

### THINGS MEDICAL IN JAPAN.

Japan, "The Land of the Rising Sun," as the natives delight to call their country, was not blessed by Dame Nature, like Java and the Philippines, with a tropical climate and the wealth of luxuriant growth of trees, shrubs, fruits and flowers which make those countries appear like gardens of Eden without much of man's help. What Nature did not do, however, the enterprising Japanese have endeavored to do, and are doing, very well themselves.

Of the some hundred and fifty thousand miles embraced in all the islands of the Japanese empire only about one-tenth can be cultivated, the balance being too rough and mountainous for anything but grazing purposes. To the stranger the wonder is that so small an amount of land can be made to support fifty millions of people, which is the number now claimed by the Japanese government.

Every available foot of ground is kept in a state of the highest cultivation and made to produce to the extreme limit. While growing the useful the artistic natives do not forget the beautiful, but make every nook and corner, that cannot be utilized for other purposes, produce some flowering plant, shrub or tree, a custom which has earned for Japan the name of being a very beautiful country. The native no doubt would, if he could, change the climate of his country so as to make the weather always as beautiful and as soul satisfying as his flower gardens, but this he cannot do, so the fact remains that sometimes there is vile weather in Japan, which is as cold and disagreeable as we have in our middle states. The history of scientific medicine, in Japan, does not extend back over very many years and the physicians, justly, point with pride to the great advancement made in medical matters, in this country, in so short a time.

Thirty-two years ago educated physicians were the exception and medical colleges were unknown in this country. The few educated doctors in Japan, at that time, were either foreigners or Japanese, who had been abroad, for study and training in some of the European medical centers. All other doctors were of the Chinese type, a mixture of herb doctor and voodoo quack, depending on vile mixtures and incantations for their cures. Now there are thousands of well educated medical men, throughout the country, the majority of them educated in home institutions, and doing good, practical, scientific work in accordance with the latest modern medical teaching.

Some of the things that played an important role, for centuries, in Japanese medicine are massage, acupuncture, the moxa and shampooing, all of which, in the hands of trained and skilled men, and used in selected cases, are capable of producing good results, but medical matters in those times being in the hands of the ignorant and unscrupulous, these forms of treatment were used in any and all form of disease that human flesh is heir to, many times doing an immense amount of harm. Fortunately modern education is doing away with some of the worst of the quacks, some of the more vile and inhuman practices, some of the more foolish beliefs in the power of uncanny and unseen spirits but unfortunately here, as in our country, there are still many who are willing to trust their lives and health to anything that has an air of vagueness and mystery about it rather than to things easily understood.

Japan now has eleven medical colleges in active operation, three of which are connected with universities, and are supported by the government. The others are independent of university connection, some, however, receiving support from the district or, as they call it, department in which they happen to be located.

As the medical schools, of this country, are much the same wherever located a description of two or three will answer for all. Nagasaki, the oldest port of Japan, was the first city we visited. This, one time, most

important city in the empire has, since the Russian war, lost its former immense trade with that country and consequently a great deal of its own importance. At present the city claims a population of one hundred and seventy-five thousand and does not have the appearance of being in a very flourishing condition. The streets are narrow, as they are in nearly all of the older cities of Japan, so narrow in fact that vehicles drawn by horses are rarely seen in the business districts, all freight being carried by coolies and all passengers transported in jinrikishas drawn by fleet-footed natives. The Nagasaki Medical college is located about four miles from the center of the city and is composed of a number of frame buildings, the most of them being two stories in height, not very well constructed and poorly finished and devoid of paint, as most buildings are in this country, making the general appearance bad, especially to the American or European eye. The interior arrangement of lecture rooms, laboratories, etc., is as good as will be found anywhere. The equipment of the laboratories is good and up to date but meager, which is not, however, the fault of the energetic and cultured members of the faculty but to the lack of money which unfortunate conditions cannot at present be overcome. In the same campus with the college buildings is a small hospital of about sixty beds, to which are admitted charity patients only. In addition to this hospital the college has under its charge, and consequently the use of the clinical material of the Nagasaki General hospital, which is situated a half mile nearer town than the college buildings. This hospital is also a wooden structure and has accommodations for one hundred and forty indoor patients and in addition to this a suite of rooms for the examination and treatment of a large number of outdoor patients of which there are a plenty at any and all times. Only senior students have access to the clinical facilities of this hospital so there is plenty of material for the entire class. The hospital contains rooms for clinical lectures, and laboratories for work in clinical microscopy, etc. There are six hundred students in attendance, this year, at the college, which is a rather larger number than the medical schools average throughout the country. A uniform course, of four years, is required in all of the Medical colleges of Japan, the curriculum of each conforming to the standard established by the government. The entrance requirements and the course in medicine are about the same as required in our own country except that the preliminary requirements call for English instead of Latin.

Of the three schools connected with universities one is at Tokio, one at Kioto and one at Fukoka. These are called the medical departments of the Imperial Universities but have no special advantage over the others unless it be in the way of financial support. In Tokio, the capital of Japan, a city of two million inhabitants, there are two medical schools—the University Medical School, connected with the Imperial University, and the Charity Medical School, founded by Baron Takagi, surgeon-general of the navy during the Russian war. Each of these schools has an average attendance of about five hundred students. The latter school is especially interesting on account of its illustrious founder who, through his untiring energy, has succeeded in not only building up a successful medical college but also secured funds for the building of a large hospital, the clinical facilities of which are reserved for the use of the students of his own school. This is called the Tokio Charity hospital and has about one hundred and forty beds for indoor patients besides a large dispensary for the care of outdoor patients of which, in this country, there is always a large number.

This hospital, like all the others that we visited, was furnished with the iron bedsteads such as we are familiar with in our own country and on the bedstead they place a mattress somewhat harder than we are accustomed to. Many of the Japanese, however, do not like the bedstead so the mattress is placed on the floor, which makes the native feel at home as that is the way the people have, for centuries, made their beds in this country. The sheets and covering used are much the same as those used in our own country. Everything in and about the hospitals of this country is kept spotlessly clean but to the American there is constantly a feeling of something

lacking, a want of cheerfulness which we desire to surround our patients, especially the convalescents, with. This is probably due to the lack of furnishings which the doctors here say the natives do not miss as they are not accustomed to such things at home, a statement which one who has visited a home of the Japanese laborer, can agree with. The great improvements made in Japan in the past thirty years, by the medical profession, in the building of medical schools and hospitals, in furnishings the whole country with educated physicians, in the improvement of sanitary methods, are certainly wonderful and yet the longer one remains here the more he is convinced that they have not done their best because of that old, gross, too common reason—lack of money—and we bid farewell to our medical brethren of Nippon with the hope and wish that some time their finances might equal their ambition—and we live to see the result.

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