

## BY INVITATION

THE FOUNDING OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL  
IN SINGAPORE (PART I)

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As in previous historical articles by the author, this one has many quotations from primary sources. This mode of presentation is more interesting and gives a more vivid picture than a precis and rehash of the facts.

A brief introduction to the study of the Medical History of early Singapore has been outlined.<sup>1</sup>

Medical education in the Straits Settlements from 1786 to 1871 has already been documented.<sup>2</sup>

From the year 1870, young men from the Straits Settlements were sent regularly to the Madras Medical College to be trained as Apothecaries to fill the junior professional posts in the Straits Medical Service. But the Government still had to rely on Apothecaries from India to help man its existing medical services which were gradually expanding as the population increased, e.g. hospitals, vaccination programme, quarantine. In addition to the existing specialised hospitals where patients were confined, i.e. the Lunatic Asylum and the Leper Hospital, new ones were established, e.g. the Maternity Hospital in Singapore in 1888. New services were also introduced, e.g. the Outdoor Dispensary in Singapore in 1882. Moreover, Government also had to provide facilities required by law, e.g. the Contagious Diseases Ordinance 1870 dealing with prostitution and venereal diseases. All this expansion needed plenty of manpower.

Dependence on Apothecaries from India had its problems. The supply was precarious, and those recruited were not the best men available. Although the Principal Civil Medical Officer occasionally praised his officers, he also had his complaints:

*"The Subordinates of the Apothecary grade have given me much satisfaction and performed their various duties with credit to themselves. Mr. Apothecary Tallent, who had been in charge of the Criminal Prison for eleven years, and was on loan from the Madras Government, returned to India in September last. I have much pleasure in testifying to his conscientiousness and painstaking work during the whole time I have had charge."*<sup>3</sup>

*"The Subordinate Apothecaries throughout the Department have done their work well and with creditable zeal, and it affords me much pleasure to place this fact on record in their favour. It would be impossible for me to desire to have a more efficient and ready staff of officers to work with, than it is my good fortune to possess."*<sup>4</sup>

*"The Apothecaries attached to the General Hospital have worked in a highly satisfactory way during the year, and I look upon it as entirely owing to their exertions that the results of treatment in many cases have been successful. . . ."*<sup>5</sup>

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*"Changes in the Subordinate Medical Staff: Mr. de Silva resigned on 28th July. Mr. Morrison arrived from Madras on 7th July; left on 9th October without fulfilling the terms of his engagement. Four Apothecaries from the Indian Government: Reardon, Leach and Curran arrived in September 1888, and Boyer in January 1889. Leach posted to Penang, the rest in Singapore. Mr. Reardon has not yet accepted permanent service in this Colony, but is waiting for the result of a communication with the Indian Government as regards his pension for his years of service in that country before electing to return there or take up permanent service here. Mr. Curran, who misunderstood the terms as regards pension on which engagement here was offered to him, has requested to be sent back to India and declines permanent service here . . . ."*<sup>6</sup>

*"Mr. D'Vaz was suspended in July, his suspension being subsequently confirmed. Mr. Boyer was allowed to resign his appointment in the Straits Service in September. Thus at the end of the year, the staff of Apothecaries was three short of its proper number, and as two more Apothecaries are required this year for District Hospitals in Malacca, there are now five vacancies for Apothecaries in the Straits Service . . . It has lately been found extremely difficult to procure men from India, and an application to Ceylon has been made in vain. A letter has been written to Madras asking that the Surgeon-General may be requested to be good enough to endeavour to procure five men for the Straits, but as to the possibility of procuring four of them, no answer has yet been received. . . ."*

*"I am sorry to have to record again in 1890, the dismissal of an Apothecary from the Service, Mr. F. Thompson, Leper Asylum, Pulau Jerajak, . . . stealing from a patient who had died. . . ."*<sup>8</sup>

Over the years, an increasing number of boys from the Straits were sent to Madras, as a study of the annual Government Estimates shows. But in 1885, the exercise was stopped as it was decided that a sufficient number had been trained and were then being trained to supply the needs of the Colony. But the demands were still there and kept increasing. The danger of "over-production" of Apothecaries was exaggerated. With retirements, resignations and dismissals, and not much help from India, the government in a few years found itself acutely short of staff.

Another factor, which paradoxically aggravated the staffing situation of Apothecaries, was the employment of female nurses in the General Hospital in 1885, when fond hopes had earlier been expressed that trained nurses would be of great help in assisting the Apothecaries:<sup>9</sup>

*"The varying nature of the work of the Apothecaries will, I think, be modified after the question of the appointment of nurses, now under consideration, is settled, as the nurses will be able to do many things for bad cases which at present the Apothecaries are unable to leave to subordinate officers."*

The women employed were not trained nurses but European nuns (Sisters) from the Convent in Singapore. These Sisters gradually usurped the authority of the Apothecaries and eventually became their superiors. This was one of the reasons given by a Madras Apothecary employed in Singapore, in an "open" letter in the Madras Mail urging his Indian Colleagues not to apply for jobs in the Straits. The other grievances were the high cost of

living, no private practice, British medical officers indulging in private practice and leaving the Apothecaries to shoulder all the responsibility in the hospitals:<sup>10</sup>

*" . . . Lately, took service under the Singapore Government . . . I was like others who came here, well-off in India, holding an independent charge with a certain amount of private practice which kept myself and family in a tolerably comfortable state . . . one dollar equals two and a quarter rupees, but in actual spending power, equals one rupee . . . An absurd rule that the Subordinate Medical Establishment are not allowed private practice, but the Senior Medical Staff are given a free hand. Men who were originally private practitioners shoved into Government posts perhaps for want of better qualified men. They stopped Apothecaries from private practice to eliminate competition. The Resident Medical Officer at the General Hospital is at the same time, the Principal Civil Medical Officer, the Registrar of Births, the Superintendent of Vaccination and Medical Officer in charge of the Jail, and in addition, advertises himself as a private dentist. Consequently, the burden of work, and what is worse, the burden of responsibility are placed on the shoulders of the Subordinates . . . deplorable . . . not surprising that under these unfavourable circumstances, two of the five Apothecaries who took service here have already gone back, a third intends leaving soon, and the two others also intend leaving later on."*

*Management of the General Hospital, supposed to be the first hospital in the Straits Settlements . . . in the hands of the Sisters from the Convent . . . who are under the control of the Bishop. Paid liberally by Government but with no nursing training. Nursing and dieting of patients are in their hands. The Apothecary does not inspect the food supplied by the Contractor . . . Ward attendants and other menial servants are also under the control of the Sisters . . . If the Apothecary has any orders to convey to the servants, they must go through the Sisters, or if he chooses to give them directly to the servants, he must stand the risk of being humiliated by being disobeyed without any means of getting the culprit punished. The whole hospital, in fact, is under a sort of feminine control guided by the religious authorities, and the Apothecary, who in an Indian hospital, is considered competent to take the place of the Medical Officer in his absence, in the Straits hospital is thought of no more than a ward attendant. If there is any Apothecary who is desirous of taking service in the Straits, let him carefully read this over, so that hereafter he may not have occasion to say he was duped. This unfortunately has been our cry ever since we landed here."*

This letter was reproduced in the Penang Gazette of 17th May 1889, and caused quite a controversy in the Straits Settlements. The Editor of the Straits Independent, a Penang newspaper, supported the Madras Apothecary; the Penang Gazette was quite impartial but the Singapore Weekly Herald, a Catholic publication, rebutted and counter-attacked.

