

A Story of Life-Saving.

THE new Chentu Hospital, built after the riots, was opened March 29th, 1897, and has consequently at date of writing, June, 1898, been in operation nearly fifteen months. With the exception of one month, after the heat of July and August last year, the medical work has gone on steadily during this time. Readers of last year's report will recollect that we have accommodation for twenty-seven in-patients. Statistics are available for fourteen months, viz :

Number of new patients seen in dispensary	2,848
Return visits of patients to dispensary . . .	7,760
Visits to patients in their homes	78
Total number of attendances given . . .	10,686
Number of patients received into wards . .	126
Number of operations under chloroform and cocaine, about	125
Number of minor operations, usually in dispensary, about	250

The figures given with the last two lines are only estimates. My record for the first half-year was stolen, and I have not kept any since. The other figures are accurate for the whole time, fourteen months.

Of the 2,848 new patients seen, 206 came from 47 different districts or counties out of the 112 counties of this province ; five came from two other provinces, and the remainder from this city of Chentu. About one-fourth, or perhaps not more than one-fifth, of the total number treated were women. Women patients come freely and are seen on the same days as the men. Out-patients are seen three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday ; fee, 20 cash (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents Canadian money), to all comers, but paid at time of first visit only. Each patient's name, age and residence are registered at the gate, and a blank prescription paper given him, together with a numbered bamboo slip. He is also presented with a Christian tract or book. They all sit in the waiting-room, waiting the hour of opening—one o'clock or half-past one. Half an hour ahead of time some one comes to preach to them, a Christian native or one of ourselves. At the hour of opening the patients are called into the consultation room in groups of from seven to ten, always keeping in order according to their numbered slips. They are ranged on benches round the walls, and from these benches called one by one to be examined and prescribed for. After receiving medicine, or perhaps having had their ulcers or abscesses dressed, they pass out by a separate way, so as not to crowd the incomers. Out-patients during these fourteen months have ranged all the way from 50 to 150 each dispensary day, while there are always a few coming for treatment on the days between. The great majority are poor people, and never pay more than that first fee of one and a half cents, even for several months of treatment. But we always have a sprinkling of well-to-do, or even the wealthy and official classes. When these latter come out of hours on dispensary days, or on other than dispensary days, we ask and receive a fee of 300 cash (about twenty cents Canadian money). And from these people who are well able to pay we always reserve the right to swell the income of the hospital by reasonable fees for our services. These fees range all the way from seven cents for one month's treatment to a sum equivalent to about \$6.50 Canadian money. This was paid for a severe operation under chloroform. I think this is the highest fee yet paid into the hospital, yet

we have done more critical operations for poor patients, who not only do not pay any fees, but many of whom do not pay more than a portion of the cost of their board.

BEDS ALL FULL.

In-patients began with one, fourteen months ago, and have slowly but steadily increased in number until, for about two months back, all the twenty-seven beds have been full, a new patient coming in as soon as a bed was empty into which he could come. Of in-patients taken into the wards in fourteen months, about twenty per cent. paid absolutely nothing ; fifty per cent. paid in part, often a very small part, and thirty per cent. paid in full for their board. Our aim in this matter is to make the hospital practically free to the great mass of poor people who come, but at the same time not to pauperize rich patients. The poor patient pays nothing and is grateful ; but, in my experience, the man who is able to pay and does not pay is much less grateful for what is done for him, than if he had paid at least a small fee for his treatment. We want rich and poor alike to be grateful, because the man with gratitude in his heart for kindness done is more ready to listen to the message of the Word of Life which we teach.

HOSPITALS WILL BE SELF-SUPPORTING.

Then there is the other side of the matter to be considered, that of self-support. Nearly one-third of the total cost of the hospital for these fourteen months has been defrayed by the money received from patients. And taking the last six months apart, the income from patients has paid fully half the total expenses in the same time. The legitimate inference is that a hospital located in a great wealthy city like Chentu will be made in the course of a few years more to pay its own way entirely. This is as it should be, and when that time comes I believe our hospital, as a power indirectly in breaking down prejudice and winning the good-will of the people, and directly in spreading a knowledge of God's Word, will have increased in value many fold. And not a small portion of the increase will be due to the fact that the Chinese take enough interest in it to support it themselves.

GOD HONORS THE WORK.

To what results can we point after all the work done and money expended during the past year ? The greatly improved feeling on the part of the people towards us must be in part credited to the hospital. We are known, and favorably known, in more homes in this city and surrounding country this year than ever before. The seeds of the Gospel have been industriously sown by both printed page and preached word, in ground often very specially prepared by deeds of kindness previously done. The out-patients hear the Gospel every dispensary day. The in-patients hear it daily, and are provided with books for constant reading. A conspicuous sign-board gives the date of the ensuing Sunday, and cordially invites everybody to attend the regular Sunday services. Many respond, and scarcely a Sunday passes that I do not recognize a number of my patients in the church. As a direct agency in preaching the Word, and both directly and indirectly feeding the Church, we have every reason to praise God for the hospital.

Besides the medical work, I have been much blessed in helping Mr. Hartwell, by taking the alternate Sunday preaching service and the Wednesday night prayer-meeting