

SCIENCE

VOL. LIX

APRIL 18, 1924

No. 1529

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SCIENCE: A Weekly Journal devoted to the Advancement of Science, edited by J. McKeen Cattell and published every Friday by

THE SCIENCE PRESS

Lancaster, Pa. Garrison, N. Y.
New York City: Grand Central Terminal.
Annual Subscription, \$6.00. Single Copies, 15 Cts.

SCIENCE is the official organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Information regarding membership in the association may be secured from the office of the permanent secretary, in the Smithsonian Institution Building, Washington, D. C.

Entered as second-class matter July 18, 1923, at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHINA TO THE SCIENCE AND ART OF MEDICINE¹

I. INTRODUCTION

FOR one who, from his medical infancy upwards, has been nourished on the teachings of Keen; who has paid homage to the personality and life of Weir Mitchell; who has seen Hobart Hare's writings translated into Oriental languages and has used them as text-books in his own classes; who has seen Chinese students become as devoted as those of Philadelphia to the radiating thought of Da Costa and others in the Jefferson faculty; for such a person to stand in the presence of a Jefferson audience and speak of a distant land might seem beside the mark, were it not that I rejoice to-day in this opportunity—especially since I have now become a son of Jefferson—to add my tribute of regard and gratitude to the teaching and life of the men on the great roll of honor of this college and to the wisdom and foresight of its trustees.

We are here to consider for a few minutes the essential unity, in development and maturity, of the medicine of the eastern and the western world. We do well to admit our indebtedness to a land that till recently had seemed an *ultima Thule* to many of us.

II. THE MEDICAL ANCESTRY OF OUR PRESENT CIVILIZATION

Will you travel with me to Peking, and make your way to the Forbidden City? There, in a temple within the precincts of the "Great Medical Court," we shall find gilded statues of three emperors, honored by all Chinese as the founders of their national system of medicine.

The two at our right are Shen Nung and Huang Ti. Even the simple-minded peasant knows that "Shen Nung sampled a hundred herbs." From the time he came to the throne (about B. C. 2737), we are told that he spent a portion of each day in tasting botanical specimens. No wonder he is acclaimed as "Father of Medicine"!

Next to Shen Nung is the seated figure of Huang Ti, who began to reign in B. C. 2696. How little he realized that the "Canon of Internal Medicine," which is attributed to him, would become the final medical authority for China's four hundred millions for four thousand years.

¹ Commencement address at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, June 1, 1923.

Science

59 (1529)

Science **59** (1529), x-364.

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Science (print ISSN 0036-8075; online ISSN 1095-9203) is published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005. 2017 © The Authors, some rights reserved; exclusive licensee American Association for the Advancement of Science. No claim to original U.S. Government Works. The title *Science* is a registered trademark of AAAS.