

this direction are often thwarted, or totally obstructed, by the most ignorant and unwarrantable interference with her functions, the simplest appliance in the department of surgery being quite unknown. The Chinese, however, are beginning to appreciate the skill of Western surgeons, as they come from all parts of the country to the many hospitals which have been established by missionaries and by the enterprise of the physicians attached to the European department of the Chinese Customs service. It is one of the hopeful signs of China to see the readiness with which they consult foreign surgeons, and to note the wonder at the result, and the respect inspired by their skill and attention. No one would ever forget the look of alarm and abject fear with which a Chinaman surveys the approach of a knife to an abscess, and how that look changes into one of unbounded pleasure and implicit trust, as the matter wells out of the opening. These labors are doing much and will yet do more to break down the barriers of prejudice and seclusion which have been reared by centuries.

That surgery was practiced amongst them at a remote period admits of no manner of doubt, as many allusions are made to the art, in some of their old books, and according to M. Stanislaus Julien it appears as far back as the third century of our era, the Chinese were in possession of an anæsthetic agent, which they employed in the same manner as we use chloroform and ether for producing insensibility during operations. M. Julien discovered a description of this in a work called "Kow-King-i-tong." In a biographical notice of Hoa-tho, who flourished under the dynasty of Wei, between the years 220 and 230 of our era. It is stated that he gave the sick a preparation of Ma-yo, who in a few minutes became as insensible as one plunged in drunkenness or deprived of life. He then made incisions, etc. After a number of days the patient found himself restored, without having experienced during the operation the slightest pain. It appears from the biography of Hoa that this Ma-yo was prepared by boiling and distillation. This, like the art of which it was the handmaid, is entirely lost, and Chinamen wondered as much as foreigners to find that in the forgotten past they possessed what is now prized by surgeons as the greatest triumphs of chemical skill, and by many a suffering patient as the greatest blessing of the healing art. At the corners of the streets in any Chinese city may be

witnessed the native dentist extracting teeth by what is said to be a painless method. The patient is made to sit down, a white powder ( $\text{Hg Cl}_2$ ) is rubbed on the gum, the patient is then directed to wait a little; after a few minutes the process is repeated, and the dentist then introducing his thumb and fore-finger, with apparently very little violence the tooth is pulled out. I have never been able to trace whether any deleterious effects were produced by the action of the mercury on the jaw, or to learn what was its specific action on the gum, further than to notice that after the first rubbing it assumed a blanched appearance. The patients all winced under the operation, but it seemed harmless compared with the anguish-inflicting forceps or key.

The Chinese physician largely practices counter irritation. A favorite method which is commonly adopted in rheumatism and inflammatory pains is for the doctor to close his fist firmly, and using the index and middle fingers as forceps, to seize the skin over the part, draw it forcibly outwards, letting it free with a snap into its place. It is quite common to see coolies, that is the working classes (whose bodies are usually uncovered), with long, dark, bruised lines on their persons caused by this barbarous system of torture. A more painful though not so common method is the application of moxa, often causing large and gangrenous wounds by the application of fire near important and sensitive organs. But the favorite application to all parts is an adhesive plaster. It is a matter of sublime indifference to a Chinese practitioner whether the patient is suffering from an abscess or a wound, an abrasion, or merely a numbness from cold, the same plaster is applied, It matters not whether the wound be recent or of long standing, or whether it be clean or foul with corruption, the same disgusting materials are applied. If in spite of such treatment a cure is effected the praise of the remedy is vaunted abroad, but if, and what is usually the case, bad becomes worse, they assume that some evil influence has been at work to counteract the efficacy of the drug.

The fact that the blood circulated through the body seems to have been known to the Chinese in ancient times. But no true notion of arteries and veins as distributing and returning the blood has ever been developed. They supposed that both air and blood permeated the body in tubes, which have only an imaginary existence.

The study of the pulse has been a favorite one