

THE PAUPER HOSPITAL IN EARLY SINGAPORE (Part IV) (1850-1859) — Section 1

By Y. K. LEE

A general introduction to the study of the medical history of early Singapore has already been outlined.¹

The history of the Pauper Hospital and Tan Tock Seng Hospital from 1819 to 1829,² 1830 to 1839,³ and 1840 to 1849⁴ has already been documented.

In the decade from 1850 to 1859, the total population of Singapore increased from 52,891 to 81,734 and the proportion of Chinese from 53 to 61 per cent. Waves of immigrants came from China. Worsening conditions in China due to the Taiping Rebellion had driven thousands of peasants to the ports of Amoy, Canton and Swatow, where hungry and poverty-stricken, they were recruited by brokers and left China as indentured labour, the great majority to South East Asia. Singapore became the distribution centre of Chinese labour throughout the British and Dutch territories in the region. Singapore was a town predominantly of men and of transient immigrants. 85.8 per cent of the total population, and 93.5 per cent of the Chinese population were men.

With this background, the history of Tan Tock Seng Hospital for the decade 1850 to 1859 will be traced.

The Governor-General, the Marquis of Dalhousie, made a three-day official visit to Singapore from 17th February to 20th February 1850. During his short visit, the Governor-General visited public buildings and institutions and made himself acquainted with the affairs of the Settlement. This included a visit to Tan Tock Seng Hospital, which "was filled with destitute and diseased Chinese, and aid was solicited for it on the ground of the great influx of these pitiable sufferers". The Governor-General donated 1,000 Rupees to the Hospital.⁵

The Chinese merchants seized the opportunity of the Governor-General's visit to submit a petition for the re-establishment of the Pork

Farm. In a memorial to the Governor they wrote:⁶

"... Amongst the numerous natives comprising the inhabitants of this highly privileged island, especially of our own countrymen, there are many who are unfortunately disabled by sickness and various causes from maintaining themselves by honest labour and thereby obliged to wander in the principal thoroughfares for alms. Although we sincerely acknowledge with deep thankfulness that a charitable institution has been built for their accommodation, yet the want of funds renders the necessity of raising a monthly subscription contributed by the shopkeepers, but this gratuitous undertaking, we beg to respectfully apprise your Honour is not an easy expedient. About three years ago, we had submitted a petition praying for the restoration of the Pork Farm and suggesting the appropriation of its revenue for the relief of the distressed patients of the Pauper Hospital, through your Honour for transmission to the Supreme Government of Bengal, but as yet we humbly remind your Honour that no reply has been vouchsafed to us. We view our settlement as highly favoured by the condescending visit of the Most Noble the Governor-General. We have prized this most favourable opportunity of renewing our humble supplication for the gracious bestowal of the charitable object aforementioned summed up in the accompanying petition addressed to the Most Noble Marquis of Dalhousie, which we humbly and earnestly request may be submitted to his Lordship and supported by your Honour's powerful recommendation. The gratitude to which your Honour shall be entitled from both of ourselves and the afflicted will truly be inexpressible, should our humble effort be crowned with success. . . ."

The Singapore Free Press reported that "His Lordship expressed some doubts as to the policy of such a piece of class taxation, but he hinted that if the farm was not re-established, some assistance might be afforded to the Hospi-

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tal from some other source." Action was taken soon after the Governor-General's return to India (*vide infra*).

A few days after the Governor-General's visit, Tan Tock Seng died on 24th February, "Justice of the Peace and one of our worthiest and richest Chinese merchants."⁷

The orders of the Governor-General-in-Council respecting the revival of the pork tax and Tan Tock Sing's Hospital were made on 11th April 1850, and were transmitted by the Government of Bengal in a despatch to Governor Butterworth on 29th April 1850.⁸

There would be no restoration of the Pork Farm nor grant of money for the hospital. An Act to prevent immigration of diseased paupers was under study, and in recognition of Tan Tock Sing's generosity a small hospital establishment would be granted, but only to look after the sick and not for the healthy paupers. The Governor-General's visit to Singapore when he saw for himself the circumstances of the settlement, had achieved more than frequent petitions, memorials and despatches sent from thousands of miles away.

"... The application of the proceeds of any given tax to a particular object is in itself objectionable. All imposts should be paid alike into the general treasury, and if these intentions were declared, the Governor-General-in-Council apprehends the Chinese residents in the Straits would cease to solicit the re-establishment of the tax. The Governor-General has inspected the several hospitals and other public institutions and works. The Hospital and Poor House at Singapore built by Tan Tock Sing appeared to his Lordship to be an excellent building. It was filled with destitute and diseased Chinese, and aid was solicited for it on the ground of the great influx of these pitiable sufferers, and also on the ground that the Government gives to a similar institution in Malacca a sum by way of annual subscription.

... The Governor-General-in-Council is disinclined to the grant of money to the Hospital at Singapore for same reason that he objects to give the proceeds of the pork tax for its support, namely, that his Lordship-in-Council fears that such an act would tend to aggravate the evil rather than to cure it.

It was complained that maimed, blind, lame and diseased Chinese were brought in crowds from beyond the seas and left upon the shores to seek shelter in the Pauper Hospitals or to fill the streets with loathsome beggars. It was obvious that this evil had arisen chiefly, if not entirely, from the faulty system in the use of the old pork monopoly, when a revenue was levied for the express purpose of keeping up a lazaretto for all decrepit and disabled Chinese who might be found unprovided for about the Settlements, and under this encouragement there was never any want of qualified inmates. It was apparent also that the more limited institution at present kept up must be open in a great degree to the same abuse, unless the wholesale influx of diseased paupers into the Straits was restrained by law. An Act for this purpose has been under the consideration of Government for some time past, and this was again pressed upon his Lordship's attention by Colonel Butterworth at Singapore. This Act will receive the early attention of the Legislature.

The Pauper Hospital at Singapore receives medicines from Government and its duties are performed in a creditable manner by the Civil Surgeon, Mr. Traill, who appeared to labour under great difficulty for want of the usual subordinate assistants. The Governor-General-in-Council on this ground and more in recognition of the liberality of Tan Tock Sing, would be disposed to assent to a small hospital establishment being granted. The extent of this aid will best be regulated by the Government of Bengal in communication with the Governor of the Straits. In adjusting this aid, care must be taken not to make any allowance for the establishment to the Poor House, the inmates of which should, in the opinion of his Lordship-in-Council, be required to do all the work for themselves and on refusing to do so, they should be ejected from the asylum and treated as offenders against the law if found again as vagrants in the street."

Before this despatch arrived in Singapore, the Senior Surgeon's Annual Report on the Civil Medical Department for the year 1849/1850 was received by the Governor and forwarded to Bengal on 22nd May 1850. Parts of the section on Tan Tock Sing's Hospital will be quoted to show that if Tan Tock Sing had not died prematurely, he might have endowed his hospital

with funds; that in the Senior Surgeon's opinion, Government should provide for the local paupers; that the Medical Officer of the hospital was placed in a ridiculous position where he was expected to practise medicine with all facilities denied him; that the large numbers of immigrants who created special problems should be curbed; that the hospital did not serve its function as a hospital, it was used only to keep the paupers out of sight:⁹

"... I allude to the hospital for Chinese paupers, commonly called Tan Tocksing's. When the late much-to-be-regretted founder of this fine building, so munificently gave his money for its erection, I believe that it was his intention not to limit his liberality to the mere edifice, but to leave a sum as a nucleus to which other donations might be added for the proper support and maintenance of an establishment and for the feeding and clothing of the patients. His unexpected and intestate death has deprived us of this hoped-for assistance, and an hospital containing on an average 122 patients is left to the precarious charity of the public who are unwilling to admit these claims upon them and hold back in the hope of forcing the Government into making provision for the unfortunate sufferers. If the Authorities and Government consider that any responsibility attaches to them in this matter, and that it is the duty of the State to provide for the sick paupers, there cannot be a question as to the necessity of providing a suitable establishment, and that the hospital should at once be put on a footing with similar establishments supported by the Government in other parts of India. The present anomalous situation of patients and Surgeon is something without precedent, and it never could be the intention of Government to put their Medical Officers into so false and invidious a position as that of the present relation between the Surgeon and patients of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital, where the Medical Officer is expected to attend whilst at the same time, all means of practising his profession in a manner creditable to himself and beneficial to the patients, is withheld from him; there being no means of obtaining the medical comforts or necessaries so indispensable for the sick who die ill-fed, ill-clothed and without hospital attendants. But at the same time that I allude to the destitute state of the hospital, I am by no

