CONCLUSION

Tamilnadu, prior to 1956 was designated as Madras Presidency. Madras presidency was under the administration of the Britishers. Britishers tried to bring in transition in all the spheres such as political, economical, administrative levels, social, religious and medical sides.

Tamilnadu has been a tradition bound society. So, the people of Tamilnadu would not adhere themselves easily to any change in the existing system. They lived in closed quarters and any change in the prevailing position was looked upon with suspicion. People of the early centuries in Tamilnadu were carried away by superstitious beliefs. Reasoning capacity was practically absent. Naturally they resorted to accept anything and everything associated with the power of nature. This was no exception even in their attitude to health conditions. When any one was affected with any disease immediately they thought the disease was due to the wrath of demons.

They had the strong conviction that the demons should be appeased, only then the disease could be cured. So, they offered goats and fouls in cut forms and they believed that the
demons could only be appeased. In addition to this there were local medical practitioners known as “Vaithyars”. These local practitioners had very limited knowledge about the causes and effects of diseases. However they practised medical treatment with the help of shrubs and herbs which were known to them. In most of the cases deaths were common.

Another important feature which prevailed in the rural areas of Tamilnadu was the total absence of sanitation and public health. Open space and river sides were used as lavations. Even today in tours people who live in huts use railway lines and the nearby places as latrines.

Even air and environmental pollution cause diseases. Drainage water becomes stagnant due to obstacles in the drainage system which is responsible for the breeding of mosquitoes. Many diseases are caused by the mosquitoes. In addition to the existing mosquito bite diseases like Malaria, elephantiasis new diseases like dangerous Chickenquinea and viral fever have been cropped up due to mosquito bite.

Tamilnadu is a land of temples. During festival seasons devotees throng in large numbers. Their sanitary conditions become so dirty that the entire area becomes polluted and cause many diseases.
In addition to the animal sacrifice before the demons to appease the concerned disease they consulted the local medical practitioners who were known as “Siddha” and “Ayurvedic Vaithyars”. They used local herbs as medicines and prepared medicines from the local herbs.

Siddha medicines have been practised in India as well as in Tamilnadu from time immemorial. This type of medicine deals with the physical ill health as well as mental wake up. This Siddha medicine attributes that a person can be treated from diseases only when his physique as well as mind is free. This medicine promulgates that only when the mind has a peaceful approach it would enhance physical fitness as well. Siddha medicines were prepared by the “Siddhars” thousands of years ago after undergoing various research work on flora and fauna. The medicines were enriched with prayers which not only cures the diseases but also provides peace and tranquillity to the mind. But, the Siddha medicines which are available today are very few as many of them are still hidden either in the hands of traditional families or unknown to the present Siddha generation.

The Siddha system of medicines is capable of treating all types of chronic diseases. Siddha system advocates healthy food habits to prevent diseases. Realising the importance of
the Siddha treatment, the Government of Tamilnadu has started many hospitals and Institutes associated with Siddha medicines through out Tamilnadu.

Ayurvedic system is another way of treatment which had its origin in ancient period in North India. Ayurveda denotes “a life saving medicines based on vedic sastras”. From the very early period the Ayurvedic system of medicines existed in Tamilnadu. When the Britishers came to India the Ayurvedic system of medicines were suppressed. But some British doctors practised the Ayurvedic system of medicine and found that Ayurvedic medical treatment yielded good results. But there was no encouragement from the government. Hence the growth of Ayurvedic medicines was stunted. But as days passed by the Government of Tamilnadu came to realise the importance of Ayurvedic medicine and many Ayurvedic colleges were started through out Tamilnadu.

Just like Siddha and Ayurvedic systems of medicines, Homeopathy system of medicine also developed in Tamilnadu. Homeopathic system of medicine had its origin in Germany. It was introduced in India in 1839. This Homeopathic system of treatment is economical and has no side effect. The Government of India also gave its consent for the Homeopathic treatment in India in 1973 by passing the Act “Homeopathy Central Council Act”.

257
The Homeopathic treatment is highly useful without any side effect. Though the treatment is a prolonged one yet definite cure is assured. Knowing the importance of Ayurvedic system of medicines many people in Tamilnadu now switch over to Ayurvedic treatment. The Government having realised its curing capacity has started Ayurvedic Colleges throughout Tamilnadu.

The ‘Unani’ system of medicine is yet another indigenous medicine which developed in Tamilnadu. Since the arrival of the Arabs, this type of medicine was practised first by the Greeks and was developed by the Arabs. When Arabs came to India during the later part of the 10th century this medicine also came to be used in India. The World Health Organization has also recognized the Unani System of Medicine. But due to lack of availability of hospitals and eminent doctors in this field this system does not have patronage of the people.

Though Siddha, Ayurvedic, Homeopathy and Unani Systems of medicines were known to the people of Tamilnadu, they had no idea about the Allopathic medicine till 17th century. Their full hope was that if they offered flowers and animal sacrifices to the local deities they could be cured of their diseases. They were not prepared to accept the treatment of
the westerners because they believed that if a westerners treated the Indians or Tamilans, the local deities would get angry and their disease would not be cured instead it would become fatal. But the missionaries who came along with the British traders to India gradually administered Western Medicine. The people were relieved of their diseases because of the application of Western medicines. The British government established the ‘Sanitary Department’ in Madras in 1864. This heralded the beginning of Allopathic medical treatment in Tamilnadu. In 1951 a separate “Ministry of Health” was formed in Tamilnadu. Mental disease treatments were also initiated in Tamilnadu. Five year plan periods are a boon to the development of advanced Allopathic treatment. The first and second five year plans also laid much emphases on the eradication of communicative diseases. Between 1961 and 1966 there was a great realisation about the safeguarding of the lives of the infants and children. This realisation led to the starting of many primary health centres throughout Tamilnadu.

