

THE HOSPITALS OF JAPAN. BY EDW. C. REGISTER, M.D. Japan has few hospitals, only ten. This is certainly a very small number when we consider that the country has a population of forty-five million and several large cities, one as large as Philadelphia, and three with five hundred thousand inhabitants each. It has a few cities with a hundred thousand people and no hospital at all. Tokyo, the capital of the nation, only has two, the Imperial University Hospital and the General Hospital.

The former is the largest, and in many respects as good as any institution of the kind I have ever seen. It is as large as all the other hospitals of Japan put together. It is almost entirely maintained by the government. It has eighty resident physicians and six hundred trained nurses. The average number of patients treated there is twenty-two hundred, and in the various out-door departments many thousand sick people are treated annually. The main building makes no pretensions to architectural beauty; it is a perfectly plain two-story brick and stone structure, a hundred feet wide and four hundred feet long. It is located in the middle of a beautiful park, with its lawns, green terraces, tropical trees and plants, playing fountains, and here and there artistically arranged and various shaped, are comfortable looking rests or seats, some in the sun, others in the shade, many grouped around fountains, while some are scattered along little rippling streams. Here landscape gardening has reached the highest state of development.

This building is only used for offices, reception rooms, parlors, library, museum, billiard rooms, drug rooms, and the microscopical department. This microscopical laboratory is the largest and most complete I have ever seen. Here I had the pleasure of meeting the celebrated Dr. Kitasato, who was sent several years ago, to China and India by the Japanese government to investigate the bubonic plague, and who successfully isolated the bacillus of this disease. He is evidently a very scientific man and an accomplished physician.

With the exception of the operating rooms, all the other buildings connected with this institution are one story high, made of wood, and join the rear of the large stone building, leading off from it at right angles and parallel with each other. They are four in number and extend back possibly five hundred feet. About every hundred feet they are connected with each other by covered bridges, with glass sides. On both sides of all the wooden buildings there is a narrow veranda, which is usually closed by sliding glass doors. All the wooden buildings are painted white, inside as well as outside.

The physicians and nurses wear white uniforms, European in style. With all this perfectly clean and glittering glass, surrounded by so many flowers and shades, with the sun's rays peeping in here and there, it certainly looks beautiful and healthy.

Connected with these buildings there is one for the physicians, one for the nurses, and one for the servants, a department for lying-in patients, one for contagious diseases, and one for the insane. The architecture of them all is uniform, the distance between them, and the way they are connected, are all identically alike. Several other buildings, used for minor purposes, are scattered about over the park, making a perfect net-work of houses, all conveniently arranged and magnificently kept.

The surgical department is a large two-story stone structure, plain, but rather handsome. It stands off to itself. It is a comparatively new building, has only been finished about a year. It has several operating rooms and amphitheaters, and

can take care of about two hundred surgical cases at a time. Minor cases are usually cared for in the main hospital building.

Surgeons in this country are very conservative, a great deal more so than in America. Patients are slow to consent to be operated on. They have to know that it is their last chance before they will consent. This is not because they are cowards or not as brave as other people are. It is because they have acquired, and to some extent inherited, a prejudice against surgery. This is not peculiar to the Japanese, it is characteristic of all oriental-semi-civilized people where Buddhism exists. Some of its former teachings prejudiced the people against surgical operations. To cause bloodshed except when favored by their god of war was a great wrong. There was no exception to this rule, even in their relations to the lower animals. To a great extent this prejudice is gradually being overcome.

This makes the surgical work of this great hospital rather small when compared with its other departments. It has septic as well as aseptic operating rooms. In the former they pay very little attention to cleanliness, but in the aseptic operating rooms every thing glitters and is in perfect order and is, no doubt, thoroughly aseptic. In and around these operating rooms you can see large and beautifully arranged instrument cabinets filled with every apparatus and appliance known in connection with modern surgery. The most of them are made in Japan, but they import some of them from Germany, England, and a few from America. The wards were overcrowded, and the rooms for single patients are very small, not over ten feet square, and, strange to say, in an institution so modern and so well equipped in so many respects, would furnish their first-class rooms, just as they are in a hotel, with velvet carpets, rugs, curtains, cloth-covered sofas and chairs.