means of opinion that under existing circumstances it would be expedient to make it a place of too great attraction. We are placed here under much peculiar circumstances. The immense migrating population poured into this Settlement annually from China during the junk season, and which may be estimated at from 10-12,000, who do not come to reside but merely make this place a centre from whence they radiate to all parts of the archipelago, bring with them numbers of sick and infirm people, who finding themselves unable to proceed further, naturally remain where they can be subsisted. This evil is immensely increased by any accidental circumstance such as a protracted passage. This occurred during the present year, the junks running out of water and provision, hundreds of passengers perished on their voyage down and hundreds more were landed in a dying state, both here and Penang. 67 such cases were sent in one day to the Hospital and the mortality during the month of March amounted to a frightful number of 51 persons out of 210. Now, if too great encouragement be given, we shall become a vast emporium of paupers and there is no estimating the extent to which this evil may grow. At the same time, there is a class of persons who may naturally claim our consideration and attention, vizt. our own local poor. To discriminate when once the people are in the Settlement would be difficult, if not impracticable. It therefore is to be considered how best this difficulty may be met and provided for; and really it occurs to me that there is but one mode of dealing with it, vizt. to prevent such persons being landed by the passing of an enactment empowering the local authorities to fine the nakhodas (captains) of boats and junks who land here sick destitute persons. This would soon reduce our Sick List to a moderate number and secure us from being overrun by the paupers of China as well as the neighbouring native states. Before therefore I could recommend Government to place this establishment on a similar footing with the other hospitals, I think it right that their liberality should be guarded against imposition either in the manner above suggested or in some other way which may approve itself to the better judgement of the Authorities. The Hospital as existing at present is neither respectable nor useful. It

is a mere receptacle to hide from public sight the unfortunate creatures whom the ravages of disease have rendered loathsome to the eye. It is neither supported by the public nor the Government, and nothing can more need reform and assistance. . . ."

Returns showing the specific diseases and deaths in Tan Tock Sing's Hospital from 1st April 1849 to 31st March 1850 are appended below.⁹ It is of interest to study the admissions and mortality rates of the various diseases, for instance, the high mortality rate in Diarrhoea, Bronchitis, Starvation, "Chronic Rheumatism" and Jaundice; and the incidence of Contusions, Incised wounds and Ulcers. One could speculate what brought on the liver failure in the eleven fatal cases of jaundice. Infective Hepatitis? Leptospirosis? The archaic nosology also merits attention.

	Treated	Died
Febris Quotidiana Intermittens (Daily intermittent fever)	5	0
Variola	2	1
Epilepsia	1	0
Paralysis	13	4
Asthma periodica	1	0
Bronchitis	5	4
Haemoptysis	1	0
Pneumonia	1	0
Cholera Biliosa	1	0
Diarrhoea	47	15
Dysenteria Acuta	3	0
Dysenteria Chronica	1	1
Cholera Morbus	1	0
Syphilis Consecutiva	2	1
Ambustio (Burn)	1	0
Contusio	23	0
Fractura	12	1
Morsus Anguinum (Snake bite)	1	0
Vulnus Incisum (Incised wound)	54	1
Amputatio	2	0
Anasarca	6	2
Atrophia	1	1
Ascites	2	1
Cystitis	1	1
Fistula-in-ano	1	0
Haemorrhoids	2	0
Ictericus	12	11
Impetigo	1	0
Fistula-in-perineo	1	0
Eczema	1	0
Lame	1	1
Lepra	26	7
Lupus	1	0
Oedema of legs	3	2
Phlegmon et Abscessus	1	0
Psora et Herpes	2	0
Poisoned by Datura	2	0
Rheumatismus Acutus	3	0
Rheumatismus Chronicus	46	13
Scrophula	4	1
Starvation	35	20
Ulcers	119	14
Withered arm	1	0
	451	102

As the despatches had crossed each other, the Bengal Government's reply dated 13th July 1850,¹⁰ referred the Singapore Government to the despatch of 29th April 1850 (see above) when the Governor was requested to state the establishment considered absolutely necessary for the Hospital.

The Governor informed the Resident Councillor and Senior Surgeon that "an establishment of Medical Subordinates will be allowed at the expense of the State for Tocksing's Hospital and Medicines to be supplied from the Government Stores. The Senior Surgeon and the Medical Officer in charge of Tocksing's Hospital to submit an establishment of Medical Subordinates that are imperatively necessary for the efficient attendance on the inmates of that Institution."¹¹

The Singapore Free Press of 7th June 1850 made some very pertinent comments on the Governor-General's decision:¹²

"It is stated that the Governor-General has declined to re-establish the Pork Farm, but consented to allow a Medical Establishment for Tocksing's Hospital and medicines from the public stores. The means of subsistence must still, however, remain to be provided to the inmates by voluntary contributions of their countrymen and other charitable persons. The amounts at present raised in this way are inadequate for the purpose, and it is therefore desirable that some systematic means were adopted for rousing the Chinese community especially to the wants of their pauper countrymen, who, unless assisted with greater liberality than hitherto, will present the strange spectacle of enjoying the the best medical treatment and lodged sumptuously but perishing of hunger."

On 13th June 1850, the Senior Surgeon after consultations with the Medical Officer in charge of Tocksing's Hospital recommended an establishment "as moderate as is compatible with efficiency. . . and that the Assistant Apothecary and Dressers should if possible be obtained from Madras or Bengal. . . ."¹³ Efficient Medical Subordinates were not procurable in the Straits in 1850. The establishment "essentially necessary to conduct the onerous duties appertaining to Tocksing's Hospital, the inmates of which are seldom under 100 persons" was

1 Assistant Apothecary
1 Second Dresser

1 Peon

2 Toties (Chinese)

The toties were to be paid \$4 per month and the allowances of the Assistant Apothecary and Second Dresser were to be regulated by the rules of the Presidency to which they may be attached.¹⁴

In the meantime, the draft Act to prevent landing and leaving of decrepit beggars in the Straits was read for the first time in the Legislative Council in India on 21st June 1850. This draft was sent to the Governor of the Straits Settlements for his observations and suggestions.¹⁵

The draft Act was published in the Singapore Free Press of 2nd August 1850, and the Editors of the Straits Times and Free Press both commented, amongst other things, that there should have been provisions for the Master Attendant to be involved and for the inspection of the passengers brought by the boats before they landed by an efficient Harbour Police:

"We have written until our fingers ached hitherto to no purpose respecting the diseased Chinese vagrants who infest our public streets, a mass of sores and corruption—the result of negligence. For many years the public eye has been disgusted with pitiable objects at every corner of the streets and almost every vessel, especially junks and ships from the neighbouring Dutch settlements, took care to bring a fresh importation of diseased men who were chargeable upon them. . . ."

To rid the Settlement of these pests it will be necessary to make periodical shipments of the diseased and maimed to China, and thereby entailing a very heavy charge on the local revenue. This outlay the draft Act proposes to make chargeable upon the importer, 'to be sued and recovered as so much money due from him to the East India Company and paid to the Company on his account'.

Our community has been most liberal in relieving the objects of commiseration pointed out in the Act, but no sooner was it known that an establishment supported by public subscription was opened at Pearl's Hill, then there poured into the station numbers of wretches from Rhio, Sambas, Minto, Batavia, some being brought in monthly by the Dutch Government steamer.

This latter disgraceful proceeding we exposed at the time, and ultimately succeeded in inducing the Authorities to insist on the removal of these poor wretches returning them to the Dutch shores. The evil has in no degree diminished. The Government being, we believe, about to provide the necessary funds for maintaining the hospital erected by the late Tan Tock Sing, some such provision was required as is proposed in the draft Act to which we have had occasion to allude, or a premium would have been offered for the diseased, maimed and blind of the neighbouring countries. The poor and unfortunate creatures belonging to our own settlements have peculiar claims on us for assistance. When the recipients of such bounty are confined to the really deserving we are sure our community will most cheerfully respond to the call for assistance on behalf of the helpless, houseless, distressed and diseased poor.

If instead of making it a duty of commanders of vessels to report diseased, maimed and blind passengers to the Superintendent of Police, they had been at once referred to the Master Attendant (who is also Marine Magistrate) the arrangement would have been far better. For strangers, it is a highly objectionable practice to send them hither and thither where it can, as in the present case, be prevented more especially as the duty properly belongs to the Marine Department, the officers of which alone are cognisant of the arrival and departure of all kinds of sailing craft."¹⁶ (In the Act, when passed, the Captain had to report to the Master Attendant instead of the Superintendent of Police.)

