

Preface

*"The desire of knowledge like the thirst
of riches increases ever with the acquisition of it"*

– Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, Vol. ii ch 3

The explosive growth in the field of Medicine has led to a state of flux in the practice of Medicine today. India is a progressive and developing country which is getting progressively riddled in the epidemic of lifestyle diseases and is mired in the already existing infectious diseases. This situation is worst confounded because of the economic disparity between the various strata of society. To sum up the situation, the lines of '*A Tale of Two Cities*' by Charles Dickens aptly sum up the state of Medicine today:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way".

The physicians practicing in India have a dual responsibility – to keep the human touch, to keep the cost of Medicare low and affordable and at the same time practice the so-called evidence based high tech Medicine. The pace of advancement in Medicine is phenomenal and to keep abreast with it is well nigh impossible. The CME organized on the occasion of the Annual Conference of the API is one such opportunity and this book also is an effort in that direction to provide a glimpse of Recent Advances in Medicine in an encapsulated form so that it can be easily assimilated and practiced.

I am privileged that I was entrusted the job as the Dean of Indian College of Physicians to edit the book **Postgraduate Medicine – Recent Advances in Medicine**. I have made a sincere effort to bring this Volume so as to focus and draw the attention of medical profession towards not only the expanding horizon of Medicine which is based on machines, computers and molecular medicine but also to the usefulness of alternative systems of medicine, complementary medicine and biofeedback mechanisms in treatment. These low cost procedures can be gainfully employed as adjunctive therapy especially in various lifestyle and stress related disorders. It has been my endeavor to draw your attention and focus on the global effort on the preventive aspects of major noncommunicable diseases like obesity, diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases. The emerging viral infections especially in relation to AIDS and Avian Flu are discussed.

The real testimony to the merit of this book shall be the readers who may use the knowledge imparted by this Volume in their day-to-day practice for whom I would like to quote from the *Address of Anderson Stuart* in a lecture on 'Medicine as a Career' at Melbourne University:

"Your success in practice is to carry with it, and to carry in it, the welfare of your patients, that they may be spared pain, may be shielded from disease, may enjoy increased comfort and happiness, and their days and your days may be longer upon the land."

I and my team of Editorial Board shall consider ourselves blessed if this effort could fulfill even an iota of this lofty aim.

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