*"The Singapore Apothecary's complaint . . . discloses a serious state of things as far as our Medical Department is concerned. The writer, an Apothecary, and one of the recent importations from Madras, makes certain assertions with a boldness and straight-forwardness that impress one at once with the truth of the several statements he puts forward . . . The accusation this writer has framed against the Straits Government in general and the*

Medical Department in particular, embraces several counts, most of which are certainly of a most damaging character, and as such would act as deterrents to other Apothecaries, who may have any self-respect, from taking service under this Government . . .

The interdiction from taking private practice is, as far as we are aware, a new departure from the rules hitherto in force in the Straits Settlements. All Apothecaries, both during the Indian regime and since the Transfer, have been allowed private practice without distinction, and those in the Service at present, at least as far as Penang is concerned, are in the full enjoyment of the privilege, if it be deemed a privilege. We cannot therefore understand why these five Apothecaries have been deprived of it. . . . Twelve to fifteen years ago, there was an attempt by an Assistant Colonial Surgeon to interdict Apothecaries in Singapore from private practice, . . . expected that by depriving the Apothecaries attached to the hospitals in his charge, who had a certain amount of private practice, he would be able to get it all to himself, but the very means he adopted for the purpose defeated his object. That the present movement in the same direction had its origin in some such motive may be inferred from the writer's suggestions . . .

The writer enters into a description of the management of the Hospital, and complains that certain duties which legitimately devolve on the Apothecaries are entrusted to the Nurses . . . We are at a loss to understand why a Nurse should be called upon to look after the dieting and articles of diet supplied to the patients, or that the ward attendants and other servants should be placed under the control of the Nurses and be independent of the Apothecaries. This arrangement would place the latter in an invidious position, and give rise to dissatisfaction, heartburnings and other evils by which the patients must ultimately suffer in one way or another. As a rule, we believe Apothecaries attached to hospitals are looked upon as officers having a certain amount of control in the management of the internal economy of the hospitals, hence the attendants and other servants are especially under this orders, as well as the ordering and receiving of the rations for the patients as regulated by the Medical Officer in charge . . .

On the whole, taking it for granted that the writer has not exaggerated or exceeded the truth, we believe he has just cause for complaint, and it should be the duty of Government to institute inquiries with a view to the grievances complained of being remedied if they exist in reality, otherwise we might find it difficult to get competent Apothecaries from India in future."<sup>1</sup>

"There should be no private practice for Government doctors in the big towns where there are enough private practitioners. Even if allowed, not for Subordinates because their duty is to be in the hospitals all the time.

Regarding the nursing, there is some truth in the Madras Apothecary's statements, but it is preferable to have the religious Sisters than to have no trained nurses at all . . . Ridiculous for the Sisters to be in charge of the food and servants . . .

Apothecary and Nurse in positions exactly the reverse of what we imagine they ought to be. It is absurd and humiliating that trained and competent men, such as the most of our Apothecaries are, should be placed in so utterly false a position and we do not wonder that they resent it.

Not all the Madras Apothecary's statements can be accepted. Still they are of so serious a nature and are made so publicly, that it behoves the Government to make a searching inquiry into the state of the Medical Department against which they are brought . . ."<sup>2</sup>

"Regarding the value of the dollar in Singapore, we certainly agree with the Apothecary, as it is a well-known fact that a dollar goes no farther than a rupee in India. But the Apothecary in speaking of private practice from which he evidently expected to make a little fortune, has himself to blame. Before accepting employment in Singapore, he should have ascertained whether or not he would be allowed to carry on his pet hobby. If there is such a field for private practice here, why does he not throw up his position at the Hospital and try his luck entirely at it!

Concerning his remarks about the Sisters, they are very absurd. The Sisters from the Convent in Singapore have been in charge of the Hospital some four or five years; during this length of time they have given every satisfaction to the Government, the Chief Medical Officers and the patients. We declare that . . . the inspection of the articles of food by the Sisters, though in able hands, is somewhat galling to the Madras Apothecary. Our friend came to Singapore with the intention of being on the war path, that is, on the make. He expected to be able to fleece the Contractor the same as he was able perhaps to do in Madras. In this he has been disappointed, and we would advise him to get back as soon as possible to Madras where he can have the Contractors under his thumb and carry on his so-called private practice. It is a good thing for the patients that the General Hospital in Singapore is under feminine control, and they know and appreciate it. Left to the tender mercies of the Madras Apothecary with his private practice, they would stand a very poor chance indeed.

As to what the Apothecary says about the ward attendants, it is nothing but right that the Sisters should have full control over them as in other matters. We have seen something of hospital management in India, and in many cases, servants that are paid by the Government to attend on the patients are merely servants to some of the Apothecaries and their families. There are tricks and makings in every trade that is sure. But when the Apothecary from Madras found out he was nothing but a ward attendant, and had nothing else to do but mix and compound pills and nostrums, and no chance to make a cent, like a sensible being he should either have given a grin and bore with it or taken his flight to his native country — Madras!"<sup>3</sup>

There is no record of the Government ever instituting an official inquiry into the Apothecary's complaint, but the Governor did instruct the Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer to look into the possibility of having a Medical School in Singapore to train Apothecaries for local needs. This was one of the three avenues open by which the shortage of staff could be alleviated. All three avenues were exploited. Appeals continued to be made to the Madras Government for help in recruiting Apothecaries;<sup>7</sup> and in the latter half of 1889, the practice of sending young men to the Madras Medical College was re-started, "the Madras Government and Medical College authorities meeting the proposals from the Straits in a most obliging way. Two students were sent from the Straits in September, and commenced their studies in Madras at the beginning of October."

