

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

REPORT OF THE MACKAY MISSION HOSPITAL, TAMSUI, FORMOSA.

In again submitting the annual report of the "Mackay Hospital" we beg to thank our subscribers for the continued support accorded to this useful institution. The following figures will show that more than an average year's work has been done, and that the institution has lost none of its popularity: New patients (outdoor and indoor), 3,280; return visits of patients for medicines, etc., 7,685.

The past year was on the whole a very unhealthy one, the summer temperature was unusually high, fever was exceptionally prevalent, while later on diarrhoea and cholera prevailed amongst the natives. No cases of cholera were brought to the hospital, circumstance explained by the rapid course of the disease allowing no time for removal, and by the fact that but few cases occurred in our immediate neighbourhood. Towards the end of August a number of wounded soldiers arrived from the East coast of the island where they had been engaged in fighting with the aborigines. A few of the more urgent cases were accommodated in our indoor quarters, which at this season were rather crowded. The odour from wounds undressed for seven days was at first rather overpowering and somewhat trying to fellow patients gifted with over fastidious olfactory organs, but things went along smoothly and good order prevailed. However striking to a stranger the contrast may appear between the nice clean wards of a Western hospital and the interior of a Chinese native hospital, still when one considers that in the latter no nurses are employed beyond the relatives or friends of patients, all of whom have to prepare and cook their own food, the order and comparative cleanliness are to be commended. The careful nursing, good food and the many other comforts are lacking; beyond advice and medicine nothing is supplied except of course in really necessitous cases; each patient is expected to provide his own fire, light and food, which latter is often but scanty fare. And in our opinion the rule that each patient as far as possible maintain himself in hospital is good, both on the score of economy in hospital management, and from the spirit of independence it fosters in the recipient of the charity. Hospitals at home are but too frequently abused by persons whose means ought to place them above the receipt of such benefits, a fact that (of late years when funds have run usually low) has been painfully brought home to the managers of such institutions. Here, although the pressure in the household may fall heavily when the head of the family is laid aside by sickness and has to be maintained on his slender savings, there are always as many deserving applicants as can be accommodated.

The Rev. Dr. Mackay appends a highly instructive account of native therapeutics in these parts, a subject on which, from his intimate acquaintance with the ways of the people he is peculiarly qualified to speak. The wheels of progress roll slowly in China; although a more enlightened era is slowly opening, the dark age of medicine may still be said to reign just as in our country less than a century ago, when equally loathsome remedies were highly esteemed, and confiding victims were starved, salivated and bled within an inch of their lives; before the application of the many inventions of modern science which have contributed so largely to rob surgery of its terrors alike to operator and patient.

NATIVE DOCTORS IN NORTH FORMOSA.

If we take any part in the healing of diseases we cannot afford, in dealing with Chinese patients, to remain in ignorance of the healing art as it is practised around and about us, any more than we can afford to be in ignorance of the superstitions of the people whilst preaching the Gospel to them. The following is only a part of the result of years of observation and experience among sufferers in a trying climate, who seek relief in all ways known to them.

Entering the profession.—Here in North Formosa natives become doctors in various ways. A man may learn by working, or being associated, with an older practitioner, who may be a friend or perhaps simply an acquaintance. Sometimes one purchases books on medicine, studies them, may copy parts of them, and in this manner learns enough about the subject to begin practice. A

man on account of being a sufferer himself and continually taking medicine, in time acquires considerable acquaintance with ailments and their remedies, so he in turn undertakes to prescribe for them. In some cases one being in a medicine shop, it may be as master or merely as clerk, on account of daily reading and filling out prescriptions sent by other doctors, in time obtains a certain amount of knowledge, and may eventually start as a practitioner. Sometimes an individual purchases the recipes of others—perhaps at a pretty high price—copies them, and thus prepares to set up as a healer of diseases. Here with regard to native practitioners there are no examinations, and no degrees are conferred; but the force of custom makes it so in this as in many other things, that if a man does not know more or less about the business from the standpoint of native faculty, he very soon has to close his door and clear out.

Charges and social position.—For one call from a doctor, one hundred cash—equal to about 10 cents—at least will be expected. Where regular attendance is given, the charges range from \$1 (Mexican) up to \$20, \$40 and \$50. As a general rule the native doctor occupies a high place in the estimation of the people. The travelling professional, however, who combines sleight of hand work with the sale of plasters and other nostrums, does not enjoy the same confidence and respect. By the native doctors diseases are divided into internal and external, and it is but rarely that one man makes it his business to attend to both complaints. Those who devote their attention to internal diseases hold the highest place in the estimation of the masses.

Diagnosis.—This is made by feeling the pulse. In order to do so the doctor seats himself opposite his patient, who, whether male or female, while the pulse is being examined, places the hand on any piece of cloth laid on the table. If a male patient, the doctor using his own right hand first feels the pulse of the patient's left hand, then that of his right. But if the patient be a female, the doctor uses his own left hand and first takes her right hand, then her left. He places his thumb on the prominent part of the wrist bone, and the first three fingers of the hand, beginning with the index finger, all on that spot in the wrist where the pulse is felt. There are five words used by which different states of the pulse are distinguished. The first of these means that the pulse is high and full, or strong; the second, that it is low or deep, and slow; the third, that it is deeper and lower still, and having very slight motion; the fourth, that it feels as if empty; and the fifth, that all motion is gone, and nothing at all can be felt.