"... We are afraid that as the Act at present stands, it will fail in its object. There ought, if possible, to be some provision for an inspection of the passengers brought by junks, etc. before they are landed. After they are landed, there will be considerable difficulty in finding out the vessels by which they were brought, and if the persons taken before the Justices should refuse to discover who brought them, how is the fact to be made out. With an efficient Harbour Police, much of this difficulty could be got over and the proof of bringing such chargeable persons to the Settlement would be rendered easy and certain. The Police would board the vessels immediately on their arrival and if

they found native passengers, would muster them and report any apparently diseased persons to the Authorities. They would then be examined by competent persons, and if found chargeable, the master or nakhoda of the vessel should be required to give sufficient security that they would be removed from the Settlement, and in the meantime, they should be kept in custody at his expense. The mode of operation proposed by the Act is cumbersome and uncertain, and without the addition of some such plan as we have above pointed out, will probably leave things much as they are at present. The persons employed to visit vessels would, of course, have to be subject to a vigilant inspection else they would probably become a nuisance."¹⁷

The Act was passed on 22nd November 1850, (Act XLI of 1850), and promulgated in the Straits during the last week of December 1850. (see Appendix A). Governor Butterworth lost no time in seeking the cooperation of Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary in China and Governor of Hong Kong. He wrote on 31st December 1850:¹⁸

"I have the honour to solicit Your Excellency's perusal of the accompanying Act of the Legislature of India recently published to prevent the landing of diseased and decrepit persons in the Straits Settlements, and I should esteem it a favour if Your Excellency would cause the same to be promulgated at the Ports (Amoy, Canton, Fuchchanfu, Ningpo, Shanghae) in such manner as you may deem expedient, especially Amoy, from whence the greatest number of emigrants come annually to Singapore."

The troubles of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital were not confined to finance. Although the Governor-General had approved an establishment for the hospital, and an application had been made in June 1850 to Bengal for an Assistant Apothecary and a Second Dresser, no reply was received until about nine months later and even that was to say that it was difficult to make suitable appointments to the Hospital:

"... the Military Department have on the recommendation of the Medical Board placed at the disposal of this Government, the services of Mr. Christopher Doyle, a Senior Hospital Apprentice, who has studied and obtained Certificates of Proficiency at the Medical College and who has been

appointed as Assistant Apothecary to the Institution. (Tan Tock Sing's Hospital).

Mr. Doyle will draw a salary of 80 Rupees per month and be supplied with quarters, but in the event of no quarters being available, he is to be allowed 15 Rupees per month in addition to the above sum. He will proceed to join his appointment so soon as he is relieved of the duties which he is at present performing with Her Majesty's 80th Regiment at Darjeeling.

With respect to the Second Dresser, I am directed to inform you that it would be impossible to get qualified persons to go from hence to the Straits to fill this very subordinate situation. His Honour doubts not however that the Senior Surgeon of the Straits will be able to procure sufficiently qualified persons from one or other of the local hospitals under his control or from Madras on the subordinate list of which Presidency, they are believed to be of a class superior to the Dressers of this Presidency."¹⁹

Mr. Doyle arrived in June 1851 to take up his appointment at Tan Tock Sing's Hospital. In the meantime, native sick and injured continued to be admitted to the Convict and Pauper Hospital, a practice strongly objected to by the Grand Jury who received the strong support of the Governor in this. "The Jury deprecate the promiscuous mixing of criminals with innocent and free persons in the hospital. On my last visit to the Convict Hospital, I found four Chinese paupers who had been admitted for wounds and other injuries, and were more likely to obtain the best medical attendance than elsewhere. Whenever the Government is pleased to sanction a regular Establishment for Tan Tock Sing's Hospital, all Police and other pauper cases will necessarily be treated there, reserving the present commodious building for transmarine and local convicts requiring medical assistance."²⁰

The Press was also much against this:

"The Grand Jury present that the promiscuous mixing of criminals and innocent and free persons must tend in demoralisation and the increase of crime, and the recent instance of the most heinous of crimes lately committed on a poor Arab boy kidnapped from the said hospital through the instrumentation of a convict, who had been some time an invalid under the same roof, will be sufficient to prove the necessity of distinct

and separate wards for the reception of felons and innocent men. . . .”²¹

Doyle’s appointment was gazetted and an extract from the Calcutta Gazette was published in the Singapore Free Press of 21st March 1851 as evidence “that Government has fulfilled its intention of providing a suitable medical establishment for Tocksing’s Hospital.”²²

Public-spirited members of the community launched another appeal for funds. This was the third leg of the tripod necessary to support Tan Tock Sing’s Hospital. The other two were the medical establishment and the passing of the Act to prevent importation of sick paupers. Since the Government had played its part, the community felt that they should do something too. The Singapore Free Press strongly supported this appeal:²³

“The Government of India, as we mentioned last week, has given effect to a promise made by the Governor-General to provide a medical establishment for Tan Tock Sing’s Hospital, but means are still wanting for the subsistence of the diseased paupers who may be placed in the hospital, and thus, although their ailments will be properly ministered to, they are very likely to die of starvation unless the community stretches forth a helping hand. The recent Act of the Legislature prohibiting the importation of decrepit beggars into the Settlement, will, if carried into practice by the Police, prevent our being burthened with any but what may be called our proper local poor, and as it is certainly preferable on every account that these poor wretches should be comfortably housed and tended rather than allowed to wander in the streets in all their squalid loathsomeness, we have no doubt the public will readily enable this to be done by supplying through voluntary contributions enough for the maintenance of the paupers in Tocksing’s Hospital. This is done at Penang and Malacca, and the Singapore public has always shown itself so ready to answer such calls even when coming from a distance, that we have no doubt the appeal which is at present being made for the means of subsisting the paupers in Tocksing’s Hospital will be liberally and adequately responded to.”

The response was encouraging and the organisers felt confident enough to ask the Editor of the Singapore Free Press to give them publicity in the issue of 20th June 1851:²⁴

“We have been requested to mention that a meeting of the Subscribers to and supporters of Tan Tock Sing’s Hospital, will take place at the Court House on Tuesday next, the 24th June instant, at 12 o’clock noon, for the purpose of choosing a Committee of Management and Office Bearers.”

This historic meeting was duly held, and the election results and resolutions of the meeting were published both in the Singapore Free Press²⁵ and the Straits Times.²⁶

“At a public meeting of subscribers and all interested in the charity of Tan Tock Sing’s Hospital held in the Court House on the 24th of June 1851 at 12 o’clock noon, the Hon. T. Church, Esq. in the Chair, the following resolutions were unanimously carried:—

- 1st. That a Managing Committee be formed of the following gentlemen—Tan Kim Ching, Esq. (as the son of the founder), the Resident Councillor, the Assistant Resident and the Senior Surgeon as standing members; with the following gentlemen as yearly members—J. Guthrie, W.H. Read, R. Little, Tan Kim Seng, Seah Eu Chin and Eyo Hood Sing, Esqs.
- 2nd. That R. Little, Esq. be appointed Honorary Secretary and Seah Eu Chin, Esq. as Treasurer.
- 3rd. That the Committee has sole and uncontrolled management of the Hospital and its inmates and the power of framing all its rules.
- 4th. That the subscriptions be collected six months in advance from 1st July 1851.
- 5th. That a yearly meeting of subscribers be held on the last Friday in June when the Committee will submit its report to the public.
- 6th. That the proceedings of the day be published in the local press.”

The Singapore Free Press added an appeal for more funds to its report of the meeting:²⁵

“. . . The subscriptions already promised, it is thought, will be scarcely sufficient to defray the current expenses, so that we would earnestly entreat our readers who may not have already contributed to do so, either by donation or monthly subscription, or what would be still better, by both. The donations amount to \$250/- and the monthly subscriptions to about \$150/-.”

On 27th June 1851, the Resident Councillor forwarded a copy of the proceedings of the "meeting of the subscribers to the Funds for the support of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital" to Governor.²⁷ He also mentioned that the monthly subscriptions of \$150/- would scarcely be sufficient to defray the current expenses and that the Management Committee would have to find ways to augment their meagre resources. He also reported that a Chinese and a Portuguese had been engaged as Second Dressers, and asked for authority "to bring on the public account from 1st July next under the head of 'Tan Tock Sing's Hospital' " the approved Establishment:

Assistant Apothecary —salary	Rupees	80- 0- 0
—house rent		15- 0- 0
2 Second Dressers, R. 15-6-5 or \$7/- each		30-12-10
Peon		11- 0- 0
2 Sweepers and Toties, R. 8-12-10 each		17- 9- 8
		154- 6- 6

The Governor was also informed that the old Pauper Hospital as a Government Establishment would cease from and after the 1st July, and that all accident and Police cases would in future be sent to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital and a distinct ward set aside for their reception.