Side by side with the starting of primary Health Centres, Mobile Health Services were also started so as to encourage medical facilities to rural areas also. Simultaneously indigenous medicines like Ayurvedic, Siddha and Homeopathic treatment were also encouraged. Though these encouragements
and developments were carried out by the Government both in the Allopathic and Indigenous medicines environmental pollution is another challenge to the health conditions of the people. Air pollution, area pollution, noise pollution and river water pollution are imminent nightmares to be tacked by the Government. To tack be pollutions the Government constituted the Environmental Hygiene Committees. The committee submitted its report in September 1950. Accordingly measures were undertaken to eradicate pollutions. But the challenge still continues. The Government and private managements have begun medical college through out the State. The prominent medical Colleges in Tamilnadu are the K.A.P. Viswanathan Medical College at Trichinopoly, Government Mohan Kumaramangalam Medical College at Salem, Thoothukudi Medical College at Thoothukudi, Kanyakumari Government Medical College at Azaripallam, Chengulpat Medical College at Chengelpat, Madras Medical College at Chennai, Coimbatore Medical College at Coimbatore, Stanley Medical College at Chennai, Vellore Medical College at Vellore and Keezhpauk Medical College at Chennai.

Likewise many private medical colleges have also been started. The prominent private and medical colleges are Meenakshi Medical College at Kancheepuram, Kirupananth
Variyar Medical College at Salem, Raja Muthaiah Medical College at Annamalainagar, IRT Perundurai Medical College at Erode, Sree Balaji Medical College at Chennai, Sri Ramachandra Medical College at Chennai and Christian Medical College at Vellore.

The awakening among the people has been responsible for the progress in the enhancement of medical colleges throughout Tamilnadu. Most of the modern techniques are being used in solving many of the problems associated with the medical field. The Ayurvedic, Homeopathic and Siddha medical fields also have been highly developed and side by side with Allopathic Medicines, Indigenous Medicines have been given encouragement and the people of Tamilnadu have been highly benefited by both the Indigenous and Allopathic Medicines. The period from 1956 till 1986 has witnessed enormous growth in the medical field. Many researchers have devoted their lives for the invention of new medicines for chronic diseases. Though in medical field both Indigenous and Allopathic have considerable growth yet certain diseases like cancer and Asthma are yet a great challenge to the medical field. Though continuous researches are going on to cure cancer and Asthma yet complete cure for these diseases have not yet been found out.
In addition to the nightmare caused by such chronic diseases the people of Tamilnadu are also not fully aware of pollutions. Pollutions cause contagious diseases. As the proverb goes that ‘Prevention is better than cure’, we also should keep the environment free from pollution. That is the only way to prevent the spread of epidemics and contagious diseases.

In Dindigul and North Arcot Districts immense tanneries are functioning. The gas produced out of the tanneries cause respiratory problems. Like wise slums in Tamilnadu is yet another problem. In slums people are not having any sanitary facility and the stagnant drainage water causes the spread of mosquito bite diseases. Still in such areas drinking water mixes with sewage water due to the carelessness of the municipality and corporations in maintaining the pipelines properly.

Drinking water is yet another problem. Proper drinking water is not available in many places in Tamilnadu especially in rural areas. People have no other way but to use the contaminated water from the rivers and ponds which causes the spread of many water born diseases.

The government has also taken steps to spell out these problems. To solve such problems the government set up the environment hygiene committee in 1950. In 1954 the Madras
Slum Improvement Act was passed and Slum Clearance Board was also constituted. In 1940 the Government allotted one crore for rural water supply scheme. Madras Public Health Act was passed in 1939 to ensure safety to the public.

Still there is an indispensable necessity on the part of the society to have a common understanding that the environment should be kept clean. In Tamilnadu in rural areas people use open spaces as lavatories which cause many contagious diseases and the surrounding areas of living centres are not kept clean. Dumping of waste materials have become common which also causes air pollution.

From time immemorial Ayurvedic, Siddha, Homeopathy and Unani medicines have been in use. When scientific knowledge was conspicuously absent people had no other way but to go in for these indigenous medicines. These indigenous medicines also were of much use to the people of those times. The use of allopathic medicine has replaced the use of indigenous medicines.

But recent development is the Government has been encouraging both allopathic and indigenous medicines, because of that both allopathic and Ayurvedic colleges have been started throughout Tamilnadu to put an end to diseases. Remedy for
most of the diseases have been found out. Still certain diseases like Cancer and Asthma are great challenges to the medical field. Though the Government has been taking preventing measures in the form of constructing medical colleges yet the people should also co-operate with the government in this field. The people of Tamilnadu should take earnest steps to co-operate with the government in the eradication of diseases.

Pollution in all forms should be put an end to and areas should be kept clean. Stagnant water should be cleaned. Co-operation of the people in the field of environmental clearance along with the Government will be a great boon in the eradication all diseases.