The crowding of their wards to overflowing seemed to me cruel, yet the patients looked comfortable, and many of them happy. Both sexes were often in the same ward, being bathed and dressed at the same time, without any embarrassment to any one.

It has been said that nudeness can be seen in Japan more than any other place in the world, but it is never looked at. The correctness of this was impressed upon me when going through the wards of this hospital.

While the surgeons in this country are very conservative, they are not timid. Many of them do excellent work. I spent a day in this Imperial University Hospital, saw several operations, and I observed nothing that was not intelligently and skillfully done. One young assistant surgeon, who could speak a little English, told me that he had used the Murphy button seventeen times without a single failure, and that the chief surgeon had performed seven laparotomies for perforation in typhoid fever and had saved three cases.

I was astonished to see so many cases of tuberculosis in this hospital. Forty per cent. of the inmates had tuberculosis. Going back over the records for five years shows that 35 per cent. of all cases admitted were tuberculous. This great susceptibility to tuberculosis, on the part of the Japanese, was something new to me. Statistics show 32 per cent. of all deaths in Japan is due to tuberculosis. In America it is less than 15 per cent., and we are justly alarmed.

Rheumatism was the next most prevalent disease I found in this hospital, and skin diseases were very rare.

It is easy to observe the causes of consumption in this country. Leaving out all hereditary tendencies, the habits and customs of the people would naturally cause it to develop. Their houses are always built on the ground, uniformly one-story high, few windows, and they are like pigeon holes. They have few facilities for heating their houses. Even in the coldest weather they will do without fire, consequently their homes are cold, damp and dark, just the conditions and surroundings to favor the development of tuberculosis. Besides, a Japanese seldom

has anything on his floor. Sometimes, among the better classes, they will use a straw matting, something like we use in the summer. They always take off their sandals or wooden shoes at the door, and wear nothing on their feet while in the house, no matter how cold and damp it is. With these conditions and methods of living it is not surprising that consumption and rheumatism are so prevalent.

The absence of skin diseases among the Japanese is evidently due to their cleanliness. I suppose they bathe more than any people in the world. There are over eleven hundred public baths in Tokyo alone, and it is estimated that four hundred thousand people patronize these baths daily. They use the water a great deal hotter than we do in America, seldom under 110° F., and often 118° or 120° F., and remain in the bath for hours, especially in the winter, as it is a cheap way to keep warm. It costs them one sen for each bath, about a half cent in American money.

I noticed in the Imperial University Hospital that they were giving creosote in pulmonary tuberculosis, in seventy-five-drop doses, three times a day, injecting serums made in Germany, and experimenting with some made by themselves. They were using inhalers and sprays just as we do, and I suppose with about the same success.

The General Hospital at Tokyo is quite a nice institution. It is partly under the control of the Red Cross Society of Japan. It has twenty resident physicians and two hundred trained nurses. Its average attendance is seven hundred, besides thousands of sick people are treated in its various out-door departments. The buildings are old and the grounds have an appearance of dampness and neglect, a lack of brightness that does not very favorably impress a visitor. The general arrangements of the buildings are on the cottage plan, with one very large brick building which is used for the officials of the hospital. The operating rooms are fairly well arranged and equipped. They will compare very favorably with some of our large hospitals.

The Yokohama Hospital is small and badly arranged, and evidently poorly managed. It is attended by a staff of three physicians, who live in the city. The building is old, damp and dark, surrounded by no gardens or yard.

Kioto, the old capital of Japan, a city of six hundred thousand population, only has one good hospital. This is the Kioto Hospital Medical School. It is a hospital and medical college combined. They are under one management, and the buildings are connected. The grounds cover ten acres and are beautiful. The buildings cover about three acres, and all but one of them are made of wood, and are two stories high. The main building is three stories high, built of stone, and it is new and a handsome structure. Twenty-eight physicians are connected with this school and hospital. Twenty-one students were graduated last March. All the physicians live in little cottages, on the hospital grounds, and the students room in the main building. Three physicians from Germany and one from Holland teach in the medical department. It is partly supported by the city government.