Dr. Simon, the Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer, submitted a "Memorandum as to the foundation of a Medical School for the Straits Settlements in Singapore" on 16th September 1889.<sup>14</sup> (See Appendix A). He outlined the necessary steps that would have to be taken. He also informed the Governor that the Medical School could be one of two standards: (a) a school whose graduates were recognised only locally; or (b) a school whose qualifications were recognised by other examining bodies overseas. He himself preferred "a school of a higher order" and recommended accordingly. The success of the scheme would involve the co-operation of the Medical College at Madras or Ceylon. The proposal was to do the first two years' of teaching in Singapore and for the students to complete the remaining years overseas. Should the overseas Colleges not be able to help, he proposed that "the scheme be slightly modified and extended as far as time and subjects are concerned, and that a school be started and licences qualifying for service in the Straits Settlements be granted here, and recognition by other colleges be trusted to the future." The School could also train youths who wished to qualify as Dressers. An interesting fact is that in the 19th century it was essential "for admission to examination by any of the licensing bodies that the medical education a student receives should cost him a certain amount in fees". Dr. Simon recommended that Scholarships and Allowances be given to medical students as he was of the opinion that few parents could afford the fees.

Dr. Simon was enthusiastic, and in his opinion, the teaching material in Singapore was unlimited:<sup>7</sup>

"The advantages for medical education here are considerable. There is no lack of subjects for anatomical teaching, which is a drawback to that study in some countries, and as regards the purely professional subjects of Medicine and Surgery, I have in my report on the General Hospital made some remarks on the material available at that institution . . .

The opportunities presented by the General Hospital for the study of Medicine and Surgery are very great, not, I am of opinion, to be surpassed by those at any Hospital in the East . . .

As regards medical cases, patients are admitted into the European Wards generally from on board ships, suffering from diseases not so common in the East as in Europe, such as various affections of the heart, respiratory organs, nervous system and kidneys; and patients are also admitted from Singapore and neighbouring places or from China, suffering from diseases more frequently met with in the East, such as remittent and intermittent fevers, dysentery and diarrhoea in all their acute and chronic forms, and diseases of the liver and spleen. In the Native Wards, special Eastern diseases of the above nature are also constantly to be seen, and also various diseases of the skin.

As regards surgical cases, the European Wards show a good number and variety, but it is in the Native Wards that the great field of surgery is found. Fractures of all kinds are met with, and occasional dislocations, wounds of all kinds are constantly being admitted, gun-shot wounds and wounds of all degrees of severity made by knives, spears, parangs, hatchets and sticks; 'accidents' of all varieties are also being constantly sent to hospital, including machinery accidents from the docks or from on

board ship. Surgical diseases are not uncommonly met with, of ordinary nature, such as diseases of bones, diseases of urinary organs, and tumours, as well as those peculiar to the East, such as elephantiasis.

The following list of operations done in the Hospital during the year will give an idea of the field of operative surgery. Of course, numerous operations done at the bedside, such as operation for phimosis, for removal of dead bone, for hydrocele, for removal of small tumours or foreign bodies, are not included in list . . ."

The Editor of the Straits Times also waxed eloquent on this subject of a Medical School in Singapore. He mentioned that this would create more opportunities for the Eurasians (most of the young men sent to the Madras Medical College in those early years were Eurasians), and possibly for the "newer generation of Chinese who are making use of such educational facilities as those given in the Anglo-Chinese School" (founded in 1886, three years earlier). He did not mind having a Medical School of a lower standard as it would in any case be of benefit to the greater proportion of the local population. His article is quoted in full:<sup>15</sup>

#### A MEDICAL COLLEGE FOR SINGAPORE

*We are glad to announce an educational scheme which will tend to open a reputable and fairly profitable calling to the Straits Eurasians. The proposal is to establish in Singapore a Medical college where lectures will be given by local practitioners and others on all the usual medical subjects, and in connection with which the students will get practical training in the hospitals of Singapore. The most immediate effect of the establishment of this Medical College will be that intelligent Eurasians in the Straits will enter themselves for the calling of hospital dressers and apothecaries, for whom there is a constant and growing demand both in the Settlements and in the Native States, but with no means of training nearer than India. As a consequence, few Straits Eurasians at present see their way to enter the calling, and the dressers and apothecaries are chiefly imported from India to the manifest disadvantages of the Straits population, for whom it is exceedingly desirable to provide as much and as varied employment as is possible. The proposed Medical College will very soon remedy that. But judging from the full arrangements that are under consideration, the college may do more. It may be in a position to impart a full medical training, and to have that training recognised as qualifying for an English degree, subject to the aspirant passing his examination in England, and indeed we are assured that there is no place in the world where the student could have a better hospital training in the sense of seeing under treatment a great variety of diseases.*

*It would nevertheless be idle to expect that the facilities of the college would at any time be used by the well-to-do European classes. These send their children home, and rightly so. Practically, the benefits of the scheme are for the Eurasians or for the children of those Europeans who are less remuneratively employed, and who tend to ally themselves matrimonially with the Eurasians. Probably also it will be used by the newer generation of Chinese who are making use of such educational facilities as those given in the Anglo-Chinese School, and some of whom*

may desire to learn the arts of medicine. Indeed, having regard to the large Asiatic population of Singapore and the inability of many of these to employ a European doctor, it may be held that the college might properly grant some certificate for local practice which, though not recognised elsewhere, would be valid in this colony. These, however, are details that are best left to professional knowledge. At present, the scheme is being prepared by Dr. Simon, and has obtained, we understand, the general approval of His Excellency the Governor and of the local practitioners. We may say more of it when it comes before Council."

Dr Simon's Memorandum was laid before the Legislative Council on 9th October 1889, the day of the official opening of the session of Council. The Governor in his address to the Council said, *inter alia*,<sup>14</sup>

"... The Government is bound to do all that lies in its power to promote the education of the youth of the Colony on the broadest lines. Our past endeavours have met with a considerable measure of success, but a vast deal more is required. The establishment of science classes will be another step in advance. Besides this, I invite your approval of schemes which have for their objects the training of young men for the junior branch of the Medical Department and the Survey Department. The policy involved in such schemes can, I feel confident, not only be justified as promoting the general welfare of the resident population of the Colony, but on the ground of economy, when consideration is given to the demand for such skilled labour both in the Colony and the Native States, which can even now only be supplied at considerable cost and in insufficient quantity..."

In the Estimates for 1890, \$2,400.00 were approved for the expenses connected with the establishment of a School of Medicine for the Straits Settlements. It was proposed to start the Medical School on 1st October 1890, and there was a Notification in the Government Gazette of 11th July 1890 regarding an examination for the selection of medical students:<sup>16</sup>

"An examination for the purpose of selecting the first six candidates for admission to the proposed Medical School at Singapore will be held at the Colonial Secretary's Office on a date to be hereafter fixed.

Candidates, who should be between the ages of 16 and 19, should apply to the Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer, from whom full particulars may be obtained, on or before the 1st August next."

The Straits Times published this Notification on 14th July 1890<sup>17</sup>

It has been said, and quoted by many others that the first attempt to start a Medical School at Singapore failed because only two candidates turned up and they were physically unfit (see below, evidence given to the Commission on the system of English education in 1902, twelve years later). Dr. Simon's reports written in 1891 and 1892 tell a different story.