The request was approved by the Governor who reported to Bengal that "... Assistant Apothecary Doyle reported his arrival in the Straits on the 16th ultimo and I am happy to be able to say that the Senior Surgeon has secured the services of two youths as Second Dressers upon salaries of \$7/- each. The Establishment for Tan Tock Sing's Hospital is now complete, which I have sanctioned from the 1st instant pending confirmation of Government. ..."²⁸ The President of the Council of India-in-Council confirmed this sanction on 31st October 1851.²⁹

Governor Butterworth went to Australia in November 1851 on sick leave. In his reply to the address of the Chinese community, he made some reference to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital:³⁰

"... I take advantage of this opportunity to notice the obligation the Chinese community and the public generally are under

to Seah Eu Chin for his management of the Pauper Hospital, which involved great responsibility, pecuniary and otherwise, prior to the establishment of the present very efficient Committee, one of whose members, my friend Tan Kim Seng, Esq. is at the head of the deputation.

I commend to the special attention and liberal support of the Chinese community, the aforesaid Institution founded by Tan Tock Sing, Esq. whose premature death prevented his endowing it as he had proposed with funds sufficient for the maintenance of a given number of inmates. ..."

The Committee of Management settled down to work immediately, but soon ran short of funds and had to ask the Government for help to build an enclosure for \$300/-,³¹ drains for \$60/-³² and to repair the roof and floor of the hospital.³³ "The Committee of Management have been at some expense in providing clothes for the inmates and procuring other indispensable articles for the use of the Hospital, the monthly subscriptions are inadequate to cover the current expenses."³¹ Government help was also accorded in the removal of night soil and construction of a cess pool.³⁴

Greatly encouraged, the Committee of Management wrote to the Resident Councillor representing the necessity of increased accommodation for diseased paupers and soliciting that the same may be provided by the Government as the funds of the Institution were not adequate to incur such expense. The Secretary's letter gives an interesting picture of the conditions prevailing then. It also propounds the then held medical view that proper ventilation was vital in a hospital:³⁵

"The Committee of Management of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital have authorised me to lay before you the following facts relative to the building and the conditions of the inmates that you may be induced to request the assistance of Government in extending the accommodation for the patients so as to equalise the demand on the charity arising from an increased population.

When this building was thrown open to the public, the number of inmates seldom exceeded 120, but lately the number is seldom below 160 and is monthly rising.

The inmates are not restricted to one class, the Chinese, but embrace all classes, who being diseased have no other means of

gaining their livelihood than by public begging, and further, police cases, accidents, etc. are admissible, thereby throwing open this charity to all classes of the community without distinction of race or creed and making it in a measure subservient to the wants of Government.

Since this charity has been established, betwixt 2-3,000 wretched beings have benefited by it, but as the number of fit objects of charity is monthly increasing, the Committee are compelled to refuse admission to many, obviating in this way one of the intentions of the Institution which was to rid the streets of diseased unfortunate beggars.

Further, the building is incapable of properly accommodating the present number of inmates which amount to more than 160 as the building only contains 126,600 cubic feet, which at 1,000 cubic feet of air for each inmate, the smallest quantity compatible with health, would only be sufficient for 129 patients, but as partitions and pillars take up many cubic feet, 125 would be the proper number for this hospital instead of which the present number is 163, and the consequence of this crowding joined to other causes is a great mortality even to the extent of one-third of all admissions.

Two cases in particular will better point out the evil and the extent to which it may be carried and how it may interfere not only with the public health but the proper and efficient ends of justice. A few months ago a man was bitten by an alligator and taken to the hospital. His wounds were thought not to be necessarily mortal and yet from the crowded state of the ward, they took on a diseased action and the man died. But more than that, five who lay near him and who from want of accommodation could not be removed, died also from the same influence. In another case, a man was wounded in the shoulder by another. His wound although dangerous was thought not necessarily mortal. He would not remain in a small detached ward for some superstitious idea, but would locate himself in the general ward when his wound took on a diseased action and he died, as stated at the Coroner's inquest, not so much from the wound but from the diseased action produced by the unhealthy state of the atmosphere of the hospital.

This bad and unhealthy condition of the hospital is not only seen in its effect, but can be most perceptibly felt by the senses, so that those whose duties require them and those whose curiosity invites them to visit the hospital are nauseated by the disgusting effluvia undoubtedly proceeding from the crowding of the patients and the bad ventilation of the building.

The Committee of Management do therefore hope that after the consideration of the above facts, you will lay before the Government the necessity of erecting a simple shed contiguous to the hospital so that sufficient room may be afforded to 80 more patients for whose support the Committee will provide the funds and they think with this addition, accommodation will thus be afforded to 200 paupers which will be sufficient at present for the wants of the Settlement."

The Resident Councillor strongly supported this request and drew the Governor's attention to the First Annual Report of the Hospital which had been sent to him.³⁶ (see below):

"... Being Chairman of the Committee of Management and from having had an opportunity of conferring on several occasions with the Officer in medical charge of the Hospital, I am enabled to assure your Honour that the representation made as to the direful effects of the present state of the hospital is not exaggerated, and I do most earnestly hope the Government will not withhold its aid in a case so pressing and where the cause of humanity is so deeply concerned.

On the 21st ultimo, I did myself the honour to forward a printed report of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital for the year ending the 26th June last, by which it will be seen that about 2,600 diseased paupers have been relieved, many of whom without such an asylum would probably have perished.

It will moreover be observed that the balance of cash on hand at the close of the past year aggregated \$862.93½. It would neither be safe nor expedient to reduce this sum in the construction of buildings, for it must be borne in mind that while the expenses of the Institution will doubtless increase, the future receipts are not likely to be equivalent to those of the first years. For instance, the \$444.16 received as interest on Chan

Cheng San's legacy of \$2,000/- is for four years.

I now beg to submit an estimate prepared at my request by Mr. Thomson for a shed 20×80 feet, amounting to \$644.63 which the Committee conceive if constructed adjacent to the spot will afford adequate accommodation and tend to the indispensable comfort of the inmates, and enable the Medical Officer to perform his duty in a much more satisfactory manner than he can possibly do under existing circumstances. . . ."

The Governor in his reply on 15th September 1852 regretted that he could not concur with the Resident Councillor in deeming the enlargement of the hospital as Government works. On reference to the records it appeared that in consideration of keeping the building in repair and paying an Establishment, a ward was set apart for treatment of patients. The remaining and larger portion was for diseased paupers who were thus kept out of the streets as beggars. He doubted if this was a legitimate Government responsibility. If these loathsome beggars were offensive to the residents, their subscriptions to get rid of them should be more liberal. If it was deemed a Police or Sanitary measure to get rid of them, the Municipal Fund should be applied to enlarge the accommodation. He stated that in Penang, the Pauper Hospital was not considered a public building and that the Chinese there had subscribed adequate funds. Under those circumstances he declined to sanction a grant of money for enlarging Tan Tock Sing's Hospital.³⁷

Parts of the first Report of the Committee of Management of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital for the year ending 25th June 1852 have already been quoted. (In Part III of this series). More selections of this report printed at the Singapore Free Press Office will be quoted as they are of great historical interest:³⁸

" . . . The Committee of Management have much pleasure in congratulating all concerned in this most esteemable charity on the amount of good it seems to have done as a glance at the reports of the Medical Officer in charge and the Treasurer will show and when the small amount of money that has been expended is taken into consideration. The subscribers and public must acknowledge the obligation that the charity is under to Seah Eu Chin, Esquire, the Treasurer, for

his economy and active supervision of the inmates and their interests. The Committee beg to tender their thanks to Dr. Cowpar for his great and punctual attention on the inmates and their medical wants.

Since the Committee assumed office, the building has been improved by the construction of drains, the sinking of a well and the erection of a fence which allows the inmates taking exercise but prevents them, assisted by other precautions, from absconding and so intruding themselves on the public.

These improvements have been done at the expense of Government and from the funds at the disposal of the Committee.

The quantity of food supplied to the inmates has been increased so that their fare is very little below that of the class around them, and in all cases, when requisite, the Medical Officer in charge has power of ordering medical comforts.

Clothes consisting of a jacket and trousers dyed in gambier are furnished the inmates weekly; and each one is allowed the trifling luxury of paper and tobacco, the want of which formerly was one cause of their absconding.

