

1880 V-103

JAPAN.

IN June, 1876, the number of medical practitioners in the returns of two cities and forty-three prefectures was estimated at 23,284, about twenty-one per cent. of whom were practicing medicine according to the Western system, and all of the remainder either according to the mixed systems of China and the West, to that of China and Japan, or to the pure Japanese one.

Knowing that it would be impossible to make the change to the new methods at once, and thus to secure uniformity, the government adopted a politic course. It strongly recommended to the young medical students to pursue only the most approved course of study, and to those now in practice to continue as in the past, or to make such changes as the exigencies or advantages of their practice might afford. In 1876 the late home minister, Okubo, issued a notification "that the examination of candidates for a certificate to practice medicine in accordance with the following regulations shall be introduced into every prefecture as soon as the condition of medical men in each prefecture shall admit:—

Regulations for the Examination of Candidates. Article I. Any one desiring to become a medical practitioner shall be required to apply for a certificate, which shall be given only after the prescribed examination has been passed satisfactorily.

Note. Any one who has been at the time of the issue of these regulations practicing medicine shall not be obliged to subject himself to an examination. The local authorities shall therefore take the proper measures to distinguish such medical practitioners from those who have been licensed after a satisfactory examination. . . . The subjects for examination for candidates are the general principles of natural philosophy, of anatomy, of physiology or pathology, of pharmacology, and the theory and practice of medicine and surgery. . . .

Article III. The examination shall be held at a convenient place, such as the local government office or public hospital; and the results shall be reported to the Home Department, which shall grant the certificates. . . .

In June, 1877 (the date of the last published report),

there was in Japan a population of 32,812,116, of whom 81,268 were medical practitioners (this enumeration includes all of the prefectures except Kagoshima), giving a proportion of 0.91 to the thousand of population. Of this army of "doctors," 20,568 were followers of the Chinese system; 4098 mixed and non-classified; 6402 the Western system; and 200 licensed after the prefectural examination. Though no official reports are at hand, yet the testimony of the native physicians in Hokkaido and at the line of hospitals in North Nippon is to the effect that Western medicine has made greater progress during the past three years than at any previous period; that the number of the Chinese school of doctors is decreasing; that the people are slowly being educated up to the advantages and benefits of the new treatment, though a very large number still adhere to the old methods; that local hospitals and dispensaries are springing up in all parts of the interior; and that the Western ideas of hygiene and sanitation are receiving increasing attention from all the local authorities.