"... With some regret, I have to report that the proposed Medical School of which I wrote in my last report, could not be opened in 1890. I had proposed to commence the School by giving, in Singapore, only the first two of the four years' instruction required to qualify, hoping that later on we should be able to give all the four years here, and only have to send our pupils to Madras for examination. The Government of Madras have very courteously consented to the following scheme, viz. that

pupils who shall have passed a preliminary examination and undergone a two years' course of instruction (in accordance with the Madras curriculum) here, may be admitted to the first examination at the Madras Medical College, and then after passing it, be admitted to that College as third year students; but during 1890 no pupils presented themselves who could pass the preliminary examination in a sufficiently satisfactory manner.

I have no doubt, however, that we shall be able to commence the School this year (1891), and probably with better pupils than we should have had last year, had any presented themselves passed the required examination, so that the delay of one year may not after all be any great disadvantage. I may mention that one boy reached the required standard in the examination that was held in 1890, but this only after one subject had been omitted. I have already four boys waiting for the next preliminary examination, and I hope, and have reason to think, there will be several more candidates by the time it is to be held..."<sup>18</sup>

Things were better organised in 1891. Government Gazette Notification No. 293 of 29th May 1891 announced the detailed regulations for the selection of medical students and student Dressers for the Straits Settlements Medical School (see Appendix B)<sup>19</sup>. Six candidates (on scholarship) would be chosen. Unsuccessful candidates for the Queen's Scholarship would also be considered. In the selection of students, "weight would be given to character and status of parents". In addition to the six stipendiary students, candidates who passed the preliminary examination and were willing to pay their own fees and other expenses in Singapore and Madras would also be admitted, and not be required to sign a bond to serve the Government after qualification like the stipendiary students.

Some publicity was given to the Regulations in the newspapers,<sup>20</sup> but once again, the Principal Civil Medical Officer's hopes were not fulfilled:<sup>21</sup>

"... I regret that in 1891, I was again disappointed in my hope of commencing a Medical School in Singapore. Nine boys presented themselves at the preliminary examination which was held in July, and only two succeeded in satisfying the examiners. It was obviously impracticable to commence a school with only two pupils, so these two boys were sent to commence their studies at Madras..."

One factor which could have contributed to the frustration of the plan to start a Medical School was the availability of the Government Higher Scholarships (in 1890, the name was changed to Queen's Scholarships) "to enable students to qualify in Great Britain or India for a professional career". Two Scholarships were available each year. For boys interested in Medicine, these scholarships were prestigious and enabled them to obtain a University degree in the United Kingdom and not just an inferior Apothecary's qualification.

Other means were tried to relieve the shortage of Apothecaries. In 1890, two new appointments were created (House Surgeons to the General Hospital) to take the places in the hospital hitherto filled by two Apothecaries and thus release them for duties elsewhere.<sup>18</sup> The appointees were to be recruited in Britain, and the first two were Dr. R. Dane and Dr. G. D. Freer, who later in 1905 became the first Principal of the Medical School when it was finally founded.

Another ploy was to improve the lot of the Apothecaries. In 1891, the maximum pay after at least 18 years' service, was increased from \$175 to \$200 per month conditional upon passing an examination, i.e. \$2400 per annum. Newly appointed House Surgeons were paid \$2100 per annum.<sup>21</sup> The more ambitious of the Apothecaries used to go on leave to the United Kingdom with the intention of obtaining the Conjoint qualifications of the English and Scottish Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons (M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.; L.R.C.P. & S., L.R.F.P.S.)<sup>22</sup> These qualifications however did not improve their status in the Government service, although they helped when the Apothecaries resigned to go into private practice.

Student Apothecaries continued to be sent to Madras.<sup>23</sup> In 1899, new rules governing the Subordinate Appointments of the Medical Department came into force (see Appendix C).<sup>24</sup> The rules covered the selection of candidates to be sent to Madras, the pre-collegiate course of study in Singapore, conduct, bond to serve the Government, allowances, salary after qualification, etc. The starting pay was \$55 per month with free quarters on the following scale:

*"Apothecaries receive salaries of \$660 to \$1320 by yearly increments of \$60. Then yearly increments of \$120 till a salary of \$1800 per annum is reached. They then receive two more increments of \$300 per annum after one and three years respectively, by which a maximum of \$2400 per annum is reached, but the last two increments are conditional upon passing a satisfactory examination in medical subjects."*<sup>25</sup>

In June 1900, there was another revision of the salary scale of Apothecaries.<sup>26</sup> The salary on appointment was increased to \$720 per annum, and the maximum salary on the 20th year of service, to \$2520. "After the expiry of their 16th year of service, all Apothecaries shall be eligible for a salary of \$2316 per annum, and after three years' service on that salary, i.e. on the commencement of their 20th year of service, they shall be eligible for the maximum of \$2520 per annum, provided that with a view of ensuring that they keep up a knowledge of professional subjects and do their best to keep abreast of progress in Medical and Surgical science, each Apothecary, before he can receive salary of \$2316 per annum, and again before he can receive one of \$2520 per annum, shall pass an examination in the practical subjects of his profession and in matters relating to Hospital Management and Public Health."

In December 1900, the rules for Student Apothecaries and Apothecaries were slightly modified.<sup>27</sup> The pre-collegiate course was reduced from one year to six months but with no pay. A breach of the agreement to remain at the College at Madras for four years and thereafter to serve the Government for fifteen years would incur, in addition to refunding the whole of the Government expenditure, a penalty of \$500.

More carrots were dangled before the Apothecaries to encourage serving officers to remain, and to attract new recruits. On 22nd December 1900, the officers became Assistant Surgeons instead of Apothecaries:<sup>28</sup>

*"His Honour the Officer Administering the Government has been pleased to direct that the Subordinate members of the Government Medical Department who are at present styled 'Apothecaries' shall in future be designated 'Assistant Surgeons'."*

And on 1st July 1901, another new scale of Assistant Surgeons' salaries was introduced.<sup>29</sup> The salary on appointment was increased to \$852 per annum. The salary scale was shortened. The salary on the 15th year was to be \$2316 per annum, and on the 18th year to be \$2640 per annum, after passing an examination in medical and related subjects. A superscale grade was also created:

*"On the special recommendation of the Principal Civil Medical Officer and with the sanction of the Governor, an Assistant Surgeon may rise to \$3000 per annum after 19 years' approved service, but the number of appointments at this rate shall be limited to three."*

The Government appointed a Commission to inquire into the system of English education in the Colony on 30th January 1902. Although not strictly within their terms of reference, the Commission took evidence on the prospects of "higher education", e.g. medicine and engineering, in the Colony. For medical education, the Commission recorded evidence from Dr. D. J. Galloway, immediate past President of the Medical Association, and Dr. T. C. Mugliston, Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer of the Straits Settlements, who were both against the idea (see Appendix D.)<sup>30</sup>

