



Medical  
Missions

J. H. McIlvaine



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And Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases among the people.

And His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils and those which were lunatic and those which had the palsy; and He healed them.  
—Matt. iv.: 23-24.

I am going to speak to you this morning of a form of missions that I am sure no one can object to, that everyone must believe in, and that is Medical Missions. Some of you may say that the religion of the heathen is good enough for them; no one can say that their medicine and surgery are good enough for them. It is not good enough for a dog. There is not one of you—not one of you—who would treat a sick dog or a sick horse as sick people are treated throughout the whole heathen world. Their medical practice is a combination of ignorance, superstition, cruelty and filth. The native doctors know absolutely nothing of the rudiments of medical science. No test is required; any one can be a doctor, and the most of them are religious char-

latans. They know nothing about anatomy; about the nervous system with its functions and diseases; about the circulation of the blood. For them the liver has seven lobes, and is the motor center of the eyes, and the home of the soul; the larynx goes through the lungs to the heart; the position of the heart is midway between the crown of the head and the soles of the feet, and it must be, is the logical explanation, because it is the center of being. Of course they know nothing of medical instruments, the stethoscope, the laryngoscope, the ophthalmoscope, the microscope, the clinical thermometer; nothing of anaesthetics or antiseptics.

The pharmacopoeia is what one would expect from such ignorance. It includes snake skins, fossil bones, shells, human and animal secretions, bats, flies, fleas, bugs, centipedes, cockroaches, caterpillars, lizards, toads—in short, everything that is disgusting, for the more disgusting anything is the more remedial it is supposed to be. It would be ludicrous were it not for the suffering which is caused. A man came to the medical missionary for treatment of dyspepsia; he had been ordered to take stone ground to a paste and drink it, and during half a year he had taken one-half of a millstone weighing a hundred pounds. On another occasion a woman came to the missionary and said she did not see why her child's eyes did not get well;

being asked what treatment had been given she said a donkey's tooth ground to a powder and mixed with charcoal; and every day she had put it into the child's eyes. Is it any wonder that one-half of those who are blind ought not to be blind today? It is estimated there are 100,000 blind men in China to-day perfectly curable. They stand on the streets and when they hear a foreigner's feet they cry out as of old, "Master, have pity on us." It costs \$8.50 to cure a blind man in China. A Sunday School class sent \$8.50 to the Medical School at Shanghai, and Dr. Jefferys wrote back that for this sum he would, God willing, undertake to restore the sight to a man perfectly blind. Think of it! Changed from utter darkness to the light of day!

In all heathen lands superstition plays a very large part in medical practice. The question is not what is the cause of the disease, but who is the cause of it? It is believed to be the work of demons. Drums are beaten, gongs sounded, fireworks exploded, processions held to frighten away the demons. The patient is beaten with clubs, is exposed to a roasting fire, and then thrust into cold water to drive out the demons. In Persia during an epidemic thousands of prayers were posted on the doors of the houses where it was supposed the demons could not enter; and in other instances prayers were written upon paper and the paper dis-

solved in a cup of water and drunk. A medical missionary was sent for to see the son of the native governor in Palestine and found the native physician had written the name of Allah several times on a plate, which was washed and the water drunk by the patient. The physician was sure the patient would recover because he had drunk the name of God so many times.

Ignorance is always dangerous, but nowhere does it cause so much suffering as in medical practice. The first thing a Chinese medical man has to learn is the location of the 300 places in the human body into which a skewer can be thrust with safety. One man came to the missionary with about four hundred punctures about his spine and his thighs. In another case the doctor had burned open the frontal fissure of a baby to let the demon out. In another he had made a fire on the breast of a little child and then thrust a needle through the palms of her hands, through her feet, through her lips and her nose. A common remedy for rheumatism is to cut an opening above the aching joint and fill it with cayenne pepper.

