

mothers did not love their children, but because they did not know what was the proper thing to do, and she believed that trained nurses could do much to enlighten the ignorance of mothers.

Ether Day, October 16th, 1846, may not convey to us the stirring memories which inspired its anniversary at the Massachusetts General Hospital at Boston, U.S.A. Few of us probably know that it was on this day that in the operating theatre of this beautiful Georgian hospital was given the first public demonstration of anæsthesia to the extent of producing insensibility to pain during a serious surgical operation. The anæsthetic used was sulphuric ether. It was fitting that the anniversary of this event, so far-reaching in its benefits to humanity, should be commemorated; and the opening of the fine new Out-Patient Building and addition to the Nurses' Home, comprising accommodation for forty more nurses, with roof garden, gymnasium and elevator, was very appropriate on Ether Day.

The Rev. M. Mackenzie, M.B., gives some interesting details, in a contemporary, of the Chinese mode of life, which Western nations are prone to regard with some patronage. He says:—"It is generally accepted that to know people you must live with them. Having lived with the Chinese now for five years, I would like to record what I know of the Chinese mode of life. At the outset I remark that as a whole it excels that of European countries. This nation forms a quarter of the globe's population and at present shows no signs of diminution in numbers. Why has China survived when Assyria, Greece, Persia, Rome as Empires have vanished away? It must be due to their mode of life. Enemies and wars, internecine strife make much of the history of China, and yet whilst Empires waned China flourishes.

"Without doubt the Chinese have a physical constitution superior to that of Europeans generally and are capable of enduring more pain. Conditions which would have a fatal issue at home often surprise us by recovering. At Ning-Daik I saw a woman, over sixty years of age, with a fractured shin-bone just above the ankle; the tissues were ruptured and there was much overlapping of the broken ends. All the wound was plastered over with some native vegetable poultice, certain to be unclean. I removed this, and cleansed and stitched, after bringing the ends of bone together. The next time I saw her was three years later, when I was no little astonished to find her well and walking, though I had merely once dressed her wound! He who would effectually improve the sanitary conditions of this country must act with caution and sympathy; no bustling will succeed, they will not be driven. Conditions which astonish the newcomer, such as the diet, housing, dress, and habits of the people, are treated with con-

siderable respect by the foreign resident of half a decade. Instead of considering the Chinese as being all wrong he regards them as being very much right. Armed with the latest filter, he wonders how the Chinese can endure on the frequently impure-looking water taken from a well which is situated close to refuse pits, or, again, he sees vegetables being prepared for the market by washing in a stagnant pond of bad colour and odour. He soon finds that there is little that the Chinaman eats or drinks that has not been well-boiled. Even the tea offered by the roadside is safe to drink, for tea is always made with boiled water. Few water-borne diseases can harm under such treatment. Few organisms can survive through boiling. A Chinaman will not even eat shell-fish raw. They must have plenty of tea to drink, as their farinaceous diet is so bulky. It is quite common for coolies to carry their burdens thirty miles a day living on rice and tea, and this he will do, making a merry greeting to fellow-travellers and humming a tune by the way. Before retiring to his straw bed on boards he will not forget to use the foot-bath. His excellent, well-shaped white teeth and muscular limbs may well be the envy of foreigners. We have little of sanitation to teach him or the field labourer. Just at this time the rice shoots are being planted out, and it seems a matter of little importance to these men whether they wear a hat or not, though the foreigner must carry a helmet."

The Passing Bell.

The circumstances of the death of Mrs. Annie Dyke, a district nurse, residing at Shirehampton, near Bristol, as revealed at the inquest were peculiarly sad. Her stepson stated that owing to illness she had broken down several times. Last week he noticed she had been crying, and she said, "There seems to be nothing for it but to put an end to myself." The witness considered this "merely hysterical." He knew the Hickman affair had got on her mind. Later in the day he identified the body found in the river as that of his stepmother.

Mrs. Dyke was trained for a year at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, and subsequently held district nursing appointments in connection with St. John's House, Worcester, and also at Scunthorpe. Her tragic end points a moral which needs emphasising, namely, the unwisdom of regarding evidence of an over-wrought nervous system as hysteria. It is easy to attribute to this cause illnesses which we do not understand. It is never wise, and it more generally merely means that our own intuition is at fault, our sympathies too narrow, and our hands too clumsy to touch without bruising that little-understood part of the human body—the nervous system.

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