The Commission submitted their report which was laid before the Legislative Council on 6th June 1902. They regretted the opposition to starting medical education in Singapore. However, there was a minority report supporting the opposition view:<sup>30</sup>

*"Para. 31. Whether a Medical School should be established in Singapore is a question on which a division of opinion exists. It must be admitted that it would be a good thing if such a School or College could be maintained here. There is an increasing need for Medical men as the Native States are opened up. We are now dependent on Madras, and the results of sending Eurasians from here to study in Madras have not always been satisfactory."*

*Dr. Simon, C.M.G., late Principal Civil Medical Officer, was strongly in favour of having a Medical School here. Dr. Galloway, lately President of the Medical Association, as will be seen from his evidence, is opposed to the idea.*

*Dr. Mugliston, Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer, thinks that there would be no difficulty getting lecturers but he thinks there is no material (students).*

*The Commission much regret the evidence before them, as they feel the great advantage which would accrue to the Colony and the Native States by the introduction of a system of training which would produce, out of local material, men better qualified to supply the demand for Assistant Surgeons and General Practitioners among the native population and the poorer inhabitants. The introduction of this would pave the way to limiting practice to men who had attained the necessary qualifications."*

*"I agree that Medical Education should not at present be attempted in the Colony. Apart from the question of the supply of students, which is more than doubtful, the teaching of medicine has no prospect of being efficient at a reasonable expenditure. An inefficient Medical School would be worse than useless, the cost of an efficient one prohibitive. The languishing condition of the Medical Schools of the Indian Presidencies is due to the fact that they have not enough students to justify the employment of specialist teachers. It is possible that one or two subjects might be taught by medical men in general*

*practice. but it is no reproach to them to say that the majority of subjects could not be adequately undertaken. To take one instance only — Modern Science, in view of the risk of infection, absolutely forbids the practice of surgery or of obstetrics to men who engage in the teaching of anatomy or pathology. Are we prepared, for the sake of possibly six or eight students, to provide even one specialist for these subjects?"*

Nothing was done about the Commission's recommendation on Medical Education in the Straits Settlements.

In 1903, the Scheme for Assistant Surgeons was modified again. The allowance of \$15 per month for pre-collegiate students was re-introduced, and the bond changed to "serve the Government of the Straits Settlements or one of the Federated Malay States for fifteen years."<sup>31</sup>

The crucial turning point was in 1904. In September 1904, the Honourable Tan Jiak Kim, a Member of the Legislative Council and an influential member of the Chinese community, after discussions with other community leaders and on the advice of Mr. W. D. Barnes, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs, presented a Memorial to His Excellency the Governor on behalf of the Chinese and other communities of the Colony praying for the establishment of a Medical School:<sup>32</sup>

*"Petition from Certain Inhabitants of Singapore to Governor Sir John Anderson, K.C.M.G.*

#### **MOST RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH THAT**

1. Your petitioners desire to bring to Your Excellency's notice the desirability of establishing and maintaining in Singapore a Medical School where residents in this Colony and the Federated Malay States may be trained so that they may be able to enter the Government service as Assistant Surgeons or practise their profession as general practitioners.

2. The establishment of such a school was first advocated by Dr. Simon, C.M.G., late Principal Civil Medical Officer, and has had considerable support in other quarters. The Commissioners appointed to enquire into the system of English education in the Colony advert to the scheme in paragraph 31 of their report of April 1902, and after pointing to the conflicting nature of the evidence upon the subject made the following statement. 'The Commission much regret the evidence before them, as they feel the great advantage which would accrue to the Colony and the Native States by the introduction of a system of training which would produce, out of local material, men better qualified to supply the demand for Assistant Surgeons and general practitioners among the native population and the poorer inhabitants. The introduction of this would pave the way to limiting practice to men who had attained the necessary qualifications.'

3. Your petitioners are convinced that there are no insuperable difficulties in carrying out a scheme for the establishment of such a Medical School and they are much impressed by the great practical good which would result from it. A large portion of the native population are unable or unwilling either on the ground of expense or of

ignorant prejudice to avail themselves of the service of European practitioners and are accordingly thrown back upon persons with little or no medical training with results very far from satisfactory.

4. The importance of a general comprehension of proper sanitary conditions and habits is of paramount importance to any country and your petitioners feel that no measure can so successfully diffuse this understanding as the provision of a proper supply of trained medical men who are in racial sympathy with those whom they attend.

YOUR PETITIONERS THEREFORE HUMBLY PRAY that Your Excellency will give this matter your earnest consideration and take steps to get a proper scheme framed for the establishment of a Medical School in Singapore.

(sd) TAN JIAK KIM & OTHERS

Dated the 8th day of September, 1904.

This petition was discussed by the Governor and his Executive Council, and the Colonial Secretary replied to Mr. Tan Jiak Kim on 4th October 1904.<sup>32</sup>

He mentioned that the Governor entirely concurred with the views expressed by the Commission on the system of English education, but drew attention to the fact that only about two hundred boys each year would be educationally qualified to apply to be medical students, and that there would be great competition for them from the business firms and Civil Service. The proposed Teachers' Training College had not attracted any candidates although they would get an allowance of \$10 per month during their training. Young men and their parents preferred present adequate income to uncertain future prospects.

Under those circumstances, the establishment of a Medical School could only be regarded as an experiment, the success of which was too problematical for the Government to undertake it without some guarantee both, as to part, at least, of the expenditure involved and as to the active co-operation of the leading men of the Chinese and other races represented amongst the signatories of the Memorial.

With regard to the expenditure, it fell under three heads: buildings and equipment, staff and maintenance expenses, scholarships or maintenance allowance for students. As far as buildings were concerned, there was fortunately at the moment, owing to the removal of the female patients to Pasir Panjang, a block of the Lunatic Asylum at the disposal of the Government, which could be converted into suitable lecture rooms, laboratory, etc. for about \$1000. The cost of equipment had been estimated by the Principal Civil Medical Officer at \$10,000, making a total cost of \$11,000.

As regards Scholarships, the Governor felt that it was essential that they should be of sufficient amount to attract the best boys from the schools, and he was of the opinion that each should be \$15 a month, with annual increments of \$1 to \$18 per month in four years. An endowment fund of at least \$60,000 should be provided

for the payment of such Scholarships for students of native origin. This amount, if invested at 6 per cent, would be sufficient for the award of five Scholarships every year.

If the amount required for the establishment of this fund and for the conversion and equipment of the building, about \$71,000, could be raised by subscription amongst the Chinese and other Asiatic communities in the Colony and the Federated Malay States, His Excellency would be prepared to invite the Legislative Council of the Colony and the Government of the Federated Malay States to provide for the payment of the necessary staff and maintenance charges, estimated provisionally at \$13,200 per annum, and also provide Scholarships for ten students annually.

