

It may appear to some who appreciate the sympathetic side of Japanese character a strange thing that it should have been left to foreigners to institute efforts of this sort. Miss Riddell, one of the Secretaries of the Kumamoto Hospital, gives a very sufficient reason for this apparent inconsistency. The Japanese, she tells us, do not regard lepers as human beings, they are worse than outcasts. "It is a very usual supposition that leprosy is not a disease according to the law of nature, and having no natural cure, those afflicted by it cannot therefore be of the same order of humanity as others."

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The house surgeon and the specialist of this hospital are of the same nationality as the sufferers, but their medical training, and, above this, their Christianity, account for their presence on the staff. They had under their charge at the end of last year twenty-five patients. The lack of accommodation keeps the numbers at this level. The applications from male lepers are much more numerous than can be granted. We cannot forbear quoting the story of one applicant as told in the report of the hospital. The writer says:—

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"As I write I see before me again a poor man kneeling on the mats, the tears streaming down his swollen, distorted face, without hair on his head, or eyebrows or eyelids, and hands with but a few fingers, upraised in an agony of entreaty, saying, 'But I hear you have a schoolroom, cannot I stay in one corner of it?'—'We have been obliged to use the schoolroom, it is full.'—'Have you not one mat for me? just one where I could stay?'—'I fear there is not even one mat just now.'—'Ah! there is no place in all the world for me! not even one mat!'"

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Of the Christian results there is much to tell, were there space for such recital. But it must be sufficient to mention that not only are morning and evening services held every day by the house surgeon, but that other week-day services are arranged and are fully attended, including a prayer-meeting in which all who wish may take part. In July of last year five patients were received into the Church by baptism, and in October out of twenty-five residents eighteen were Christians, thirteen of these were communicants, and three catechumens were under instruction. We hear not only of the poor and despairing seeking the cross of Jesus, but of medical students and of a lecturer in a medical school who were not ashamed to acknowledge Him of that despised name, as their Saviour and Lord.

## Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



THE International Medical Congress which is to be held during the Exhibition at Paris promises in point of numbers to be a great success, from 8,000 to 10,000 medical men from all parts of the world having signified their intention of being present.

In his annual report, the medical officer to the Beaconsfield (Bucks) Urban Council strongly urges the absolute necessity of a mortuary. A week, he says, sometimes elapses between death and burial, and the dangers of ill-health to the occupants of rooms, separated often only by a wooden partition or a curtain from the decomposing dead, are greater than is often suspected. He adds that he has known of a case in which a father, mother, and two children all slept in the same bedroom where a dead child lay six days.

In a paper read recently before the Royal Statistical Society, Miss Rosa M. Barrett, the writer of the Howard Medal Essay, expressed the opinion that the criminal statistics of various countries show that there is no general decrease of crime among the population between the ages of 16 and 21 years. Though there is for the most part a decrease of juvenile prisoners, an actual decrease of juvenile crime is recorded only in New York, Massachusetts, Ireland, Canada, and some of our Colonies where preventive work has been most active. In England prisoners under 16 years of age are decreasing, but still constitute 14.3 per cent. of the total of prisoners; those from 16 to 21 are increasing, and form 19.4 per cent. These figures are a disquieting commentary upon the lasting moral efficacy of the spread of Board School education. France, indeed, shows an increase both in adult and juvenile crime, and in Belgium special measures have been adopted for keeping under State care juvenile offenders until they reach the age of 21. The question of the best treatment of juvenile offenders is one that bristles with difficulties. The old adage that "prevention is better than cure" especially applies. The timely special training of weak-minded children, who, when neglected, are apt as they grow up to pass into the criminal ranks may help in its solution.

The *Academy* tells a good monkey story from over the water. A pet monkey, belonging to a son of the Rev. W. G. Herbert, pastor of the Caroline Street Methodist Church, of Baltimore, got into the study of the clergyman the other day, opened a volume of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and tore out sixteen pages of the article on Darwin's "Origin of Species." Then it turned to Butler's "Analogy," and it was examining it with great apparent delight when the clergyman returned and put a stop to the proceedings.

A Russian story tells that the Most High once gave a feast to the Virtues, and finding that Charity did not speak to Gratitude, while the other guests conversed freely, asked why. Charity answered for both: "We never met before."

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