

Numbers of them are to be seen. They are used as ice-bags, or to hold the hot water, and are looked upon as very important articles in a sick-room. The hot water ranks first, then ice.

With the usual courtesy of the nation, and their fondness for the Japanese equivalent to our word "honourable," they speak of "honourable hot water," which is a proof of the high esteem in which it is looked upon by the people. They will describe the bladder as a bag for the "honourable hot water." In Japan it is possible to procure at a chemist's all the common drugs that one can get in England. The Pharmacopœia is the same, although written in Japanese characters; yet there is a Latin index in Roman letters, so if one cannot make oneself understood, one can look up a simple drug, such as quinine, in the Roman letter index, making the Japanese chemist understand what one wants.

Many plants used in medicine all over the globe grow in Japan. It is their native land. The Japanese ability as gardeners is well known, and the wonderful way in which they produce giant plants and dwarf ones. But the medicinal ones appear growing naturally. The best-known drugs are camphora, obtained from a tree found growing wild; menthol, obtained from a herb; colocynthidiz pulp, the pulp of a fruit very much like an orange only darker in colour, at the present day is a very general medicine; and croton-seeds, from which is extracted the well-known croton oil. The Japanese are extremely skillful with their hands, their touch being most delicate. This is largely in their favour when taking up medicine as a profession.

It was a Japanese named Ritasat, who discovered the bacillus that causes tetanus (commonly called lock-jaw), a discovery that was only made after a long and careful research on the subject, which meant painstaking labour and work of a highly delicate nature. A very great amount of skill in bacteriology was necessary before such successful results could have been obtained. Other bacteriological discoveries have also been made by the Japanese, proving that they can quite hold their own with men of other countries.

The hospitals are differently managed to those in England. It is curious that one thing has not yet been altered. The patient in Japan takes his own attendant to the hospital to look after him, which, in itself, shows the entire working of the hospital to be quite different from our own.

As far as hygiene is concerned, the Japanese may well teach Western nations a lesson. The poorest man in Japan will, if he possibly can, have his bath every day. Massage and a general shampoo is largely indulged in by all classes. People make quite a profession of it. The prices vary according to the subject. Among the poor the fee is extremely small.

EMILY L. B. FORSTER.

Our Foreign Letter.

IN AN ITALIAN HOSPITAL.

(More Pages from an Englishwoman's Diary.)

(Continued from page 156, Vol. XXX.)

Rome, January 21st, 1896.—Arrived last night, and am staying with Cssa. S. till I can find a room near the



hospital. I went to look up the pupils at their work, and to have a talk with the Direttore about their training. I found the girls working hap-

pily with the nuns. It has been a wise plan leaving them in their charge these first months, as it has drawn them in a way into our scheme, instead of arousing their opposition to it. They have, though, taught them about all they themselves know, and our President told me that it was fortunate I had now returned, as things seemed to have come to a standstill. The Direttore told me that he had twice sent a probationer to a private case, as they were far more intelligent than the older servant-nurses. This is pretty bad for them, but now I hope to keep them with me, though they must also remain, to some extent, under the Suore. Professor T. (Direttore) said I could have a room in which to give the girls lessons, and promised to hand over a patient on whom to demonstrate the usual A B C of refined nursing (washing under blanket, changing, moving, &c., &c.). This will do to begin with. When the Suore know me and see how "pacific" is my intent, I trust a better chance will be given for helping in the wards, and showing the pupils for what they should be responsible by making them so for special cases. The wards are overflowing, and Suore and inserviente are often overworked, so that really we might be of use and comfort if only all evil feelings of distrust and jealousy can be kept away.

January 25th.—After very discouraging search for a room the last three days. I decided not to go to any that had been recommended, but simply to ask myself at any decent-looking house near the hospital, Via Merulana. The first two houses I tried were failures; No. 1 wanted a single man, and at No. 2 the stairs were too dirty, with crying children on them. The third looked hopeful; clean, quiet stairs, up which I climbed to third floor. An elderly, respectable-looking woman let me in; everything was clean and bright, air and sun in the room they let, and a little servant to wait on one. Terms moderate. I took address, so as to ask the Prefet (husband of our President) to find out if the family were really respectable. But as I liked their physiognomies, and wished to begin work to-morrow at S. Giovanni, I moved in this evening, dear Mrs. St. — bringing me, and giving cakes for first meal. The family Bucca are as friendly as possible, the old lady saying her daughter-in-law would "take me as a sister," and, as she "irones divinely," I shall find her a useful sort of sister to have. They are extraordinarily ungrasping also, and, when I offered

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)