To ensure continued interest of the leading members of the Chinese and other communities in the Medical School, the Governor also proposed that the scholarship and equipment fund should be vested in a body of Trustees to be elected by the subscribers, with the Principal Civil Medical Officer as Chairman, and the Secretary for Chinese Affairs as Vice-Chairman, and that these Trustees should be associated as an Advisory Council with the Principal Civil Medical Officer in the general administration of the Medical School, and should be a Visiting Board for the School.

If the Memorialists were prepared to accept those terms, the Governor suggested that they should communicate with the Principal Civil Medical Officer and the Secretary for Chinese Affairs, and as soon as he was informed that the funds which he considered necessary was forthcoming, he would be pleased to initiate the legislative measures necessary for the establishment of the School.

On receipt of this reply to their petition, a meeting of the leading members of the Chinese community was held at the Chinese Protectorate in Singapore, at which the Governor's challenge was accepted and arrangements for the collection of the necessary subscription made. Over eighty thousand dollars were finally collected, twenty thousand of which were subscribed in Penang and nine thousand (in one donation) in the Federated Malay States. The Singapore Chinese headed by the Honourable Tan Jiak Kim (who himself gave \$12,000) were by far the largest subscribers. (To be continued).

(References will be found at the end of Part II of this article).

**APPENDIX A.**

OFFICE OF PRINCIPAL CIVIL MEDICAL OFFICER,  
STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

Singapore, 16th September 1889.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward for the perusal of His Excellency the Governor, the enclosed Memorandum on the foundation of a Medical School in Singapore.

I drew up the Memorandum at the request of His Excellency, and have gone as fully into detail as it is possible to go at present. It will be readily understood, however, that there are many matters connected with the

scheme which can only be arranged when the broad lines have been laid down.

I have, etc.  
MAX F. SIMON.

Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer, S. S.

The Hon'ble  
The Colonial Secretary,  
Straits Settlements.

**MEMORANDUM AS TO THE FOUNDATION OF A  
MEDICAL SCHOOL FOR THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS  
IN SINGAPORE**

1. A Medical School may be founded in one of two ways:
  - (a) As a school to supply merely local wants, and to produce men qualified to supply these wants and nothing more; or
  - (b) As a school of a higher order, which should commence, in a small way possibly at first, but on higher lines, to educate men in such a manner that the education they may receive shall be accepted as part, and subsequently it is to be hoped as the whole, of the curriculum required to admit them to examination by examining bodies in Ceylon, Madras or Great Britain.
2. As regards the first way, all that would be required is that Government determine what qualifications are necessary for men to fill subordinate medical positions, as high, say, as Apothecaries; to arrange for the education of students up to such qualifications, and to make such qualifications legal. These qualifications would not, of course, be by any means necessarily legal in places other than the Straits Settlements.
3. As regards the second way, Government would have to make arrangements for the education of students according to the curriculum of some recognised licensing body, commencing with compelling them to pass a recognised preliminary examination, and arranging for lectures and teaching generally, and for the payment of fees for such lectures and teaching, as shall bring these conditions on a par with similar conditions in recognised schools.
4. I think that, in starting a Medical School, it will be preferable to begin at once on the second or higher platform, firstly, because it is good to begin a thing properly at once; and, secondly, because though a beginning may be made in a small way, it would be in the right way, and additions could be made afterwards without trouble; whereas if a beginning should be made in a purely local way, and change afterwards should become desirable, the whole thing would have to be begun *de novo*.
5. A course of medical instruction extends over four years in Great Britain and Madras, and over five years in Ceylon. In all places, the first two years are chiefly spent in acquiring a knowledge of Anatomy, Physiology, Chemistry, Botany and Materia Medica, and at the end of these two years, students pass their first professional examination in these subjects. The remaining two or three years are chiefly occupied in learning the ostensible



subjects of the profession — Medicine, Surgery, etc., and at the end of them the student passes his final examination and becomes a qualified practitioner. The course of study for the first two years is, I think, all that could at present be attempted here, and I would advise that a commencement be made with that.

6. I would recommend that, in the first instance, this Government write to Madras or Colombo, and ask the Government there if, provided (a) that students here pass a preliminary examination recognised as admitting to the profession, and (b) that such students afterwards receive here a course of instruction equal in subjects, courses of lectures, numbers of lectures in each course, and cost in point of fees to the corresponding instruction at Madras or Colombo, such students may then be admitted to their first year professional examinations at Madras or Colombo, and be afterwards, if successful, permitted to enter at either of those places as third-year students.

7. If this matter be satisfactorily arranged with the Madras or Ceylon Government, local arrangements could, I think, be easily made. Firstly, as regards the preliminary examination; an examination must be chosen which is recognised by any licensing body as admitting to the study of the profession, and, I think, that an examination suitable for the purpose is the Cambridge Junior Local Examination, the papers for which are sent out to Colombo and could be easily obtained for this place also. I have been informed that there is some chance of the Matriculation Examination of the London University being held here, but though some students might prefer to pass this examination, I fear that it is of too high a type for the majority of those who might wish to become pupils. Possibly an arrangement might be made by which the examination for the Government Higher Scholarships should be recognised, but this matter must be settled by Government.

8. I have spoken to Dr. Mugliston and Dr. Ellis, and I am able to state that these gentlemen and I are willing to undertake the delivery for such lectures in Anatomy, Physiology, *Materia Medica*, Surgery and Medicine (the latter two not to an advanced point) as may be necessary for the two first years of medical school education. Clinical Medicine and Surgery can be taught at the General and Pauper Hospitals. Chemistry lectures and practical work might, I think, be put in at the Science Classes about to be conducted by Dr. Bott, and perhaps Mr. Ridley would take a course of lectures on Botany. Arrangements for dissection could be easily made, the supply of subjects being ample.

9. It is necessary for admission to examination by any of the licensing bodies that the medical education a student receives should cost him a certain amount in fees. I am afraid that at present very few youths can be found in Singapore whose parents are able and willing to pay these fees, and I think it will be found necessary for Government to pay them. In Ceylon, the Medical School was commenced with stipendiary students. It will also, I expect, be necessary in most cases for Government to make some allowance to students during their educational career.

10. If it be decided to open a Medical School on the lines I have proposed, it will be perfectly easy to hold also

secondary or junior classes, for youths who may wish to qualify as Dressers. Such youths will also require allowances during their education.