The Committee have to regret that the well for the use of the hospital is very inadequate to supply its wants and ere long it will be necessary to use a force pump or increase the number of attendants. The Committee have to regret the more than usual mortality in the hospital, but the reasons they beg to advance will doubtless be found sufficient.

The first undoubtedly is the state of the patients when brought in. In many instances, they have died on the day of admission, while others have lingered for a day or two. From July 1851 to June 1852, 111 died in the hospital. Of these, 69 died within five days of admission, their average residence being 2 days and 9 hours. Others again have lingered for years, one having been an inmate for 3 years and 17 days.

The second and principal cause of this mortality seems to be the almost universal custom of opium smoking amongst the inmates, which by undermining the constitution makes it more susceptible of receiving the impressions of disease, and when the disease has been contracted, leaves the constitution no stamina to resist it.

The following table shows that of those admitted not less than 75% of the Chinese are addicts to this vice:

	Inmates of Hospital	Total opium smokers	Bengalis, Malays, etc. not opium smokers
1851			
September	136	80	7
October	128	85	3
November	136	80	7
December	129	79	10
January	124	69	13
February	135	76	11
March	144	87	12
April	143	93	12
May	156	100	13
	1,231	749	88

The Committee would call the attention of the public and subscribers to the great boon this institution has been to suffering humanity, as in the nearly seven years of its existence, (i.e. the Pauper Shed at Pearl's Hill and later Tan Tock Sing's Hospital), it has afforded relief to about 2,600 diseased paupers, nearly one half of whom would otherwise have perished without assistance in our streets. It has been of much service in enabling the rest who from being sick were incapable of working, to return to their labours and earn their livelihood by their own exertions.

It has taken from our streets the many wretched objects of charity who were hourly to be seen crawling from door to door exhibiting their sores and misery until they disgusted those who relieved them, who wondered that such a state of wretchedness could exist in this land in the 19th century; and finally by the reception of such people into the hospital where they are fed and clothed, the public have been protected in their property and the Government saved the keep of so many criminals, as induced by poverty nothing prevented these unhappy beings from stealing except the want of opportunity and the fear of detection. The latter reason is of no moment in comparison to the cravings of an opium smoker. At present, the Police on seeing a mendicant either put him in hospital or in the House of Correction; if diseased, in the first; if incorrigible, in the latter, by which we are relieved from those who under the disguise of sick beggars never let slip an opportunity of pilfering.

The Committee do therefore earnestly trust that the public will not only continue their contributions but if possible increase them in amount and number, for those who are blest with the means could not bestow their donations on a more useful and humane charity. . . .

Rules and Regulations of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital (see appendix B). . . ."

The Senior Surgeon's Annual Report for 1849/1850 having gone "through the proper channels" did not reach the Court of Directors in London until 1852 when they asked for a report. "We shall be glad to hear what steps have been taken for giving effect to the liberality and benevolent intention of Tocksing, and we hope that you will have been enabled to put the hospital on an efficient footing without that liability to abuse as pointed out by Lt-Colonel Butterworth."³⁹ In the meantime, of course, steps had been taken, resulting in the formation of the Committee of Management.

Before the Committee of Management could be informed of the rejection of their application for Government aid to enlarge the hospital, the Secretary wrote again regarding the deficiency of ventilation and the lack of proper drainage:⁴⁰

"... the very serious inconvenience experienced for the want of a proper drain or drains to carry off the night soil and the tainted water flowing from the wards of the hospital when washed in the morning. The inmates are so much crowded and the want of ventilation so manifest that some alteration in that respect is much needed.

At present, the only outlet for the night-soil, etc. is by an open ditch extending from the hospital along the back of the house occupied by the Apothecary, a few feet beyond which it terminates. The effluvia from the noxious matter collected in the ditch is extremely deleterious and is justly complained of by all parties including visitors. The nuisance is intolerable especially in dry weather. . . ."

The Resident Councillor visited the spot with the Superintendent of Convicts and Roads who suggested that a covered brick drain be constructed from the hospital premises to a properly constructed cess-pool. This would cost \$303/-.⁴⁰ The Governor also rejected this request, but however did not object to assistance being given in convict labour towards effecting these improvements.⁴¹

A special meeting of the subscribers was held on 26th October 1852 to discuss the Government's refusal to aid financially in enlarging the hospital and improving the drainage.⁴² At this meeting, it was resolved that \$1,000/- should be taken from the general funds of the hospital and applied towards the proposed improvements and that an appeal should be made to the public to replace this sum as the funds were barely sufficient to defray the current expenses for maintaining the patients. An estimate of the cost of the proposed additions and alterations amounted to \$1,550/-, irrespective of convict labour, but as it had also been decided to improve the drainage and also to meet other expenses, it was recommended that \$2,000/- should be raised.

At a subsequent meeting of the Committee called for the purpose of considering the best mode of raising the sum required, Mr. Tan Kim Ching, the son of the founder, most liberally volunteered to defray the whole cost of the improvements. These were thereafter proceeded with.⁴²

The Singapore Free Press reported a meeting on 25th November 1852 between the Governor and the prominent Chinese residents to discuss the over-crowding in Tan Tock Sing's Hospital. At this meeting, Mr. Tan Kim Ching repeated the offer he had made to the Committee of Management:⁴³

"... some of the principal Chinese residents met the Officiating Governor yesterday morning for the purpose of considering what steps should be taken, when the difficulty was solved by Tan Kim Ching, the son of the founder of the hospital, offering to defray the entire cost of the additions, estimated at \$2,000/- provided Mr. Thomson's plan is adopted. This act of liberality on the part of Tan Kim Ching removes the main difficulty and his generous example has been followed by others of his countrymen increasing their monthly subscriptions so as to allow the benefits of the hospital being materially extended. The monthly income of the hospital however will still be inadequate to meet its requirements, and we therefore trust many others will be induced to contribute towards its maintenance, and thus assist in conferring a great boon on their helpless fellow creatures who must otherwise be left to perish in their misery."

Mr. Tan Kim Ching on 10th December 1852 placed the \$2,000/- at the disposal of the Resi-

dent Councillor, who forthwith informed Mr. Thomson that the plan submitted by him for increasing the accommodation of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital had been approved by the Governor and Mr. Tan, and that he should proceed with the work and in addition improve the drainage and water supply.⁴⁴

The Parsee community of Singapore responded to the call for aid very promptly. On 13th December 1852,⁴⁵ Messers Byramjee, Hormusjee Cama & Co. sent the Resident Councillor a cheque for \$1,000/- "to be invested in a secure manner and the accruing interest to be appropriated in aid of the funds pertaining to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital." Mr. Church, the Resident Councillor, in acknowledging the gift, replied:⁴⁵

"... I beg to state the desire expressed in the letter shall be rigidly and faithfully executed and it will afford me peculiar gratification to bring this spontaneous act of liberality to the notice of the Managing Committee of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital at their next meeting.

The very handsome manner in which you have presented this gift in aid of a local institution has been reported to the Supreme Government of India.

The assistance afforded is I assure you, most opportune. The inmates of the hospital far exceed the number originally contemplated and there has accordingly been a corresponding increase in the monthly expenses.

The Parsee gentlemen have ever been most conspicuous in India for their disinterested generosity and have evinced by many munificent substantial proofs of their earnest desires to alleviate the misery and wants of their fellow creatures of whatever religion or country they may belong. This noble philanthropic feeling is not confined to the Continent alone but is universal as demonstrated by your present large donation to a hospital in this remote part of the British territories."

The generous donations of Tan Kim Ching and the Parsee gentlemen were duly acknowledged by the Government of India:⁴⁶

"... The Governor General-in-Council is gratified to learn that the intentions of the late benevolent founder of the Hospital have found so liberal a supporter in the person of his son, Tan Kim Ching, and His Lordship-in-Council desires that his acknowledge-

ment may be conveyed to that public spirited gentleman for his ready offer to supply the funds required for the enlargement of the Hospital.

The Governor General-in-Council is also gratified to hear of the donation promised by Byramjee Hormusjee Cama, by which and other subscriptions among the Chinese, this charity is now on such an improved footing."

