conducts 6 day schools and 2 night schools and one nursery school. Scholarships are made

available to working class students receiving education in secondary schools. The association also runs a well-equipped dispensary with an average annual attendance of 75,747. A programme of opening ante-natal and post-natal clinics, and medical examinations of the workers and their dependents, is making satisfactory progress. The association has its own press and publishes a fortnightly magazine. The affairs of the association are governed by boards composed of the elected representatives from amongst its members. These boards are reconstituted every two years, and they have to maintain a paid staff of 236 persons to carry on their work.

How ever did the Mahatma achieve so much from so little? One hears a lot of talk about freedom nowadays. Political freedom is most in the air but hardly any spiritual freedom. You cannot talk to a labour leader without hearing a sermon from him on the freedom from want; but what a human being wants most is inner peace. The industrial physician's panacea for increasing production is freedom from illness, but mental and religious attitudes have so much to do with bodily health. There is, however, one freedom which covers all other freedoms—*freedom from self*. The Mahatma succeeded with the industrial worker of Ahmedabad, because he taught him to strive for this freedom. He needed lieutenants for his work. He asked for only one qualification in them. They must be reformers who want to reform themselves before others. *He placed before them a higher philosophy of life, a religious creed of truth, non-violence and service, and he succeeded because he lived it in his own life with them and for them.*

The East dreams, the West acts; the East is passive and other-wordly, the West is dynamic and practical. Such are the slogans which a type of occidental thought, developed through objective methods of experimental science, flings against oriental

philosophies of subjective methods. Upto a point there is truth in the slogans, but there is a fallacy too. What motivates each end is the search for happiness in life on this earth, and not in any other life elsewhere, and one of the main instruments of research the oriental mind uses, is meditation. But meditation is not an end in itself. It is an attempt at integration of mind and its functions in order to evolve action on a higher plane, and of a higher type to make the life fuller and richer with a more lasting happiness freed from the fears, frustrations and maladjustments of a civilisation based on a hedonistic philosophy of life.

Nor is meditation the only instrument of oriental research for attainment of happiness. There are at least three such main ones, and they are adapted to the natures and temperaments of men. Any one, or combination of them, can lead a person to attain his natural goal of happiness in this world, and the instruments that Mahatma Gandhi used—whereby he achieved so much from so little, are *Karma-Yoga*—realisation through work and duty, and *Bhakti-Yoga*—realisation through devotion and prayer. He woke a vegetating mass of humanity into action by placing before it a religious ideal to live and die for. He gave the industrial worker of Ahmedabad inner peace if not material prosperity. This worker is an exact prototype of the industrial worker anywhere else in India,—illiterate and ignorant, eating the same unbalanced diet, and living in unhealthy slums. But all the same he is imbued (thanks to Mahatma Gandhi) with a bit more of the spiritual idealism, the abiding heritage of his land. Whereas most of the trade unions of the land have a shifting membership and a changing leadership torn with party politics and personal jealousies, the Ahmedabad Textile Union is steady and progressive with a religious concern for amelioration of the condition of its members. Today illegal strikes are

the order of the day all over the country, but they are unknown quantity to this union. Its members have given up liquor and it is not often that they quarrel with their employers; and when they do fight, they do so non-violently, and to teach their employers a bit of religion, and once started, there is no going back and there are no blacklegs.

The West has its own method of experimental science, and the East cannot help admiring, appreciating and even imitating them, for amongst the three main paths advocated by oriental philosophy for realising a man's own divinity, one is "*Gnyana-Yoga*"—realisation through knowledge. But what confounds the East is the absence in the Western methods of any serious attempt at an approach to the concept of the wholeness of life. The three main paths of oriental research are known as *yogas*, and *yogas* mean methods of union. So when science picks up a particular function of the body or of the mind and studies it apart from all the rest, oriental thought, trained to look out for unity amongst diversity, cannot help asking, to what purpose? to what end? Nor can it help concluding that science divorced from religion is humanity mortgaged to Satan. The last world war is proof thereof, and the growing fear of an approaching third war is another.

