

Foreword

When the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences Society was inaugurated in 1995, the first main objective was to collect and preserve materials of historical interest relating to the development of medical sciences in Hong Kong for exhibition in the Museum. The second objective was to promote research and public interest in the development of medicine in Hong Kong. To this end, the Museum has organized guided tours of heritage trails and published articles, pamphlets, and books on local medical history. In addition, the Society has organized regular talks of medical history and medical topics to the public not only to arouse the public's interest in the history of medicine, but also to alert them on the importance of health and prevention of diseases.

Both authors of the present book have been regular contributors to the Museum's column in the *Hong Kong Medical Journal*—"Reminiscence: Artefacts from The Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences." Dr. T. W. Wong was the editor of the Museum's publication for the 20th anniversary—*Footprints of Medicine: From the Collections of Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences* and other medical history books. Professor Moira Chan-Yeung has published three well-researched books on the medical history of Hong Kong covering the period of 1842 to 2015. When I learned of their new project on writing about notable doctors of the past, I eagerly awaited the results of their labour.

This is probably the first book dedicated to the life and times of the doctors who have shaped the medical development of Hong Kong. It is a fascinating story of how the pioneers transformed a city with primitive medical services into what it is today—a city with advanced medical facilities as in any major Western city. As a pathologist, I am naturally drawn to the stories of trailblazers such as Dr. William Hunter, Professors Wang Chung-yik, Hou Pao-chang, and James Gibson, who built a strong foundation for modern pathology in Hong Kong. Hunter, in particular, was the one who oversaw the building of the Bacteriological Institute,

which stands today as the Museum. In addition to the intriguing stories, the sequence of narration of these exceptional doctors over more than a century and a half guides us through the development of local medicine in areas of public health, public medical services, medical education, and private practice. The book also provides a great source of reference materials for any researcher in this field.

The Museum has been using different artefacts to arouse public interests in medical history. Telling history through the stories of these architects of our medical and health services is also a good way to engage the general public. This new book by Wong Tai-wai and Moira Chan-Yeung, both members of the Society, is therefore a welcomed addition to the scholarly works of local medical history.

Dr. Mak Wai-ping
Chairman (Executive Committee) and Board of Directors
Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences Society

Preface

The development of Western medicine in Hong Kong to its current sophisticated state over more than 150 years is a fascinating story, which has been described by Moira Chan-Yeung in her three books on local medical history (*A Medical History of Hong Kong: 1842–1941*; *A Medical History of Hong Kong: 1942–2015*; and *A Medical History of Hong Kong: The Development and Contributions of Outpatient Services*). These books, covering the period from 1842 to 2015, present an account of the major medical events in the context of the socio-political and economic situations of the time.¹ The publication of the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences Society, *Plague, SARS and the Story of Medicine in Hong Kong*, also takes a similar thematic approach to the medical history of Hong Kong.² It includes chapters on the control of infectious diseases and tuberculosis and on the development of hospitals and medical education.

Historical events are often driven by many forces—political, economic, and social changes—acting within a certain time frame. However, we believe that human factors are equally important in shaping the events. This book, *Hong Kong Notable Doctors: Individuals Who Shaped the Medical Services, 1842–2015*, gives the history of development of sanitation and medical and health services in Hong Kong from a perspective different from the above books—the personalities responsible for these remarkable achievements during this period, adding another dimension and color to the remarkable medical history of Hong Kong. The personalities include doctors, nurses, paramedics, and also patients who should not be considered as passive recipients of medical service. In view of the limitation of space in this book, we will only discuss the doctors who are no longer with us but have pioneered and engineered the development and growth of medical and health services in Hong Kong.

While these doctors from diverse backgrounds lived in different eras and engaged in different branches of medicine, they were strikingly similar in several aspects: their dedication to serving the community and

their tireless labor to achieve their aim at times under adverse conditions, leaving their mark in the history of medicine in Hong Kong. These individuals, spanning over a period of over 150 years, comprised doctors in government public medical and health services who advocated new initiatives and laid the infrastructure; those who established health policies, and moved the health system forward; the medical educators who trained the medical workforce and generated new medical knowledge through their research; and practising doctors, who not only delivered medical care but also offered their free services in education and social welfare. The story of each doctor in this book is narrated in the context of the complex political, social, and economic backdrop of his/her time. We have also identified the few pioneer female doctors before and after World War II, and described their struggle to enter medical school and the achievements in their life-time.

This book is intended for medical students, medical practitioners, other healthcare professionals, and even general readers. We hope that the stories of these medical pioneers will stimulate their interest in local medical history and to learn from them. We also hope that the general readers who are taking a first dip into the world of medical history will find it fascinating. These doctors built the medical services of Hong Kong from scratch to its current state with an advanced infrastructure similar to any developed nation in the world and as a testimony to their work, the men and women in Hong Kong led the world in life expectancy.³ We wish to remember and honor them, celebrate their lives here, and to give thanks for their inspirations and selflessness.

The Hong Kong public medical and health services were called by different names over its existence, e.g. Medical Department, Medical and Health Services, or Medical and Health Department. We have used the name according to how it was called during the period in question. The appendix has the name of the public medical and health services according to the period for clarification. In addition, the medical profession is notoriously confusing for its numerous professional titles, especially when given in abbreviations. A listing of these titles and their abbreviations can be found in the section on abbreviation in the front matter of the book. Finally, the information of this book came from a number of primary and secondary sources which can be found under bibliography at the back of the book.

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We are also fortunate to be able to contact some of the friends and relatives of these notable doctors. Dr. A. E. Rodrigues, son of Sir Albert Rodrigues, kindly shared his private collection of photographs and anecdotes of his father. Ms. Christine Fang allowed us to use the pictures of Dr. Harry Fang and gave us information and photographs of his father's efforts to promote rehabilitation in mainland China. Dr. Peter Ho spent his valuable time searching for old photographs of his father Dr. Ho Hung-chiu, John, and kindly allowed us to use some of them. Dr. C. T. Hung, past president of the Hong Kong College of Anesthesiologists, contributed photographs of Dr. Zoltan Lett and his achievements in building the discipline in anesthesia in Hong Kong, and Dr. Arthur van Langenberg for information on the history of development of surgery in Hong Kong. We wish also to express our gratitude to the Centre for Research Collections of the Main Research Library of the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow for information on the student record of Professor James Gibson and on his PhD thesis.

The following clinical departments of the University of Hong Kong have kindly allowed us to use pictures of notable educators from their

departments: Departments of Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Orthopaedics and Traumatology, Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Pathology, and Surgery. We are also grateful to the following organizations that have given their consents for reproducing their photographs: Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Charity Foundation, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong College of Family Physicians, Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital, Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association, Institute of Mental Health (Castle Peak Hospital), Mental Health Association of Hong Kong, Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Hong Kong, Tung Wah Museum Archives, University Archives (the University of Hong Kong) and the Wellcome Collection.

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