As any hospital administrator would know, an increase in the number of patients necessitates an increase not only in accommodation and funds but also a proportionate increase in staff. In December 1852, the full-time staff of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital consisted only of one Assistant Apothecary, two Dressers (one of them a Chinese), two coolies and one peon. They were expected to look after 170 patients.⁴⁷

The Medical Officer in charge of the hospital, Assistant Surgeon James Cowpar, found that it was quite impossible to cope with the situation. In January, 1853, he wrote in to ask for an increase in the establishment. His request had the strong support of his immediate superior, Senior Surgeon Oxley, and the Resident Councillor.⁴⁸ This was the first time in Singapore's medical history that a female nurse was asked for.

"I have the honour to intimate that the Subordinate Medical Establishment sanctioned by the Government of India for Tan Tock Sing's Hospital in 1850 is now inefficient. At that time, the number of sick averaged about 100 daily, but since my arrival here in April 1851, the number of applicants has greatly increased, and at the request of the Management Committee. . . ., by placing cots in every available locality, I have admitted nearly all that have applied or been sent, and the daily average for several months has been about 170. I have also been informed that your Committee with the sanction of the Honourable the Officiating Governor have resolved immediately to increase Tan Tock Sing's Hospital so as to accommodate 200 patients. In such circumstances, a much more efficient establishment is absolutely necessary. . . ."

The proposed establishment submitted to the Governor by the Resident Councillor for approval was one Assistant Apothecary, four Dressers, eight coolies, two peons, two cooks and one female nurse. "A female attendant is

very essential. An aged and destitute woman was sent to hospital a few months since by the Superintendent of Police with both legs broken from an accident. Very serious difficulty was experienced in procuring the services of a female attendant to aid and assist the unfortunate patient." This proposed establishment would increase the monthly salaries from Rupees 154-6-6 to Rupees 327-11-2, an increase of Rupees 173-4-8.⁴⁸

The Governor turned down this request.⁴⁹ In his opinion, since Tan Tock Sing's Hospital was a hospital and poor house combined, it would be incorrect to designate all the inmates as patients. He however agreed to two Chinese Apprentices being attached to the hospital:

"... I conceive that the Establishment sanctioned by the Government in 1850 was designed for the hospital portion of the Institution, while attendance on the paupers and chronic disease cases should be supplied by the funds subscribed. . . . I will give my best support to the suggestion of the Senior Surgeon that two Chinese Apprentices should be attached to the hospital as Dressers on salaries of \$7/- p.m. at first, to be gradually increased to the maximum according to qualifications.

It appears to me that any increase in the number of coolies, peons, cooks or nurses should be regulated by the state of the funds subscribed."

A cholera outbreak in March 1853 aggravated the bed shortage in the hospital. "Police be directed to send any case that occurs on this side of the River to the Convict Hospital, sending those that occur in Town to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital."⁵⁰

In May 1853, Mr. Thomson reported that more money was required to complete the additions and alterations to the hospital, and suggested that a water tank should also be built.⁵¹

"... the outlay on the addition to Tock Sing's Hospital amounts to \$1,745.40.

The wings will require another \$300/- to complete them, and the out-offices consisting of cook houses, privies and their sewerage, another \$200/- Total \$2,245.40. For the purpose of completing these therefore it would be as well if funds could be provided to the extent of \$250/- beyond the \$2,000/- subscribed by Mr. Kim Ching.

As the want of water is a great drawback to the healthiness and cleanliness of the hos-

pital, I have given my attention to the subject and have no hesitation in stating that an ample supply on the level with the Hospitals could be provided by digging a tank between Tocksing's and the Seamen's Hospitals and collecting the surface drainage of the proximate parts of Pearl's Hill in it by means of catch-water drains. The cost of the tank and drains to the offices and wells will be about \$300/- exclusive of the cost of convict labour."

These additional sums were approved by the Committee of Management, and Mr. Tan Kim Ching again magnanimously came forward and donated the money.⁴²

Mr. Tan's philanthropy was gratefully acknowledged at the 2nd Annual Meeting of the subscribers to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital held on 25th June 1853. In addition to the resolutions re-electing the Committee and thanking R. Little and Seah Eu Chin Esquires for their valuable services as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer respectively, two more were proposed and unanimously passed:⁴²

"That the thanks of the meeting be offered to Tan Kim Ching Esquire for the liberal gift of the sum of \$550/- in addition to the munificent sum of \$2,000/- previously contributed towards the enlargement and improvement of the Hospital.

That the Committee be authorised to take the necessary measures for erecting in each wing of the hospital a marble tablet with a suitable inscription acknowledging the liberality of Tan Kim Ching Esquire in contributing the sum of \$2,550/- towards the enlargement of the hospital and the provision of other desirable improvements."

The Annual Report recorded "the improvements and additions which have thus been made or in the process of being carried out" through the generosity of Mr. Tan Kim Ching:⁴²

"First, the improved ventilation of the hospital has been secured by removing a number of doors and opening arches in the walls of the main ward so as to throw all the wards into one. Accommodation for 30 additional patients has also been secured by these alterations.

Second, a ward has been formed to the south of the main building on the site previously occupied by the Kitchen and Dressers' Rooms, 70 feet long and 30 feet broad.

Third, the out-buildings at the north end have also been enlarged and improved and room found for the Surgery, Dressers' Rooms, Kitchen, etc.

Fourth, a large tank is being constructed between the hospital and the Apothecary's House, which will afford a copious supply of water to the hospital. The drainage around the hospital will also be materially improved.

We may mention although not appearing in the report that the convict labour supplied by Government in carrying out these operations is estimated at a half of the pecuniary outlay, so that the cost of these improvements and alterations altogether may be set down at \$3,825/-."

The high mortality rate of the patients was also noted in the Annual Report and reasons ascribed:⁴²

". . . The Committee express regret at the great mortality which had taken place amongst the inmates in the past year, and which is attributed to the defective ventilation of the building as well as the overcrowding of it through the great increase of patients. The number of patients in the previous year was 478, while in the year under report it amounted to 752. The rate of mortality during the same periods being 24.47% and 33.51%. The principal causes of death seem to have been Cholera Morbus 9; Debility 60; Diarrhoea 11; Chronic Dysentery 6; Elephantiasis 6; Rheumatism 6; Ulcers 122.

The Committee also assign as a cause of the increased mortality the manner in which the swamp at the foot of the hill on which the hospital stands, is being filled up with sweepings of the Town consisting of animal and vegetable refuse and rubbish, and which are only covered with a thin coating of soil two or three inches thick, quite inadequate to prevent the foetid gases from escaping...."

The improvements in the hospital were approved of by the Grand Jury who in their Presentment of 17th August 1853 stated that "the Jurors have also to express their approval of the arrangements and increased accommodation of Tocksing's Pauper Hospital, which with 201 patients presented no appearance of being over-crowded, showing careful and systematic management, highly creditable to those in charge." But they were not all praise. "The

Jurors deem it objectionable, however, that the Police cases should be mixed up with the Chinese paupers, many of whom are covered with gangrenous sores which must poison the atmosphere and retard their recovery."⁵²

Governor Butterworth returned to Singapore from Australia by P. & O. Steamer on 9th November 1853. He had been away on sick leave for about two years. He was very energetic and two weeks after his return, on 24th November, he visited Tan Tock Sing's Hospital. The Singapore Free Press recorded this visit:⁵³

"Yesterday, His Honour the Governor paid his first official visit since his return to Singapore to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital, attended by Capt. Church, A.D.C. Several members of the Committee, viz. the Honourable T. Church, Esq., Tan Kim Ching, Esq., R. Little, Esq. and Dr. Cowpar, were present. Colonel Butterworth carefully examined the building and personally inspected the appearance of the inmates and their accommodation. His Honour appeared much pleased with the cleanliness and excellent ventilation, and the 'admirable improvements' in the hospital which had been made during his absence, he said, reflected great credit on the Committee of Management. He made many inquiries of the Medical Officer regarding the diseases of the inmates and appeared from his inquiries to have a vivid recollection of former patients. Before leaving the hospital, Colonel Butterworth expressed to Mr. Kim Ching, the son of the founder, his gratification at the accounts he had received during his absence of Mr. Kim Ching's liberality in connection with the hospital. His Honour congratulated Mr. Kim Ching on his following in the footsteps of his father who was the first person for whom the Governor-General of India (the highest personage in this part of the world) inquired on his arrival at Singapore, and when he found that owing to ill-health, Tan Tock Sing could not wait on him, he sent his Secretary to call upon him and expressed the Governor-General's high opinion of his liberality in providing such a hospital for his indigent countrymen. His Honour hoped Mr. Kim Ching would continue to act liberally as he had commenced, and that when he paid his next visit to the building, he would see it in a completed state. He would not require any tablets to record his liberality although his

Honour highly approved of such things, but in the improved appearance of the hospital he would have the best commemoration of his generosity of which his children's children would have reason to be proud."

