

there for treatment, and who, forsaken by friends and relatives, are without protection of any kind.

When money is spent or stolen and hands and feet are crippled, the leper must wander away and beg, growing more degraded day by day, spending the nights under the shelter of a bridge or sharing some wretched hovel with other outcasts—the lowest of the low. There are certain places where they congregated, and some years ago one such colony was burnt down by the order of an official, zealous for sanitary reform! The poor lepers were scattered, whither no one knows and no one cares.

There is one of these beggar colonies near the town of Kumamoto, where I lived. A handsome temple stands on the side of a beautifully-wooded hill, approached by a long avenue of ancient cherry-trees. On festival days the place is gay with stalls, where brilliant-hued sweetmeats, toys, trinkets and finery are exposed for sale, but amidst all the gaiety the leper stands, filthy and loathsome, holding up his maimed hands in supplication, for the devotees belonging to this sect believe that they may acquire merit by giving alms and therefore it is a good place for beggars. In former days they used to line the whole long ascent, but afterwards they were chiefly confined to a little space among the trees shut off from the public by a low fence. Once a week I used to visit this temple, distributing Christian literature and inviting the lepers to come to the dispensary. People of this lowest class are generally too demoralised to wish to enter a respectable hospital, where rules have to be obeyed, but they are glad to come and have their wounds dressed once a week and listen willingly enough to a gospel talk from the Japanese doctor.

As we climb the long flight of steps to the temple gate, the tender trill of a nightingale comes to us from the wild woodland on our right. Great trees wreathed in a fragrant-flowered creeper and a dense undergrowth of bushes and bamboo grass completely hide the squalid cottages hidden behind all this loveliness, where vice dwells side by side with abject poverty and disease. I often felt that the moral degradation of many of these people was infinitely more terrible than their physical sufferings, but even in that "darkest spot of earth some love is found." In one hovel a poor crippled leper woman is trying to mend her children's clothes though she can scarcely hold a needle in her poor stumps of hands, and in another a man lies very ill, but all is clean and neat, and beside him sits a young woman with drawn, weary face, carefully counting out a few copper coins. But we must not linger. Climbing the steps we enter the temple court and find all the elaborate paraphernalia of a Buddhist temple, beautiful buildings adorned with every device of art, gay banners, incense burners, candlestands, pitchers of holy water, lanterns of various patterns and colours, and much more that must be seen to be realised. On one side is a plain building set apart for the use of lepers.

See the rosaries in their hands,  
Hear the drum's persistent beating,  
And the endless vain repeating,  
Prayers that no one understands!

"Namu myō hō rengo kyo" are the words, and scholars tell us that they mean "Hail to the lotus leaf!" but they mean nothing to those who chant them, day after weary day, year after weary year. The wealthy worshipper passing in his rich garments picks out the smallest coins to throw to the poor outcasts, and hurries on, trying to forget their ugliness, for no one cares for the leper. Is he not under the curse of Heaven for some terrible sin committed perhaps in a former existence? Why, then, try to prolong the bitterness of a living death? Kinder were it surely to let the accursed one pass as swiftly as may be to the merciful oblivion of death. The Japanese are far from being a cruel people, but such is the bitter fruit of a false creed.

(To be concluded.)

EVELINE W. CROPPER.

## SANITARY MEASURES IN INDIA.

A memorandum, by Surgeon-General Lukis, the Sanitary Commissioner, has been placed before the Legislative Council at Simla, says *The Times*, dealing with the measures taken for the suppression of plague and malaria in India. Regarding malaria, a detailed account is given of the steps taken in the various provinces based on the advice of the Malaria Conference held here in October, 1909. The figures show a marked decrease in the last twenty years among the troops and also among the inmates of the gaols. Since 1908, the memorandum proceeds, the Government of India has given a recurring grant of 30 lakhs (£199,980) from the Imperial revenues for improving sanitation, and last year a special grant of 57 lakhs was made for drainage schemes. A special conference of Sanitary Commissioners will be held in Bombay in November to discuss urban sanitation.

Regarding plague, it is clearly shown in the memorandum that the failure to deal effectively with the disease, in spite of the progress made in the study of it, and the efforts of the Government, is due to the absence of help from the people. Their education and hearty co-operation should supplement the Government in its endeavours to secure sanitation by getting rid of mosquito breeding places near dwellings and by paying attention to home hygiene.

We regret that it was stated in our issue of August 5th that Dr. Emmeline Stuart was in charge of both the Men's and Women's Hospitals in connection with the Church Missionary Society, at Ispahan, Persia. We learn that Dr. Donald W. Carr has for 17 years been in charge of the Men's Hospital.

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