Diseases.—The heart and liver are supposed to cause these above-mentioned five different states of the pulse. It is believed the heart has seven openings, and that wind and an evil principle there enter it and produce these various conditions. There are different diseases according to the four seasons of the year. Those of spring are supposed to be caused by the liver, of summer, by the heart; those of autumn arise from the lungs, and of winter from the kidneys, etc. The most common complaints for the four seasons are as follow. Spring.—Headache, chills and fever, raging fever, great thirst, etc. Summer.—Chills and fever, pains in the stomach, extremities numb, great internal heat, cough, diarrhoea, great thirst, etc. Autumn.—Cholera, stomach-ache, chills and fever, inflamed eyes, water brash, cough, etc. Winter.—Cold, followed by coughs, giddiness, chills, aching bones, enlarged spleen, indigestion, constipation, etc.

Prescriptions.—The native doctor invariably writes out his prescription. It is then taken to the drug shop, and when the shopkeeper begins to fill it out he lays it on the counter, and lays a flat piece of stone or metal in such a position as to let the eye catch the name of the first article of medicine to be supplied. When this has been carefully weighed and laid on a paper, he moves the stone or metal down so as to show the second, and so on to the end. Each one being in this way prepared according to the prescription; be there one, two or many articles, all are wrapped together in one paper along with the prescription, which is always thus returned to the customer, and the name or names of the articles marked on the outside of the package. It must also be said to the credit of the native druggists that they are always careful not to sell poisonous plants or

minerals to unknown persons. Very common substances used as drugs have names in the medical vocabulary which are unknown to the masses; for instance, sparrows' dung is called "white cloves." Minerals, rocks, shells, etc., as a rule are ground into powder, and then roasted in a pan for use. Vegetables, roots, flowers, barks, seeds, etc., are used as infusions.

Mackay Hospital, Tamsui, has again during the year 1888, as in the past, done its noble part to alleviate human suffering, and uphold true principles of medical science. Dr. Alexander Rennie has had a year of exceptionally hard work, and he has laboured with devotion and success. At one time during the great heat of the summer, with very many wounded Chinese soldiers in the building and the hospital keeper ill, in the midst of intolerable stench, he carefully operated upon, and cheerfully attended to the sufferers with all the characteristics of a true physician and surgeon. This report shows the largest number of patients treated in the hospital in any year since its establishment.

It is with gratitude also I record the interest always taken in the medical work here by the foreign residents. On more than one occasion I have seen merchants and others of our community, as well as captains, officers of steamers, etc., in the hospital during Dr. Rennie's dispensing hours, who showed their pity for sufferers and appreciation of all that was being done to relieve them.

There is work here that must be done in the hospital or else not at all, such as serious cases to be treated, surgical operations, etc., and from all corners of our field preachers and converts never cease exhorting sick and suffering to go there. At the same time there is work to be done in the country which the hospital cannot possibly overtake. Preachers have borne their part in doing that work during the past year. Foreign medicines are superior to native, and however much preachers may be regarded as knowing, having been drilled in anatomy, etc., and being acquainted with the "materia medica" of all the medicines put into their hands, they most assuredly know more about the human system, its maladies and their remedies than the native practitioners. How could men, women and children (women with bound feet) four and five days' journey away, who are often suddenly prostrated by fever, Asiatic cholera, etc., possibly make their way to the hospital during months of heavy rain or burning sun? It is under such circumstances that the preacher at a chapel, there and then on the spot, is able to give relief, thus remove prejudice, and make the people more willing to hear and then accept the Gospel. The truth is, the preachers at the fifty stations may be regarded as doing the work of fifty men in as many hospitals on a smaller scale.

During the past year many sufferers, after spending sums more or less large on their native doctors without avail, have been relieved by preachers, and have shown their gratitude in more ways than one. I do not hesitate to say that some of the preachers have rendered really valuable service, very especially the native pastor at Sin-tiam, whose successful practice has been the means of bringing many not only to hear the Gospel, but to embrace it.

For myself, referring to the past I might speak of travelling years, building years, this last year—1888—I made very especially a teaching year, in which I spent months here at Tamsui drilling students and preachers. Still I have been over the entire field, extracting teeth and dispensing medicine as usual. Including all the preachers, we have dispensed during the year to 8,683 patients, about 1,000 of whom were seen by the preachers at Sin-tiam. By such means prejudices have been removed, suffering ones benefitted, and the mission brought to be more highly respected by all ranks and classes, both of people and officials. Thus, however, many interruptions, difficulties and drawbacks there may be, native ignorance, imposition and conceit will most assuredly be overthrown and replaced by Western medical science. And just as assuredly will the combined superstitions of Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism be overthrown and replaced by Christianity—the comfort of the heaven-seeking soul, the guide of the earth-wandering pilgrim, and the bulwark of the great nations of the earth.—George Leslie Mackay.

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India Missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for debility and all nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive, and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge, to any who desire it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper. W. A. NOYES, 139 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.

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