

The Walking Stick of a Physician as a Multifunctional Instrument

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All throughout the human history, several accessories have been used by man, that aid in his walking, since he began walking upright and one of such accessory is the walking stick. It not only facilitated the human development by assisting speeding up their locomotion, but also got modified by them with the advancement of their civilization. With later modifications, its purposes differ from just a walking aid to a weapon as well as a medical apparatus. Though a number of scientific works found on Ayurveda and Sinhala Vedakama, still there has been no study carried out on the professional walking stick. Thus, this paper attempts to discuss the transformation of a professional walking stick into a highly sophisticated multipurpose medical apparatus, under Ayurveda and Sinhala Vedakama. To collect data, Vruddhatraya has been referred to, while conducting interviews with local Vaidya. Both Charaka and Sushruta recommended the professional use of a walking stick by a Vaidya as a part of a uniform. Apart from that, Sinhala Vaidya had radically transformed this professional walking stick into a medical apparatus, that contained the most important drugs used in day today medical practice, carrying along with his travels. It was invented with a precise knowledge of Ayurveda Bhaishajya Kalpana as it holds the drugs in an air tight manner. Further, raw materials were selected to craft this new medical apparatus with an intention to reveal the position held by a particular Vaidya in the society. Based on the above facts, it can be concluded that Sinhala Vaidya were able to transform a simple walking stick into a highly sophisticated multipurpose medical apparatus that signifies their ingenuity.

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