They know nothing about sanitation or disinfectants. An oriental city smells with the fifty-seven smells that Coleridge smelled in Cologne. Some one has said that you can smell China a hundred miles out at sea. The



sewage is dumped in the streets, stagnant water with decaying bodies in it is frequently drunk. There is no drainage except where civilization has come. Smallpox has decimated the islands of the South Seas, and carries away one-half the population of China, where the majority of the people are pock-marked. The terrible scourge of the bubonic plague and cholera ravage unhindered because it is supposed to be the work of demons. "Why is it," said a native Chinaman, "that you Christians do not take the plague? We have had our fireworks and our processions, and given presents to the gods, and yet we die by thousands." In some villages dogs are decapitated and their bodies hung up in the trees in the hope that the unpleasant sight will drive away the demons.

In China you will never see the funeral of a little child pass through the streets, but if you get up early in the morning you will see a cart drawn by two oxen loaded with the bodies of babies. This cart goes through the streets at nights and collects these bodies, often mutilated by the dogs, and they are carried out of the city and dumped into a pit and covered with quicklime. I do not say these things to harrow your feelings. It is impossible to exaggerate them. But we ought to know something of them and sometimes to think how the

great world lives without the privileges which we enjoy.

Now, what in the name of humanity and religion, are we doing for these eight hundred millions of people? We have what they so much need, and for the lack of which they so suffer and die. We can give it to them if we want to. They are anxious to have it and often go long distances for it. It is no unusual sight in China to see a man go 150 miles to get the help of the medical missionary; in one instance a man was wheeled in a wheelbarrow a whole week's journey for this purpose. One hospital in Bombay received patients from 2,091 different towns and villages. Dr. Porter received patients from 1,013. One blind man who had been cured went home and he came back bringing twelve of his neighbors, leading one another by the hand as they did of old. Another put twenty of them in a boat and brought them to the medical missionary. The work of the individual missionary is almost beyond credibility. Dr. Elizabeth Reifsnyder treated over 200,000 patients. Dr. Butchart has an annual practice of 35,000 patients. Dr. John Kerr of Canton, in his long work there, had over 700,000 cases and performed over 40,000 operations. Dr. Mackay pulled 21,000 teeth in Formosa, relieving the pain of whole villages. I know a man born in China who has a large scar on his face. If you ask

him the cause of it he will tell you that when he was a boy he had to have a tooth extracted and they made a hole in his cheek and with a mallet and spike hammered the tooth out. In the two hospitals in Canton 112,000 cases are treated annually and the four hospitals in Shanghai treat annually 92,000 cases. In China there are today about 250 hospitals and dispensaries, with 5,000 trained assistants, ministering to 2,000,000 of the sick. In India there are 254 hospitals and dispensaries ministering to nearly 2,000,000. In Persia, Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt there are medical stations. There are six medical stations along the West coast of Africa and seven along the East coast. There are 500,000 lepers in China, 600,000 in India and 200,000 in Japan—over a million altogether—for whom no provisions is made except through the 50 asylums and medical work of the Church.

But the work of the medical missionaries is not told even by such figures as these. He goes into the wider field of social welfare and grapples with the problems of sanitation and hygiene. He prints and distributes books and pamphlets; he prepares the public mind for dealing with epidemics, and with lectures and writings teaches them the best way to prevent them. Governments listen and follow his instructions. He establishes plague camps and isolates them. He introduces vaccination; today every

child in Siam and Laos is vaccinated as much as in America; one missionary station alone vaccinates 10,000 people annually, and two missionary doctors vaccinated 200,000 people. He convinces the authorities of the needs of drainage and disinfectants, and is rapidly changing the whole character of the native practice.

The example and experience of the native Christians accomplish much. The first thing that the native convert learns is the practice of cleanliness, personal and household, and the comparative immunity of the native Christians during the prevalence of epidemics tells its own story. During the plague in Bombay, with 1,500 native Christians only six were attacked; a recent official health report in Bombay comments on the exceptional healthfulness of the native Christians. Throughout India the death rate is 25 to the thousand; among the native Christians it is 8 to the thousand. During the plague in Hong Kong only three were attacked. In Amoy the Christians, when the plague came, cleaned up their houses and then printed and distributed instructions throughout the city as to how to deal with it. It is estimated that one-half of the immense suffering and disease in heathen lands could be prevented by ordinary cleanliness and the hygienic methods which medical missionaries teach.

