

spent the whole afternoon in composing a letter that should be an example to the erring foreigner of the manner in which a serious correspondence ought to be conducted; describing at length the features of her town and neighbourhood, and discoursing earnestly upon her favourite writers.

By the time an answer arrived she had conjured up a fascinating vision of her Maltese correspondent as a tall, thin, melancholy youth whose studious habits had severed him from his kind, and made him grasp eagerly at any chance of communication with the outer world. This theory would account for the unconventionality of his letter—what should a learned dreamer know of “Mrs. Grundyisms”?

Letter number two, unfortunately for this mental picture, contained a photograph. (Needless to say, Lucette had ignored the request for hers.) A fat, round face, with an aggressive black moustache, and an enormous pair of spectacles, grinned cheerfully at her, and obliterated the vision of the studious youth. Moreover, the letter was written in English, or what the writer evidently thought to be English. He asked that Lucette would correct it carefully, and write back in the same language, as he very much wished to improve in his English composition.

That letter went into the fire forthwith, along with the photograph, and Lucette had the pleasure of seeing the fierce moustache and wicked grin curl up, blacken, and disappear in the flames.

By this time many other letters had arrived—another from Malta, many from Austria, some from Russia, France, and Italy. Several of them were expressed in language of high-flown gallantry, not to say familiarity; many of them contained photographs of the writers; but all of them asked for future letters to be written in English, in order that the correspondents might improve their linguistic abilities. Also one writers had a great craving for picture postcards to add to their collection; and one asked for a few of the leading magazines, to add to a collection he was making of papers and magazines of all countries. Of the customs and literature of their countries there was no word, and Lucette sought in vain for any response to her ideal of Universal Brotherhood.

“Why on earth,” said she to her bosom friend, “don’t some women write to me? These are all men!”

“The women are too busy writing to the men, of course,” responded her friend with unnecessary sarcasm.

Lucette is still seeking for the royal road to her ideal.

JESSIE HARVEY.

## Our Foreign Letter.

### A RED CROSS HOSPITAL AT TOKYO.



This hospital is one of the most important in Japan, and occupies a fine situation in “the city of gardens,” as

Tokyo is rightly called. The Red Cross Society numbers 6,000 nurses and 930,000 members, the Empress heading the list. She is much interested in the Red Cross Hospital, and has a nicely furnished room set apart for her use during her frequent visits there. On the wall hangs a fine portrait of her in European Court dress. By the way, I understand that the Empress and her ladies wear Japanese and European clothes on alternate days, and similarly eat Japanese, and European food on alternate days. It is astonishing to reflect on the strides Japan has made in European civilisation, since the country was burst open to Europe as the result of the American expedition there under Commander Perry in 1853-54. This Red Cross Hospital is entirely on the lines of an up-to-date American Hospital. The Japanese are inimitable imitators, the question now being, how far they can and will surpass that which they imitate. Will their extraordinary progress in European civilisation suddenly come to an end? Will there be a reaction towards their essential Orientalism?

At the present moment there is an Indian army doctor in Japan, who has been sent by our Government to learn the Japanese language and to study Japanese hospital methods. It will be interesting to hear his report after a two years’ residence in the country.

Three hundred nurses are in training at the Red Cross Hospital; they look very trim, these little nurses in their white gowns and curious-shaped caps of white linen, like a square helmet with a red cross marked in the centre on the front.

With the exception of the central building, containing the offices and reception rooms, the hospital is one storied, and has many separate blocks. The lady who accompanied me on my visit, and introduced me to the Superintendent who showed us round, is a life member of the Red Cross Society in Japan; she gained this honour during the war with Russia, when the foreign women ranged themselves with Japanese of all classes from the Empress downwards in helping to make bandages and to care for the wounded soldiers.

After taking tea, European fashion, and being introduced to one or two of the doctors, we started on our tour of inspection, which lasted an hour and a half. A young doctor had been ferretted out who could speak English, but was evidently much relieved to find that, as my friend spoke Japanese, his services as an interpreter might be

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