11. In estimating the cost of opening a Medical School it will be necessary to include in the estimate the cost of fees for a certain number of students and junior students, as well as a sum of money for general expenses. General expenses include materials for instruction, text books, diagrams, objects for anatomical study, and, no doubt, other things the need of which it is impossible now to foresee. I would recommend that a sum of \$1,000 be placed on the Estimates for next year as general expenses connected with the opening of a Medical School, and that to this the cost of fees and allowances to six students, and allowances to six junior students be added. An arrangement as to fees will have to be made with Ceylon or Madras, but I calculate that for each student the amount to be charged for fees for two years will be about \$150, which should be paid in advance on entering. An allowance of \$15 a month might be made to students during their studies here, and one of \$10 to junior students.

12. I do not think it will be found practicable to commence operations before October 1st (the date on which Medical Schools open) 1890, therefore I would suggest that a total amount of \$2,350 be placed on Estimates 1890, made up as follows:

General Expenses connected with opening Medical School .....	\$1,000
Fees for Hospital Attendance and Lectures for six Students for two years, payable in advance at \$150 .....	900
Allowance to six Students for 3 months (October, November, December) at \$15 a month each .....	270
Allowance to six Junior Students being educated for subordinate posts (Dressers, etc) at \$10 a month each, for 3 months .....	180
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,350</b>

13. Of course, it is to be hoped that, with increasing prosperity and population of the Straits Settlements, students will hereafter present themselves who are able and willing to pay for their education. Such students, of course, when qualified, will be at liberty to practise their profession in any way they may like, and will not be in any way under obligation to Government. Stipendiary students should, I think, enter into agreement to serve the Government for a term of years, as has been the custom with Straits Apothecaries hitherto educated entirely in Madras.

MAX F. SIMON  
Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer, S. S.

**APPENDIX B.**

**STRAITS SETTLEMENTS MEDICAL SCHOOL**

**SENIOR STUDENTS**

1. An examination for the purpose of selecting the first six candidates for admission to the proposed new

Medical School at Singapore, will be held at the Colonial Secretary's Office on Thursday, 16th July, 1891, and the following days, at 10 A.M.

2. Candidates, who must be between the ages of 16 and 19 on the first day of examination, should apply to the Principal Civil Medical Officer on or before the 1st July next.

3. The subjects of examination will be as follows:

(a) English:

(i) A portion not exceeding 30 lines in length selected from a standard English author will be given as an exercise in dictation. Ten errors in spelling (exclusive of technical and other unusual words which will not be counted) will exclude the candidate from further examination. Marks will be deducted for defective handwriting.

(ii) Meaning of words and phrases; in grammatical construction of sentences, and in grammar generally.

(iii) English composition.

(b) A colloquial examination in Malay, Tamil or in a dialect of Chinese. Care will be taken to ascertain the facility possessed by each candidate of making himself understood in the vernacular which he has selected.

(c) The leading facts of the History of England, and pages 95 to 142 inclusive of Lucas' Historical Geography of the Empire.

(d) General geography, and geography of Malaya in particular.

(e) The first four rules of arithmetic, vulgar and decimal fractions and proportion.

(f) Algebra, including addition, subtraction, multiplication and simple equations.

(g) First book of Euclid.

4. No candidate will be selected who fails to secure (a) 66 percent of the total number of marks; and (b) 75 percent in the first subject (English). Weight will be given to character and status of parents.

5. Should the number of successful candidates at the examination exceed six, the first six in order of merit will be chosen as students of the Medical School. Should the number be less than six, vacancies in the number may be filled up by any of the unsuccessful candidates for the Queen's Scholarships, provided that they have passed the examination for those Scholarships in a sufficiently creditable manner, as described below.

6. Any candidate for the Queen's Scholarships who may have gained half marks in the examination for those Scholarships may be exempted from the preliminary examination above described, and may be admitted as a student of the Medical School, provided that any vacancy may exist in the number of students to be admitted. Students will be selected to fill such vacancies in order of merit at the Queen's Scholarship examination.

7. The selected candidates will be obliged to attend the Medical School at Singapore for a period of two years, after which they will be admitted to the first professional examination at Madras for admission to study there as third-year students.

8. The fees for hospital attendance and lectures for two years, payable in advance, will be \$150. These fees may, in special circumstances, be remitted with the sanction of the Governor; and, until the school is well established, will generally be remitted.

9. Students during the first two years of their course will receive an allowance from the Government at the rate of \$15 a month, and in the event of their passing the first professional examination referred to in paragraph 7 above, their fees at the Madras Medical School, together with a maintenance allowance (to be fixed hereafter) will be paid by the Government.

10. Students admitted to the Medical School will be required to enter into a Bond to repay to the Government the cost of their instruction should they, without obtaining permission, give up their studies, or should their progress be at any time reported as unsatisfactory, and also to engage to serve the Government of the Colony or of a Protected Native State for a period of fifteen years after passing their final examination in Madras.

11. In addition to the number of six (stipendiary) students as described above, students who may like to pay their own fees and cost of living here and in Madras, may, on passing the preliminary examination, be admitted to the School. Such students on qualification will not be bound in any way to Government, but may practise on their own account.

#### JUNIOR STUDENTS

12. The Principal Civil Medical Officer will also receive applications from candidates desiring to be trained for subordinate posts, such as Dressers, etc. The number selected will at first be six, and they will receive during their attendance at the school an allowance of \$10 a month.

13. The Medical School will be opened at the beginning of August next, and full information as to the course of instruction and lectures will be published hereafter.

14. All students admitted to the School will have to pass a medical examination as to fitness for service.

By His Excellency's Command,

J. F. DICKSON,

Colonial Secretary.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,

Singapore, 29th May, 1891.

#### APPENDIX C.

The Subordinate Appointments of the Medical Department will, in future, be filled up under the following Rules, to which all candidates will have to conform.

1. Candidates must not be below 17 or above 20 years of age (at the date on which the first session of the Madras College opens in the year in which they propose to join); they must present themselves to the Principal Civil Medical Officer, Straits Settlements, at Singapore, or the

Colonial Surgeon at Penang or Malacca, and produce certificates of parentage and of age, with testimonials as to character and respectability. They will also be examined as to their physical fitness.

2. All Candidates must have passed the VIIth Standard (Educational) and in at least two extra subjects. Preference will be given, in order of merit, to any candidates who have nearly succeeded in obtaining a Queen's Scholarship; but should occasion require, all or any, of the candidates may be called upon to enter for a competitive examination in subjects to be fixed by the Inspector of Schools who will hold the examination

3. Successful Candidates may have to undergo, for a year, a pre-collegiate course of study, during which year they will be attached to one of the hospitals of the Colony, in order to determine, by examination, if they are fit to be sent to Madras.

4. During the pre-collegiate course of study, Candidates will receive pay at the rate of \$15 a month.

5. Should a candidate during his pre-collegiate course be guilty of misconduct or negligence or indifference to his duties, or, for other reasons be considered by the Principal Civil Medical Officer unlikely to prove efficient, he will, at any time, render himself liable to removal from the Service.