About five years ago all of its buildings were destroyed by fire, and they have only in the last year finished rebuilding them, consequently everything is new and up to date. They have two operating rooms not connected with amphitheater halls. I have never seen anywhere two operating rooms more conveniently arranged or more thoroughly equipped. Here pharmacy is taught as well as medicine.

Several years ago the medical school was divided into a medical school proper and a preparatory medical school. When a student begins with the preparatory studies it takes him twelve years to graduate. This hospital has the most complete hydrotherapeutic establishment of any in Japan. It occupies the basement of the main building, and is thoroughly modern in every respect. It comprises a Turkish bath, vapor bath, Charcot's douche, electric baths, sulphur baths, iron

baths, and a suite of hot and cold baths with sprays. Annexed to this department is a completely fitted medical gymnasium.

The Doshesha Hospital at Kioto is kept up by a Canadian mission. It has no resident physician and only one trained nurse, who is from New York. Three physicians attend the hospital, each a week at a time, in rotation. They have six or eight beds fixed up especially for foreigners, and many Europeans and Americans have been cared for there.

Nogoya, a city of two hundred thousand population, has only one small hospital. It is a private institution, run by three rather bright, enterprising young Japanese physicians. The buildings were not originally constructed for the purpose for which they are now used. The grounds are small, no lawns, and few shades. The surroundings had a dilapidated, neglected look, and the inside was dark, damp and had a mouldy smell. Their little operating room looked neat, but was poorly furnished. They had sixteen patients, but none of them were surgical cases.

Osaka has a city hospital. I did not have an opportunity to visit it.

Kobe and Nagasaki each has a hospital. The one at Kobe interested me greatly. Its buildings are very large and it is evidently well patronized. They have eighty trained nurses, and an average of two hundred and fifty patients. Its reception rooms for out-door patients were crowded to overflowing. The general operating room for third-class patients interested me more than anything surgical I have seen in Japan. Here seven operations in one room were being performed at one time. It reminded me of Barnum's circus, it had so many attractions going on at one time. It had no preparatory ante-room for undressing or dressing. The anesthetic was administered and, in fact, everything connected with each case was done in this one room. Female as well as male patients were admitted and treated or operated on as their time came. I noticed one surgeon was operating for urethral stricture in the male, another setting a broken arm for a little boy, while another was doing gynecological work. Only seven physicians remain in the hospital at night, all the others live in different parts of the city. I could not learn how many were connected with it or how they were appointed.

The Red Cross Society has recently established a hospital in Kobe. The day I visited it it only had three patients, one nurse, and no resident physician. I did not see the hospital at Nagasaki. I understand it is used partly for the Japanese navy. America, England and Germany all have naval hospitals at Yokohama.

I suppose it might be said that there are a great many other hospitals in Japan that I have not mentioned. There are many little mission hospitals where they are doing dispensary work, and often they have a few beds where they take care of three or four patients at a time. A great many physicians have their own little private hospitals. I visited several of them. They are so small, have so few facilities, and are so poorly patronized that they are not recognized by the local city directories. The Japanese army has several hospitals. I did not, of course, visit them.

The Imperial Hospital at Tokyo, that I described at first, seems to be the medical center of Japan. Nearly all the best people, throughout the country, when they have to submit to any important surgical operation, or have any serious complicated disease, go there. The distance from any part of Japan to Tokyo is short, the railroad facilities are good and the fare is less than a cent a mile. This makes the surgeons, physicians and specialists there very accessible, and they are patronized more than they are in any other part of the country.

The Japanese physician is peculiarly fitted for certain departments of medicine. It is characteristic of the best element of the race to be industrious, deliberate, careful, and he loves, more than anything else, to work for days, weeks, and even months, at a single thing. Mr. East certainly knew the people well when he tersely said that they seemed to be "great in small things and small in great

things." I notice that they are enthusiastic workers in microscopy, their patience seems never to tire; they will prepare slide after slide, specimen after specimen, and their interest never sags. This kind of work suits them.

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