

ĀYURVEDIC HERITAGE OF J & K A REVIEW OF SRI RANBIRA CIKITSĀ SUDHA SĀRA

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ABSTRACT

This work reviews the contents of an *Ayurvedic* treatise “*Sri Ranbira Cikitsa Sudha Sāra*” authored by *Kaviraj Neel Kanth* in the year 1931 of *Vikrami*, in ‘*Takari*’ script, the official script during the reign of His Highness Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Jammu and Kashmir. A copy of the book is presently available with Raghunath Sanskrit Library, Jammu in torn condition. This is a humble effort by the authors for the exploration of hidden and old *Āyurvedic* literature of Jammu and Kashmir.

No science can stand the test of time and prove its validity in practice without having concrete footing in the culture and civilization. During the centuries of foreign rule in India, *Āyurvedic* institutions declined or were suppressed and much of the *Āyurvedic* knowledge was fragmented, misunderstood and not used in its totality. But the individual consciousness of a sufficient number of members of Indian society who were coherent, harmonious and life supporting in real sense, kept this life science into existence by their untiring efforts. Maharāja Ranbir Singh, the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir was such a personality who had a great respect and regard for the cultural heritage of this land. He did a lot for progress and propagation of Indian heritage especially of *Sanskrit* and *Vedic* literature. He always encouraged scholarly people to come forward and work for the preservation of rich ancient heritage. Six years after the publication of *Ranbira Prakāśa*, a treatise on *Āyurvedic* literature which is a compendium of various *Āyurvedic* texts by Pt. Jagadhar in the year 1931 of *Vikrami*, Maharāja Ranbir Singh got published another *Āyurvedic* treatise, ‘*Sri Ranbira Cikitsa Sudha Sāra*’ authored by *Kaviraj Neel Kanth*, an *Āyurvedic* scholar of that time who belonged to Purmandal, a place situated in the south-east part of Jammu. Vidhyavilasa Mudranālaya published this treatise under the supervision

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of Pandit Śankar Nāth. A torn copy of this work is presently available with Raghunāth Sanskrit Library, Jammu bearing Acc.No.842.

This work has been written in “*Takari*” script, which was the official script during the reign of His Highness Maharāja Ranbir Singh. A lot of improvements were made in this script during the period of Maharāja. As the original texts of *Āyurveda* are written in Sanskrit, it was not possible for a common man to understand the exact essence of the texts. In order to make this system of medicine popular, the treasure contained in these masterly works needed to be made available for its easy and practical applicability for the common populace. Maharāja Ranbir Singh realized this fact and persuaded the scholars of that time to bring forth this knowledge in the form of published material in the language of the masses. Contrast from the *Ranbira Prakāśa*, which is a detailed work on *Āyurveda* in two large volumes in Hindi language, *Sri Ranbira Cikitsa Sudha Sāra* is a handy work consisting of only 78 pages. Moreover, it is composed in the prose form whereas, *Ranbira Prakāśa* is composed in meters on the tune of the great epic *Rāmāyaṇa*.

The work starts with the traditional *Mangalacarana*, which states that the Jammu (J&K) forms a part of *Bhārat* (India) and Maharāja Ranbir Singh who belongs to the family tree of great Maharāja Gulab Singh was governing the region at that time. The author writes in praise of Maharāja Ranbir Singh about his bravery, statesmanship, genius and care for his people.

The book starts with a salutation to Lord *Rāma* and prayer to *Lambodara* (Lord *Ganeśa*). Then comes the actual text. The methodology for the different pharmaceutical preparations like *Kwātha* (decoction), *Avaleha* (confection), *Vaṭi* (tablet), *Curna* (powder) and *Hima* (cold infusion) has been described. The remaining work is divided into seven *Sutarangas* (sections).

The first section deals with the etio-pathogenesis of *Jwara* (fever), its different types, specific remedies and dietary management. In the second section diseases like *Atisāra* (diarrhoea), *Sangrahani* (mal-absorption syndrome) and *Arśa* (hemorrhoids) are discussed in detail along with their treatment and dietetics. Third section deals with

Kāsa (bronchitis), *Śvāsa* (asthma), *Śula* (abdominal colic), *Āmavāta* (rheumatoid arthritis) and *Netra roga* (ophthalmic disorders). The fourth section deals with *Pāndu* (anemia), *Kāmala* (hepatitis), *Stree roga* (gynaecological disorders) and *Bāla roga* (paediatric diseases). Similarly, the fifth section deals with *Rājayakṣma* (consumption), *Medovṛddhi* (obesity), *Kṛmi roga* (helmenthiasis), *Mukha roga* (diseases of the oral cavity), *Āmlapitta* (hyperacidity), *Prameha* (urinary anomalies), *Vātarakta* (gouty arthritis), *Viśuci* (acute enteritis), *Tṛṣṇa* (acute thirst), *Vamana* (vomiting), *Kandu* (pruritis), *Gandamāla* (cervical lymphadenitis), *Kanṭha roga* (diseases of throat), *Mandāgni* (decreased digestion), *Vidradhi* (abscess), *Hṛda roga* (cardiac diseases), *Danta roga* (dental disorders), *Raktapitta* (haemothermia), *Hikka* (hiccough) and *Murca* (syncope).