Science in the West dissects and inter-dissects and has now reached the stage of splitting the atom. The bewildered oriental mind wonders how long it will take them to split up the world into such tiny atoms as to make it unfit for human habitation. But when we read of achievements of their industrial nurse, we feel reassured that she will not allow any such devilish development of science. Her religion, not of her birth or her rituals, but the religion she lives daily in her work-a-day life and imparts to others, is mightier than their science.

"A sick workman is a piece of

humanity broken into bits. The physician picks up one to study it under his stethoscope; the bacteriologist wants another for his microscope, the psychologist a third one, and so on. And each of them brings his own particular knowledge to bear on the particular bit, and draws particular inferences from it, sometimes right, sometimes wrong. In the end it is the nurse who gathers up the various bits and reconstructs a whole from them with the virtue of her motherhood and the alchemy of her smile. While scientists keep busy sharpening their intellects in this or that particular direction, the nurse enlarges her heart to include in it, the whole of humanity.

McGrath has said in her book, *Nursing in Commerce & Industry*, "that industry needs a superior nurse." Far better if she had used the word *religious* in place of *superior* for only a nurse as lives religion in her life, can be a superior one.

It is acknowledged by the industrial world that the most successful leader of the "Safety First" movement in industry, is not one with the highest scientific training, but one who can best impart to others the divinity within himself, and thus bring forth this spark from others.

Psychotherapy is a creditable advance Western science has made in treatment of psychogenic neurotic conditions. But it does not go as far as it should, and never will, unless it is supplemented by a sound philosophy of life. Merely to relieve the pain of a mental conflict through release of emotional tension, is like relieving renal colic with an opiate. It does not cure the disease permanently. For this the colic needs a surgical operation and a change in diet and other daily routines; and the mental conflict, integration of the mind and its functions, and a new orientation on the meaning of life. That however is only possible by replacing the philosophy of hedonism with something higher. Swami Akhilananda in

his book "*Hindu Philosophy*" has said that "the real removal of the disease can only take place when psychiatry and religion in the broadest sense of the term, amalgamate, co-operate and are harmoniously co-ordinated".

Mere absence of illness or release of emotional tension is not positive health. To realise a true concept of positive health of an industrial worker, the physician has to supplement curative first aid with industrial hygiene; and the psychologist has to practise psychotherapy in a religious background. The West has achieved wonderful progress in industrial hygiene. The East has much to learn from the West for advancing industrial health on the physical plane. Nonetheless the East has a definite contribution to make towards its progress on the mental plane.

The progress of science at the mechanical end of industries is inspiring. The disturbing element however is that side by side there is a great increase in the number of strikes throughout the world. Evidently a purely mechanistic theory of life cannot advance human relations. For this some humanizing of the system is necessary. The need of the hour is *increased production,—more goods, and still more goods, but "people produce, not machines."* What must be emphasised is *the man behind the machine*. It may be said to the credit of science that there is not a mechanical problem it cannot tackle successfully, but it has yet to learn how to use its discoveries to advance the fundamentals of life. Hopeful signs are however visible on the horizon of the post-war era. It was exactly through the objective methods of scientific investigation that a psychologist like Henry Link staged "The Return to Religion." Such a happy transformation is now apparent in several other directions too. The present trend is that

manufacturers of machines are incorporating humanics in the designs and techniques of their machines, and the recent development of colour-conditioning machines is a laudable move in the right direction. Manufacturers are realising more and more that human nature is subject to moods when what is wrong appears as right, and are now more particular to devise guards on machines that will protect a worker against his moods. This is the only way to solve successfully the burning and most taxing problem of industry today: strained management-labour relations. Human relations can only improve through fusion of science with religion, and is most natural that such a fusion takes place at the industrial medicine end.

The literature of industrial medicine is replete with thoughts on morale, motivation, supervision, group psychology, human factor, management-labour relations, etc. but these are mere pawns on the chess-board of industrial medicine which move to the dictates of ancient and eternal verities of life like *'do unto others as you would have them do unto you'*. Modern industrial psychology lends support to this view. This science is striving to prove the ultimate goodness of human nature, that co-operation, not conflict, is its inner aim: and through upholding the true fundamentals of life, it makes a very near approach to Swami Vivekananda's definition of religion as *"Manifestation of the divinity that is already in man."* Truly industrial medicine is religion rediscovered by science, or, at least, should be.

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