But the great work of the medical missionary

today is not ministering directly to the sick, but the educating and training of native physicians in modern methods. There are thirty-two medical schools now in heathen lands, graduating every year hundreds and even thousands of native physicians, well equipped for their work. In Japan the medical missionary is no longer needed, except as he is needed in the slums and among the poor of our own cities, for today Japanese surgeons are famous operators throughout the world, and their doctors are as good as any. In Japan the idea of scientific medicine has been thoroughly established; the Imperial University at Tokio has a well equipped medical department. The sanitation of the Japanese army in their late war was an example to the civilized world. Fourteen years ago Dr. Teusler went to Japan to open up a disused hospital, where he found only a few broken-down beds and worn-out blankets. From that small beginning in these few years has grown our Hospital of St. Lukes in Tokyo. It has now eighty beds, a corps of thirty trained nurses, a staff of ten Japanese surgeons—four of them graduates of the Imperial University—and four American physicians, and a dispensary that ministers to 30,000 cases a year. But this is entirely inadequate to the work, and Prince Katsura and Baron Gato have given \$25,000, and the government has promised \$100,000 on condition that \$250,-

000 is raised in America. This will double the capacity of this hospital, and with a staff of Japanese and foreign surgeons, will be a power for international friendship, as well as for the extension of Christian influence.

China is following slowly in the steps of Japan. The mother of Li Hung Chang was the first person to give \$1,000 for medical work. He himself maintains a hospital and dispensary, paying the current expenses. A Hindoo lady has given \$60,000 for a hospital in India; another \$6,000 for a women's and children's hospital. A Parsee merchant has given \$50,000. Even in Africa the King of Toro has built a hospital at his own expense.

In 1880 Dr. Henry W. Boone was sent out as the first medical missionary in the great province of Shanghai. Within four months a building was erected as a hospital, named St. Luke's, the ground and building paid for by local contributors; and it is the boast of Dr. Boone that during thirty years his work never cost the Church in America anything. It now fills a whole block in one of the most thickly settled parts of the city, with large buildings on two of the other corners, and ministers today to sixty thousand people annually. Then there is St. Elizabeth's, for women, at Sinza, ministering to 14,000; St. Andrew's at Wusih, which in four years had 105,000 cases; St. Peter's and the Elizabeth Bunn

Memorial at Wuchang, and St. James' at Anking. These are but a few of our Church institutions in China, and the contributions from China amount to more than those from America. China is thoroughly awakening to the need of the best medical practice, and is asking for the best that we can give them for the training of their brightest and best young men for this work, not only in the hospitals but in medical schools.

Women also are going into this work, as in this country. In Japan the training of young women as doctors and nurses is especially popular. There are classes for them in the hospitals and educational institutions. The first Chinese woman to receive a foreign medical diploma and return to her native land to practice was Dr. You Me Kyng, the daughter of a native pastor, who was graduated from the New York Medical School for Women in 1885. The second was Dr. Hu King Eng, the daughter of a mandarin whose two sons entered the ministry, who was graduated from the Philadelphia College for Women in 1894. She returned to her own land and was received with an ovation by all classes, and is called the "Miracle Lady." A Chinaman brought his old blind mother a thousand miles in a wheelbarrow to get the benefit of her skill. In 1896 two Chinese women were graduated from the medical department of the University of Michigan, and

when their diplomas were conferred there was no such applause as these two little women received--the faculty joining in the applause for the first time.