After his next visit to the hospital on 3rd June 1854, the Governor suggested to the Resident Councillor, after praising all concerned, that maimed paupers might be deported to China:⁵⁴

"With reference to the inspection of the Seamen's and Pauper Hospitals which I made in your company this morning, I desire to record my unqualified satisfaction with those Institutions. . . .

The Pauper Hospital shows by its improved aspect the care and attention bestowed upon it by the Committee of Management, whilst the increased accommodation afforded by the two wings recently constructed solely at the expense of Tan Kim Ching, the worthy and liberal descendant of the generous founder of the Institution, permits no less than 160 Chinese, many of whom suffering from the most loathsome sores, to be comfortably located without causing the atmosphere to be offensively tainted.

I very sincerely congratulate the Committee of Management on the state of this hospital, and I doubt not all who visit it will recognise with me, the same character of order and cleanliness, which is so remarkable in the Seamen's Hospital under the same zealous Assistant Surgeon, aided in management and treatment by Assistant Apothecary Finley and a very attentive Chinese boy by the name of Ah Lam.

It has occurred to me that those paupers who have been cured of their sores but remain in so maimed a condition as to be unable to gain a livelihood without begging in the streets, might be sent back to their own country (not Hong Kong) either at the expense of the Institution or by funds raised for the especial purpose, but this is a matter solely for the consideration of the Committee of Management in whose able arrangements for the welfare of this Institution I have no desire to interfere.

Should an opportunity offer, I beg that these few observations may be communicated to all concerned, either directly or indirectly, in the direction, control and management of the Seamen's and Pauper Hospitals."

At the third Annual Meeting of the Subscribers to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital held on the 4th July 1854, Dr. Little, the Honorary Secretary, read the annual report "upon the state of this most useful charity."⁵⁵ Tan Kim Ching's liberality was duly noticed. The alterations and additions he paid for had been completed during the year under review, "so as to make the hospital accommodation equal to the wants of the Settlement. The ventilation of the building had been improved, and the general arrangements of the charity were so complete as to elicit from the Governor who had visited it recently the most unqualified recommendation." The high mortality rate of 32½% was commented upon. Of the 316 fatal cases, 112 or more than one-third died within one week and several within three hours after admission. "A great number of the cases admitted into the hospital consisted of paupers picked up from the streets and road sides or brought from the miserable haunts to which they nightly resort, whose constitutions are irretrievably injured by the long existing diseases and poverty; others with gangrene of the toes and feet and other foul ulcers, who from their debilitated state, afford little hope of recovery."

Several resolutions were proposed and unanimously agreed to; thanking the Committee of Management, the Secretary, the Treasurer and Medical Officer for their past services. A new Committee was elected. Tan Kim Ching was thanked for his "liberality in defraying the expenses of painting the hospital and burying all the paupers." It was also resolved that the Governor be invited to become the Patron of the Hospital "seeing the deep interest His Honour takes in the hospital."

The Hon. Secretary wrote to the Governor regarding this on 7th July, and the Governor replied on the same day:⁵⁶

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter under this date, and in reply I beg you will do me the favour to intimate to the Subscribers to Tan Tock Sing's Hospital that I accept with pride and pleasure the office of Patron to the above Institution, the management of which reflects the highest credit on all concerned.

W.J. BUTTERWORTH."

At this meeting, the Treasurer reported that he had a balance only of \$651.99. The expenditure during the past year was \$2,845.33 while the subscriptions amounted to only \$2,620.34,

and the Treasurer had to use part of the previous year's reserve of \$876.98 to defray the expenses.⁵⁵

It was very timely at this juncture that a wealthy Arab merchant, Mr. Syed Allie bin Mohd. Aljunied, "placed the munificent sum of \$1,000/- at the disposal of the Committee of Management of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital, which amount is to be invested in houses, and the rents and issues thereof to be applied for the benefit of the charity."⁵⁷ He also offered \$800/- with an annual quit rent of \$60/- for a piece of Government land which he wished to make over for the benefit of Tan Tock Sing's Hospital. The Governor on 31st July 1854 permitted the land to be disposed of on a lease of 99 years on the terms proposed with the understanding that no remission of the quit rent could be allowed.⁵⁸ The legal formalities of this gift were not completed until 1857. (see Appendix C)

In August 1854, the Act passed on 22nd November 1850 to prevent the landing of beggars (see above) was re-published "for general information, and the attention of all Captains, Commanders, Masters or Nakodas of Ships, Junks, Topes, Boats, Prahus and other vessels is particularly directed to the first and last portions of the said Act."⁵⁹ The Resident Councillor was directed by the Governor to "call the special attention of the Sitting Magistrate and Master Attendant" to this Act, and was informed that

"The Lt-Governor of Hong Kong will make correct translation in Chinese—300 copies—and issue to the several junks entering the Roadstead and for circulation in your Residency.

H.M. Plenipotentiary in China has promised to have the Act published and circulated amongst the Chinese population in the five Consular Ports particularly in Amoy from whence the greater number of junks visit the Straits."⁶⁰

On the evening of the 13th September 1854, some of the crew of Her Majesty's Sloop "Lily" (known as "Lily Troupe") gave a theatrical and musical performance at Theatre Royal.⁶¹ Part of the proceeds (\$100) was distributed among five local charities. Tan Tock Seng Hospital's share was \$20.⁶² This was the first of many charity performances in aid of Tan Tock Seng Hospital. (To be continued)

APPENDIX A

Act No. XLI of 1850

An Act to prevent the landing and leaving of decrepit Beggars in the Settlements of Prince of Wales Island, Singapore and Malacca.

Whereas much public inconvenience has arisen by Masters of Ships and Nakodas of Junks and other Vessels landing and leaving in the Settlements of Prince of Wales Island, Singapore and Malacca, diseased, maimed, blind and decrepit persons, who afterwards beg for subsistence in the public streets, it is enacted as follows:

1. From the First day of January 1851, all Captains, Commanders, Masters or Nakodas of Ships, Junks, Topes, Boats, Prahus or other Vessels who shall bring and land, or cause to be brought and landed in any part of the Settlements of Prince of Wales Island, Singapore and Malacca, or in any of the places now or hereafter to be subordinate or annexed thereto respectively, without leave of the Superintendent of Police of such place, any diseased, maimed, blind or decrepit person, not having the means of subsistence and who may be hindered by his or her diseased, blind and disabled state from earning a livelihood, shall, on conviction before two Justices of the Peace, be liable for every such offence, to pay a fine not exceeding One Hundred Dollars, and in default of payment, to be imprisoned for any period not exceeding two calendar months.
2. Any two Justices, upon complaint of the Superintendent or other Officer of Police, that any such person, who has not resided one month in the Settlement, has been found begging, or

has become chargeable to the Settlement, may cause such person to be brought before them, and may examine such person and any other witnesses on oath or solemn affirmation touching the place from which he or she was brought to the said Settlement, and may cause any such person to be removed to the place from which he or she was so brought in such manner as shall be from time to time directed by the Governor of the said Settlements, and the reasonable cost of such removal shall be borne and paid by the Master of the Vessel by whom such person was brought to the Settlement, and may be sued for and recovered as so much money due from him to the East India Company, and paid by the Company on his account.

3. The Captain, Commander, Master or Nakoda of every such Vessel shall, within twenty-four hours of the arrival of the Vessel at any one of the said Settlements, deliver to the Master Attendant of the Port a true list of all the passengers embarked on board of his Vessel at the time of such arrival, specifying the name, nation and rank or condition of life of each; and every such Captain, Commander, Master or Nakoda who, without reasonable excuse, shall neglect to deliver such list within the appointed time, or wilfully make out or deliver a list which is false or incomplete in any respect, shall on conviction before two Justices of the Peace, be liable to a fine not exceeding Five Hundred Dollars, and in default of payment be imprisoned for any term not exceeding three calendar months.

APPENDIX B

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF TAN TOCK SING'S HOSPITAL (1851)

At a meeting of the Committee of Management held on the 4th July 1851, the Honourable T. Church, Esq. in the Chair, the following rules and regulations for the government of the hospital and its inmates were severally proposed, considered and adopted:

1st Meetings, when and where

The Committee of Management shall meet at the Hospital on the third Tuesday of every month.

2nd Business to be transacted at the monthly meetings

At the monthly meetings of the Committee, the Honorary Secretary shall read the proceedings of the last meeting. The Committee shall then appoint one of their body as a Visitor for the space of one month, transact the general business of the hospital such as the inspection of the Books and Accounts, the state of the hospital and its inmates; receive the report of

the monthly Visitor and Surgeon, and transact any other business it may deem necessary.

