

A WHOLE AND HOLY APPROACH

In addressing the British Medical Association in its 150th year in 1983, Prince Charles said, "I admire their dedication (the medical profession) and their human concern. Because I think it is only too easy to take them for granted in a world which has become bemused by scientific events, and because I think the members of the medical profession themselves should be reminded occasionally that the words 'healing' and 'holy' come from the same original idea of making whole.

"Medicine today tends to be more and more chemistry and less and less healing in the classical sense. I do not for one moment wish to decry the chemistry because we owe it too much. But I do not want to do it the dis-service of pretending that it is the whole answer to the voice of a physician's calling. It can never deal with the sickness of the spiritual proliferation with horrific swiftness all around us.

"What is the modern physicians response to the stricken spirit who comes to him with his sick soul disguised as an ailment of the body? Does he allow the faith in him to reawaken the faith in the patient, to join his chemistry for the total recovery of body and spirit?

"At the height of the civilization, Greek medicine reached a level of insight which was not to be achieved again until Paracelsus. They gave the highest priority to personal and emotional factors in therapy. Paracelsus himself wrote that, 'the whole world is an apothecary shop and God, the apothecary-in-chief'.

"It seems to me that the lack of psychological insight into the unconscious being of man is possibly one of the saddest neglects of modern medicine."