

for the Chinese physician in all ages. It is marvellous with what eyes a Chinese doctor can look into his patient through the pulse; he can not only tell the disease, the exact seat, but even decide the age and sex of the undeveloped foetus. Western physicians are often placed at a discount among the Chinese on account of their supposed ignorance in not being able to diagnose a case from merely feeling the pulse of a patient, sometimes they are not even allowed to see the sufferer, a hand merely being thrust out between curtains, and often the most misleading answers are given to simple questions, the more certain to test the skill or puzzle the ingenuity of the doctor. The Chinese physician sublimely soars above all such difficulties, and finds in the realms of imagination easy solutions, which, if they do not lead him to cure the patient, shamefully imposes on the innocent and unsuspecting. The Chinese have accomplished this blissful and wonderful state by the invention of the theory of the Yin and Yang, which in their speculations are two principles or powers in nature, the male and female, ever active in producing the physical, chemical and vital phenomena which occur within and around us. Not only are all the obscure phenomena of inorganic change accounted for by the action and reaction of those powers, but the occult powers of living bodies in all the complicated action of their organs in health and disease are explained by calling in the aid of these imaginary principles. When these are equalized there is health; when the male principle is in the ascendant there is disease, and it is of an inflammatory type. If the female principle predominates the disease is of a low or typhoid character. The reaction of these principles make up an amount of absurdity truly wonderful, but venerable for its antiquity. Most of the medicines in use among the Chinese are absolutely inert, and to some of which such virtues are attached as to be sold for many times their weight in silver. The native Gensing, though entirely rejected in western medicine, is very highly prized amongst the Chinese, so much so that it enters as an essential ingredient into numerous native preparations. The high value attached to it, is because its roots bear a real or fanciful resemblance to the form of the human body. The same fanciful relations guide them in the application of all medicines to the cure of disease, for medicines are never applied by them according to their known therapeutical properties, but according to some

supposed relationship between the organs of the body on the one hand, and the elements, earth, wood, metal, water and fire, on the other. Thus they fancy that the liver is related to the element wood, and as metal has control over wood, medicines related to the element metal are those which for this reason are applicable to the cure of diseases of the liver; so with regard to all their medicines and all the organs of the body. A round of imaginary relationships is established, the actual virtues of the medicines are overlooked, active and inert substances are employed with the same confidence, thus exhibiting an amount of ignorance and absurdity in dealing with the lives and health of men which is absolutely inconceivable.

But one of the most melancholy chapters of Chinese medicine is the superstitious and idolatrous practices connected with guarding the sick from the destructive spirit of disease. This is accomplished by various incantations, and by the exhibition on the bed and walls of the room, of hideous pictures to frighten away the genii of evil. Sometimes the patient's face is painted in the most grotesque manner, in fantastic shapes and colors, giving the whole scene, were not the life or health of the patient at stake, a most ludicrous aspect.

The choice of a physician is also decided by lot and not from any well-known skill or ability of the doctor, or if the patient or friends decided upon a certain practitioner, they endeavor to find evidence that their selection has been fortunate. The Chinese are, however, in all these matters thoroughly practical. The physician undertakes to cure for so much and within a certain time, and should the first dose of the medicine not produce the desired effect, the oracle is again consulted and another physician is again called in. The moment, however, a Chinese doctor perceives that the patient is sinking he at once abandons the case, leaving the poor sufferer to linger without aid, or do anything to smooth the way of the last and closing scene. This moment is the opportunity of Western Physicians, often, however, too late to be of any use to the sufferer. The Chinese have a thorough contempt for their doctors unless they are certain he is doing them good, or he succeeds in gaining their implicit confidence by bold and reckless assertion. His nostrums are invariably looked upon with suspicion, for even in the much vaunted Tung Wah Hospital of Hong Kong,