

UNORTHODOX "CURES" *are*

Medical PROBLEM *Cannot Be Lightly Dismissed* *—says Leading Doctor*

READERS INVITED TO TELL

What is the medical value of unorthodox cures and treatments?

Speaking at the Medical Congress, Adelaide, Dr. John K. Adey, of Victoria, said that one direction in which research would be profitable would be an inquiry into the cures made by unqualified people.

Almost everyone has heard of cases where people, suffering illness or complaint, have spent years visiting doctor after doctor, hospital after hospital, seeking a cure—eventually turning to some unqualified practitioner or so-called "quack," from whose treatment the patient finally claimed a cure.

The Australian Women's Weekly now invites readers to submit their experiences of any such medical treatments.

THE medical profession shuts its eyes to the fact that many unqualified pra-

ctitioners do get a certain number of results," Dr. Adey said. "It is quite useless for us to dismiss these with a wave of the hand and

say they are charlatany and quite unworthy of a reputable practitioner," he added.

"I do not suggest we should copy their methods, but if some methods of charlatany have curative value they should be subjected to proper scientific investigation, and their results used in the proper manner."

Dr. Adey's plea is sure of finding popular backing, but it is another matter to appeal to the medical profession. That little "closed circle" of qualified autocrats frowns on any new discovery or treatment that has not the seal of orthodoxy—in other words, the honor of being described.

sponsored and employed by qualified practitioners only.

Yet the history of medicine and sur-

gery furnishes scores of instances of "outsiders" discoveries being eventually adopted by the orthodox of the profession after a preliminary campaign of pooh-poohing and ridicule.

Quinine (for malaria) and ipecacuanha (for dysentery) were both popular remedies long before an orthodox physician took each under the "wing of respectability," cured reigning potentates, and incidentally gained reputation and a fortune.

Most recent example of this medical snobbery was the case of Sir Herbert Barker. Barker was an English "bonesetter," trained in methods of treating joint troubles that have been traditional in British country districts for centuries.

When Barker's skill with his hands began to gain him a reputation the orthodox doctors did all they could to have him refused the right to practise. When a qualified physician helped Barker by administering anaesthetics for him, the orthodox actually succeeded in getting him de-registered.

Views Changed

THEN Barker began to treat and cure famous personalities, in-

cure famous personalities, including Presidents, Monarchs and millionaires; he was knighted. Now the tune was changed.

The qualified men rushed to acquire the Barker methods. "Manipulation" is now an accepted treatment for joint troubles, especially adhesions.

A leading Australian surgeon recently described Barker's methods as routine practice before a meeting of the local B.M.A. Sir Herbert Barker himself has lectured to an audience of qualified practitioners in London.

If we look back at the history of quackery and charlatanism we find that even the rogues and scoundrels were sometimes in possession of a secret which was worth while.

Sir John Long was a charlatan of the first water, who was deservedly punished for imposition towards the close of his career; yet this fraud invented a liniment which was afterwards adopted by the orthodox not as a cure-all (as advocated by Long), but as a useful embrocation where a counter-irritant was needed. In fact, this "quack" liniment was eventually listed among the official preparations of the British Pharmacopoeia.

Many a homely traditional remedy has found a similar haven; but usu-

ally only after the orthodox physicians have hurled their anathemas upon the

"unqualified" who have presumed to use it.

For instance, local warmth for certain types of rheumatism has been a traditional treatment for centuries. Yet it is only in recent years that medical orthodoxy has adopted it, and the patient now gets heat treatment in any of half-a-dozen different "officially" recognised electric machines.

Another "Discovery"

TWO substances just "discovered" by white physicians to-day were used successfully by Chinese doctors for the past thousand years.

One is China clay (kaolin) which (in the guise of fancy scientific names) is now freely prescribed by orthodox physicians in intestinal disorders.

Its efficacy is due to its power of absorbing toxins from the digestive tract, say our modern medical men. Probably the Chinese would ascribe its virtues to dispersal of devils; but the fact remains that they had discovered its uses centuries before the B.M.A. existed.

The other substance is ephedrine, one of the most widely-used drugs by orthodox physicians just now; it finds a use in asthma particularly.

Its general adoption by our qualified men dates from only a few years.

But Ma Huang, a wild plant growing in China and Japan, had been used by the people of these countries as a popular remedy for centuries. And Ma Huang is the original source of ephedrine, though a way to prepare it artificially is now known.

Tell Your Experience

WHETHER Dr. Adey's appeal to fellow physicians will be considered seriously is doubtful; past history shows that the profession is pretty deaf on that side.

The Australian Women's Weekly therefore has decided to launch a little popular appeal of its own. Will any readers who have had experience of successful treatment of any complaint on unorthodox lines write to us and furnish details of this treatment?

In particular, we would like to hear of success with the lesser ills and troubles which harry the average citizen in daily life. Letters published will be paid for at our usual rates.

Readers' names will be withheld from publication if desired. They are required by The Australian Women's Weekly, however, as evidence of good faith.

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The accounts of these treatments should also be accompanied by the supporting testimony of a friend or relative who is familiar with all the details of the case.