3rd Extraordinary meetings

It shall be competent for any one member of the Committee to call an extraordinary meeting through the Honorary Secretary who shall in his notice state the object of the extraordinary meeting.

4th Vacancy

Whenever a vacancy may happen in the Committee of Management the members at their next monthly meeting shall themselves fill up the vacancy.

5th Quorum

Any three members shall be sufficient to constitute a quorum.

6th Honorary Secretary, his duties

The duties of the Honorary Secretary shall be to keep a record of all the proceedings of the Committee of Management in a book called "Record of Proceedings", which book shall be kept at the hospital except when required by the Honorary Secretary and all the entries therein shall be signed by the Chairman officiating at the time. The Honorary Secretary shall also conduct the correspondence, keep copies thereof and preserve all papers and documents belonging to the hospital except receipts for payment.

7th Treasurer, his duties

The Treasurer shall be requested to attend all monthly meetings, furnish a statement of the interim expenses and the current account of the hospital. He will collect every six months, that is, July and January of each year, the subscriptions in advance, pay all accounts previously audited by the Medical Officer in charge, furnish a yearly statement of the finance and be accountable for the monies in his possession.

8th The Surgeon, his duties

The Surgeon or Medical Officer appointed by Government shall be expected to furnish an abstract of the monthly returns stating in addition the proportion of opium smokers amongst the admissions.

9th The Medical Officer, his duties

The Medical Officer shall be requested to attend the monthly meetings of the Committee to suggest alterations and improvements in matters connected with the hospital and give

his opinion on all points affecting the health and condition of the inmates.

10th Class and description of inmates

The Medical Officer will discharge such inmates as he deems sufficiently recovered to enable them to earn their subsistence, and select such as he thinks are capable of light work but not so convalescent as to dispense with medical superintendence.

11th Reception of paupers

The Hospital shall be open for the reception of diseased paupers of all classes unable to earn their subsistence from their infirmities.

12th

It shall be competent for any one member of the Committee or the Medical Officer in charge or the Superintendent of Police to authorise the admission to the Hospital of any person he may think a fit object of relief and no person shall be admitted unless so authorised.

13th Emergent Cases

In regard to applicants not really paupers, the Medical Officer in charge is authorised to receive only such emergent cases as severe accidents, etc. on the parties paying ten cents daily.

14th The Apothecary, his duties

The Apothecary in addition to his medical duties shall see that the inmates of the hospital are provided with the quantity and quality of food and clothing as shall be fixed by the Committee, and shall be prepared to carry out the orders of the Committee for the health, comfort and work of the inmates.

15th The Apothecary responsible for the cleanliness of the Hospital

The Apothecary shall be held responsible for the general cleanliness of the Hospital and compound and the several apartments therein and of the inmates of the Hospital.

16th Apothecary to be allowed a peon

To enable the Apothecary more efficiently to perform his duties, he shall be allowed one additional peon on a monthly salary of \$5/- who will be under his orders. Further to assist him he shall be at liberty to employ such of the inmates as he may think fit and qualified and whose complaints do not incapacitate them, but previous to employing such inmates he must

obtain the special permission of the Medical Officer in charge.

17th Clothing

The Apothecary shall see that each inmate is furnished with clean clothes once a week or oftener if requisite, and that the cast-off are washed and repaired by such inmates as he may appoint for the purpose.

18th Clothing

The Apothecary on the admission of an inmate shall inspect his clothing. If unserviceable it shall be burnt; if not so, it shall be ticketed and deposited in a safe place and returned to the owner on his discharge.

19th Estimates for clothing, etc.

The Treasurer shall be required to obtain estimates of the clothing and bedding of the inmates sufficient for a period of six months for approval of the Committee.

20th Employment of inmates

The indoor employment for such of the inmates of the Hospital as the Medical Officer in charge shall deem fit for work shall be furnished them agreeable to the orders of the Committee, and that one half of the nett proceeds of such labour be applied to the formation of a fund to supply extra expenses of the Hospital such as furnishing the inmates with wine, opium, medical comforts, etc., while the other half shall be divided among the working inmates on their discharge.

21st Use of opium, etc. forbidden

That the use of opium, baang and spiritous liquors by the inmates be strictly prohibited unless ordered by the Medical Officer in charge.

22nd

That in all cases where the Medical Officer in charge shall order extra diet, opium, spirits

or medical comforts, the Apothecary shall note the same in his books.

23rd Removal of dead bodies

On the decease of any inmate, the fact shall be reported by the Apothecary to the Medical Officer in charge, but without further reference the Apothecary shall remove the body from the Hospital to the Public Funerary to await the orders of the Medical Officer in charge.

24th Permission to leave the Hospital

Without the permission of the Medical Officer in charge no inmate shall leave the compound of the Hospital.

25th Subscriptions

That a few lists of subscribers and the amount of their subscriptions, and of the donors and of their donations with a short statement of the objects and usefulness of the Hospital be struck off in English and Chinese. That a list be placed in the Hospital and one furnished to each of the members of the Committee so that no exertion be spared to increase the fund at present much too limited.

26th Annual Report to be published

The Committee of Management shall make and publish an annual report of the progress of the institution, the amount and nature of the relief afforded specifying the number of persons admitted, discharged, etc., the names of subscribers, their amount of subscriptions, the expenditure and rules and regulations of the management of the Hospital, etc.

27th Diet of inmates

Further it was resolved that the diet of the inmates should consist of one catty of ordinary rice for each person per diem, and that \$1.50 should be allowed for every 100 for "chow-chow" per diem, and that the details be left to the management of Seah Eu Chin, Esq. who has for some time ably managed them.

APPENDIX C

ORDINANCE No. VII of 1880

An Ordinance to incorporate Tan Tock Seng's Hospital.

.....

And Whereas by a deed indented, made on the 8th day of December 1857, the late SYED ALLI BIN MOHAMED AL JUNIED, an Arab

merchant of Singapore, assigned, for a nominal consideration, the remainder of a term of 99 years from the first day of June 1857, in a piece of land situate in the district of Singapore town, as described in Government deed numbered 1434, and dated the 1st June 1857, from the then Government of the Straits Settlements, the

Hon'ble the East India Company, and estimated to contain an area of five acres, one rood and eighteen poles, subject to a yearly rent of sixty dollars to be paid to the said East India Company, to the Hon. HENRY SOMERSE MACKENZIE, Resident Councillor at Singapore, ROBERT LITTLE, Esquire, of Singapore, Honorary Secretary to the Committee of Management of Tan Tock Seng's Hospital, and TAN KIM CHING, Esquire, of Singapore, merchant, on trust to hold the said land for the sole use and benefit of the hospital, commonly known as Tan Tock Seng's Hospital, but subject to the control, order and discretion of the Committee of Management of the said hospital, for the time being, or the major part of them, to apply the rents, profits and advantages arising from the said land for the purposes of the said hospital, as should, from time to time, be directed by the said Committee of Management, but so that the said Trustees and the said Committee should not sell, alienate, mortgage or otherwise encumber the said land, and should not demise or lease the land, or any part thereof, for any term longer than 25 years, and in default thereof, the said Syed Alli, his heirs, executors, administrators or assigns, might resume possession for the residue of the said term then unexpired; and it was further provided in the said deed that the persons holding the offices of, or acting as, Resident Councillor of Singapore, and Honorary Secretary to the Committee of Management of the said hospital, for the time being, and the eldest male descendant in the male line of Tan Tock Seng above named, the founder of the hospital, should at all times act as, and be, Trustees under the said deed; and that when the persons holding the said office vacate their offices they should ipso facto cease to be Trustees under the said deed; and in the event of the said offices of Resident Councillor, Honorary Secretary to the said Committee of Management be abolished, or remaining vacant for more than two months at any time, and in the event of failure of properly qualified male descendants of the said Tan Tock Seng, or in any of those events, it should be lawful for the Management Committee of the said hospital, or of any other persons in whom might be vested the management of the hospital, for the time being, to nominate and appoint any fit person or persons to be Trustee or Trustees under the said deed so that the proper number of Trustees might at all times be kept up.

Abbreviations Used:

- S.F.P. = Singapore Free Press. Microfilm. National Library Holdings, Singapore.
 S.S.R. = Straits Settlements Records. Microfilm. National Library Holdings, Singapore.
 S.T. = Straits Times. Microfilm. National Library Holdings, Singapore.

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