6. Previous to leaving for Madras, each Candidate with his parents or guardians, must enter into an agreement that the former will serve the Straits Government for fifteen years; and if at any time before this period expires such Apprentice quit the Service without the consent of Government, he or his parents or guardians will have to refund to Government the whole of the expenditure incurred on his behalf during his education.

7. Should a Candidate during his collegiate course be guilty of misconduct or negligence or indifference to his studies or for other reasons be considered by the Madras authorities as unlikely to prove a desirable officer, he may at any time be removed, and ordered by them to return to the Colony, and in such case, he or his parents or guardians will be bound to refund to Government the whole of the expenditure incurred by the Government on his behalf during his instruction.

8. While studying at Madras, each Apprentice will receive monthly the following rates of pay:

During the first year	— 41 Rupees.
During the second year	— 46 Rupees.
During the third and subsequent years	— 51 Rupees.

provided that after the first year satisfactory reports are made by the Principal of the Madras College that he has been diligent. But where the behaviour has not been favourably reported upon there will be no increase of salary.

9. The course of study at Madras will extend over four (or more) years, on completion of which, every student will be subjected to a final examination; and on obtaining a Certificate of Qualification as an Apothecary, he will then return to Singapore and receive that appointment from the Straits Government, on a monthly salary of \$55,

with free quarters; his salary afterwards to increase according to the scale fixed by Government.

10. Service for pension will count from the date of appointment as an Apothecary.

11. The passage of Apprentices to and from Madras will be paid by Government.

By His Excellency's Command,  
J. A. SWETTENHAM  
Colonial Secretary.

Singapore, 13th March, 1899

## APPENDIX D

### EVIDENCE GIVEN BEFORE THE EDUCATION COMMISSION.

DR. D. J. GALLOWAY examined by members of the Commission said:

(a) I was President of the Medical Association until a month ago when my year of office came to an end. The question of the advisability of establishing a local Medical School entirely depends on how far the education would go. If it is only to instruct pupils to become Dressers and Apothecaries, there may be a chance of such a School being a success here. If your intention is to start a proper Medical School, attendance at which, would count with the Universities and other licensing bodies, I do not think that there is any possibility of its being a success. The place is much too small for such a School, and it is exceedingly doubtful even with the minor medical education which seems to be contemplated, whether you would have sufficient students to keep such a School going, that is, including the Native States as well as the Colony. I believe there are now some open scholarships for Straits boys at the Madras Medical School, and the demand for them will give you an idea of the local demand for medical education.

(b) I scarcely think that the fact that the students have to go to Madras makes the scholarships unpopular; boys would go a great deal further if there was anything to be gained. The fact that they are bound to serve the Government for 19 years in all, is merely a *quid pro quo* on the part of the Government. I don't suppose you would give them a free medical education here. I can only tell you that to erect a Medical School would be an extremely costly thing, that is, to give any education worth the name of medical education. It also means an immense amount of work for the Government medical staff. In Hong Kong, there is a Medical School at which the lecturers are local medical practitioners, but I do not think you would get the local men to give the lectures here. Including the Native States, I should think that there is greater demand for trained medical here than in Hong Kong

Some years ago, Dr. Simon tried to establish some local medical training, but the lectureships went begging. I do not think anybody was particularly anxious to become a lecturer here. Taking the three subjects of Anatomy, Pathology and Physiology, no practitioner in practice, especially if the practice embraced midwifery, would care to take up those subjects. The tendency with

general practitioners is that they forget the special knowledge which is required in a lecturer.

(c) I do not think that including the Native States the supply of material for a Medical School would be sufficient to warrant the Government to go to the expense of establishing it.

(d) If such a School were established, the students would be nearly all local born, generally Eurasians. Such men are physically fit to go through the training and work of Apothecaries. We have had such men for years who have been educated in India.

(e) I think a more liberal supply of Assistant Surgeons might be obtained by sending local lads to be trained at the Indian Universities. Time spent in the medical classes in India is allowed to count if the students wish to complete their qualification at Home. I do not see any warrant for the Government to go to the expense of establishing any training school for the medical profession here.

Dr. T. C. Mugliston, Acting Principal Civil Medical Officer, Straits Settlements, examined by the Commission, said:

(a) My idea is that the suggestion to establish a local Medical School to train Assistant Surgeons instead of sending them to Madras, is premature, and that we could not do it for lack of material. We could do everything as regards staff, that was proved in 1890 when Dr. Simon had all the staff and all the arrangements made, but when we tried to get boys, we could only get two, and I have just learnt that they were not physically qualified. (see Dr. Simon's reports for 1890 and 1891, in the article. Different reasons.) Of course, a School cannot be kept up without material; if we were sure of the material we could arrange all the rest. I do not think a School could be carried on with less than from 20 to 25 students. The students and the lecturers would all lose heart if it was not a proper undertaking. At present, we want five boys to go to Madras, and we can only get four. Unless boys have an inclination to enter the medical profession, there is nothing to induce them to come forward for it. I have heard the other day that the Medical School at Hong Kong is dying.

(b) I was told by Dr. Atkinson of the Hong Kong Medical Service that they were at their wit's end to get Assistant Surgeons. On learning what our system is he said he would try to introduce it at Hong Kong as their system of training men was not satisfactory. Some of the men who have been trained in Hong Kong have come to the Straits and are now employed here. The boys who go to Madras, study there for four years, and then have to serve the Government for 15 years. The effect of the establishment of a local school in inducing more students to come forward is quite hypothetical, and I can give you no information on that point. Mr. Hare (Secretary for Chinese Affairs, Federated Malay States) says that Chinese boys do not care to go in for the medical profession. Personally, I do not think there is sufficient material for a local Medical School.

(c) I think we have doctors in Singapore who would make competent lecturers. Of course, they would have to work up the special subjects. At Madras, the Professors are nearly all Army doctors. Nearly all the local doctors are young men and thoroughly up to date.

Dr. Simon started a School on paper only. He wrote to me and asked me to take a certain subject, and another to take another subject. He made all the arrangements in that way and then tried to get the boys, but could not do so. (See article). The question of starting a local School has recently been discussed in official papers, and the opinion is altogether against it being a success. Dr. Travers and Dr. Wright think it would not be a success. Dr. Haviland thinks it would be a qualified success only. Mr. Merewether reports against it on the ground of want of material. In future, we shall have to get our own supply of Assistant Surgeons as we do now, but we shall probably have to offer better terms, perhaps give a little more money to start with and lessen the term of 15 years' service.

It must be borne in mind that although we can get a local staff of lecturers, we have not the equipment that they have in Madras. The Madras University is a very old one, and is the best in India. They turn out better Apothecaries there than in any of the other Presidencies or Ceylon. It would cost a tremendous lot of money to start a Medical School here. It would be necessary to provide laboratories, dissecting rooms, lecture rooms, etc. I should very much like to see a School here, but I do not think it is feasible at present.