Many of you are familiar with the story of the Lady Dufferin Fund in India. In Punna, a city 100 miles from Lucknow, the wife of the Maharajah was ill with a painful disease. As no male physician could enter the Zenana the prince sent for Miss Beilby, a medical student at Lucknow, and after some weeks his wife was restored to health. Miss Beilby was returning to England to take her medical degree, and the Rani sent for her and said: "I want you to tell the Queen of England and the Princess of Wales and the women of England what we women suffer. Take this locket and write this message on it and wear it till you see the queen, and read her the message." On her return she was granted an audience, and she took off the locket and read the message to the Queen, who was much touched, and said: "I had no idea things were so bad, and I want it to be known that my sympathy is with the women of India." Lord Dufferin was just then going out to India as Viceroy, and the Queen sent for Lady Dufferin and impressed upon her the importance of doing everything that could be done for the suffering women of India. What was the result? In a few years' time there were 11



different branches of this association under the supervision of women, with 108 hospitals and dispensaries, with 28 women with British medical diplomas and a staff of 70 assistant doctors and surgeons. In 1897 1,327,000 women in India received help from this association. It is not a missionary association, it is purely philanthropic, and its object is to secure the training of women as doctors, as nurses, as hospital assistants and midwives, and the establishment of hospitals and dispensaries under the superintendence of women for work among the women in India.

And yet after all we have done we only reach about five per cent. of the people of the heathen world; the other 95 per cent. are still under the old, cruel, superstitious methods. We have here in America one physician for every 600 people; in our own city one for every 400 people; but throughout the heathen world there is one for every 1,000,000 people. If we had one doctor in Pittsburgh for the whole city and surrounding territory we should have about the same condition as prevails throughout the heathen world. We have in this city 35 hospitals, about one for every 20,000 people. With one or two exceptions none of the hospitals of this city ever need all their accommodations. In the heathen world there is but one hospital—and that a small one—for every 1,000,000 people. If we had

one small hospital in Pittsburgh which we had to share with the neighboring towns, we should have about the same condition as prevails in these heathen lands.

My friends, some of you know what it means to be ill, and some of you have had those whom you love very sick; and you have had a trained nurse come into your house with a blessing on her face; and you have had a physician in whose skill you have had hope and confidence. Many of you have been in hospitals and have had those whom you love there, and have seen them surrounded with every comfort and convenience, care and skill. You have laid yourself down on the wheeled stretcher and have been wheeled down the long corridor to the operating room, with a smile on your lips, and perhaps a laugh in your heart, for you knew you were in good hands and no one was going to hurt you. And you have waked up feeling awfully uncomfortable, I know, but so happy that it was all over that you did not mind it. You have had your dear ones restored to you and on the way back to health and happiness.

Have you no thank-offering, no expression of gratitude for these things that mean so much to us? And what better expression can you give than by doing something for those who suffer as we suffer, and far more, for the lack of these very things that

have been given to us? Not some small trifle that costs you nothing and that you never think about again, but something that means some real sacrifice in your life. You can designate it for medical missions if you want to and your wish shall be respected, but something surely we might do: and if only those who have been in hospitals or who have had those they loved there, were to give something commensurate with the benefits they have received, we should have a much larger offering next Sunday than is asked or expected. You feel the claim of all that the Lord Jesus Christ has done for your soul and your spiritual health; you feel the claim of what medical science and surgery have done for your body and physical health, and both these claims united in the cry of the heathen world for the Gospel of Divine Love and the gospel of human healing.

I have not the time to speak of the evangelical power of this work. It is not necessary, for I am sure it must be self-evident to you all. "China," said Dr. Peter Parker, "was opened to the Gospel with the point of the lancet," and the same is true of all heathen lands. The medical missionary can go where others can not go; his fame spreads far and wide. He breaks down the bars of prejudice and superstition; he opens the heart to the message of love. People come to be cured and they

commend to others the religion that has helped them; they come for personal benefit and go away with a message of good will. It interprets the meaning and character of the religion of Christ as a religion of love to men. Above all it follows the teachings and the methods of the Great Missionary and Savior of the world, who healed men's bodies that He might find the way to men's souls.