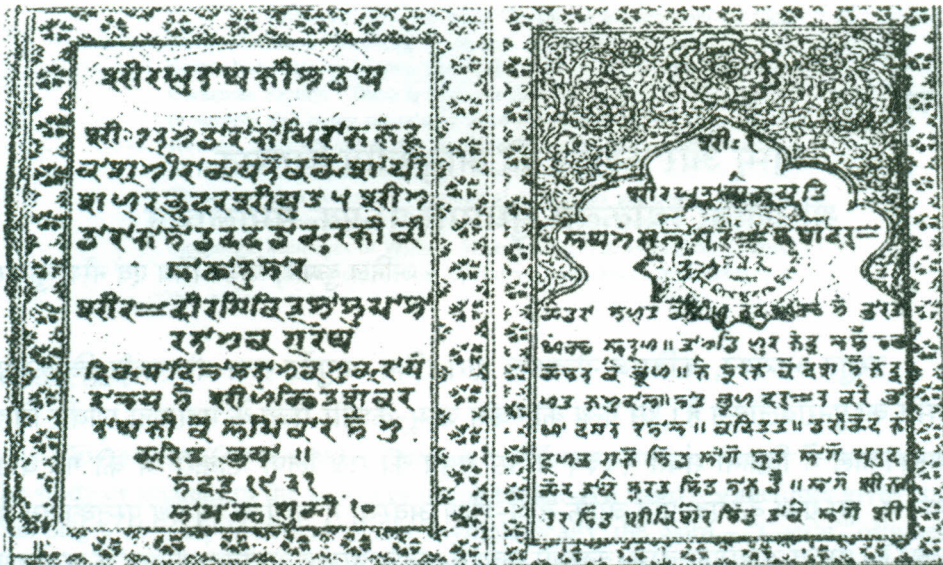
The sixth section details the diseases like *Urustambha* (spastic paraplegia), *Aśmari* (urolithiasis), *Mutrakṛccra* (dysurea), *Sukha roga* (STD), *Kapāla roga* (diseases of skull), *Śopha* (oedema), *Karṇa roga* (diseases of ear), *Vāta*, *Pitta* and *Kapha roga* (humoral disorders). In this section certain specific therapeutic recipes have also been mentioned most of which are *Rasa* preparations. Vehicles for the different drugs have also been indicated. In the seventh section, author has concludes the work.

In the end of the book, a list of 242 drugs comprising of herbal, mineral and animal origin has been appended along with their Sanskrit and Persian synonyms.

It is remarkable here to notify that the most talked about diseases of the present day affluent society which are taking a heavy toll of the society i.e. obesity, ischaemic heart diseases, consumption (immunodeficiency) etc., have been given due consideration in this work. Otherwise also while detailing the different diseases, all the aspects of the disease right from the aetio-pathogenesis, types and therapeutic approach have been given. Although, the work is in unison with the basic principles of *Āyurveda*, yet the worthy scholar has not given any reference in the work. The recipes mentioned in the book especially the last seven in section sixth indicate the inclination of the physician scholar Kaviraj Neel Kanth towards the *Rasa* therapy and it appears as if these recipes were well tried by the author. But in order to prove their worthiness, these formulations need to be evaluated on modern scientific parameters.



Maharāja Ranbir Singh



“Takarī” script of the book

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सारांश

जम्मू और कश्मीर की आयुर्वेदीय विरासत - श्री रणबीर चिकित्सा सुधासार पर एक समालोचन

- अनिल कुमार, गेयिन सिंघ एवं नरेश कुमार

प्रस्तुत अध्ययन, कविराज नीलकण्ठ द्वारा रचित आयुर्वेद ग्रन्थ श्री रणबीर चिकित्सा सुधासार का पुनरावलोकन है। इस ग्रन्थ की रचना जम्मू-कश्मीर राज्य के महाराजा रणबीर सिंह के शासनकाल में विक्रमी संवत् १९३१ में उस समय की राज लिपी 'टाकरी' में की गई थी। वर्तमान में, इस ग्रन्थ की एक प्रति जोकि जीर्ण-शीर्ण अवस्था में जम्मू के रघुनाथ पुस्तकालय में उपलब्ध है। प्रस्तुत अध्ययन, जम्मू-काश्मीर राज्य में अदृश्य पुरातन आयुर्वेद साहित्य के अन्वेषण हेतु लेखकगण का एक प्रयास मात्र है।