

SCIENCE

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THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE AT THE PEKING UNION MEDICAL COLLEGE

THE introduction of western medicine into China has been due, thus far, largely to the therapeutic success of surgery and the various surgical specialties. Internal medicine has lagged a long distance behind surgery both in the attention which it has received in the mission hospitals and in the extent to which it has influenced the Chinese people. One frequently hears it said that the Chinese "like western surgery, but they do not care for western medicine," and a corollary is that for "internal disease" they prefer to rely on the native system of practice. The fact is, however, that our western internal medicine has not yet been given a fair chance to demonstrate its worth. Practitioners of western medicine in China—for the most part, of course, missionaries—have found themselves confronted by an enormous number of surgical problems, many of them presenting direct emergencies, and it is natural that these cases should have received the first attention. Traumatic injuries, infections and large superficial tumors can often be easily and quickly alleviated, and their cure produces a profound impression on the patient and on his friends, but the diagnosis and treatment of strictly medical diseases is much more time consuming and the results are usually far less obvious and striking. With the days so full of pressing surgical problems and with the frequent lack of the facilities for modern medical diagnosis, it is not surprising that, with few exceptions, the medical patients have received somewhat scant attention. Even among the lower classes the Chinese often manifest great power of discrimination and an appreciation of careful, thorough attention, and if western internal medicine is to make its way with them it must be presented in the best possible manner.

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