

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NURSES.

THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN NURSING IN JAPAN.*

Report of Miss Take Hagiwara, Hon. Vice-President,
International Council of Nurses for Japan, presented by
Miss Iku Todoriki.

I take pleasure in a report to the Congress on behalf of the Red Cross Nurses on "The Recent Developments in Nursing in Japan."

The Red Cross Nurses in Japan, so far as nursing is concerned, historically have occupied such a peculiar situation as to be distinguished from ordinary ones in Japan; and this report, we hope, may well explain something of the recent developments in nursing in Japan.

At a former International Congress of Nurses, we outlined a history of our Red Cross Nurses. Since then, some rules governing the training school have, whenever occasions required, been altered, yet the objects and the principles of education have remained the same—adhering to the principles of Red Cross and of bringing up proficient and unselfish nurses.

Our Red Cross Hospitals now number twenty one in all, including one Central Red Cross Hospital in Tokyo. These institutions have, as a matter of course, the nurses' training schools. To mention in particular, applicants for probationers must be examined physically, mentally and intellectually. Age restrictions range from 16 to 25 years. The courses of training cover three years. The first year is devoted to scientific studies and theoretical nursing, the second and third years chiefly to practical training.

The candidates for Head Nurses are selected from among the ordinary trained nurses, who are recognised as being thoroughly proficient as well as having executive ability. These are requested to take special courses of training for six months at the Central Red Cross Hospital in Tokyo. They are given not only higher scientific and practical courses but also are taught such subjects as concern hospital management and social service. These nurses and probationers are provided with lodging and boarding, and also an allowance for clothes and other necessary expenses.

After their graduation, they are quite free in their choice of work but for twelve years are under obligation to respond to any call made by the Red Cross Society in a crisis whether in times of peace or of war.

The League of Red Cross Societies, with which the Japan Red Cross joined in 1919, has made us enlarge the scope of our work in time of peace.

As a result, to the curriculum of the training school has been added such courses as concern social service in the field of nursing. The number of graduates from our training schools is over 8,000. We have now a plan in view to train 2,000 students every year. It is a gratifying matter that we are now able to secure better qualified applicants and also that the number of such applicants is increasing year by year. This phenomenon proves the fact that the social position heretofore occupied by nurses in general has been greatly raised, to say nothing of the Red Cross Nurses.

To mention briefly the relief work done by our nurses during the German-Japanese war, that is, 1914-1915, we despatched 76 nurses to the seat of war, and cared for 374 patients including both nationalities.

During the European war in 1914, we despatched 57 nurses to Russia, France and England in the hope that they might be of some help.

During the chaotic period in East and West Siberia, the Japan Red Cross despatched its nurses to the number of 136.

* Presented at the International Congress of Nurses, Helsingfors, July, 1925.

After the evacuation of the Checko-Slovakians from Siberia, our nurses administered relief chiefly to the Japanese sick and wounded, and also to the helpless Russians.

In 1921, we despatched 38 nurses, including Head Nurses, to Saghapien.

During the period of famine in Northern China in 1921, 8 nurses were despatched there.

The Civil War in China from 1922 to 1924 called for help from our branch hospital in Mukden, Manchuria.

The numberless White Russians who had to take refuge on account of *coup d'etat* which occurred at Vladivostock could not be ignored by the Japan Red Cross. As a result of a conference between our Red Cross Headquarters in Chosen and the Governor-General, we had to despatch our relief units to such districts as were deemed necessary.

At the time of the recent catastrophe which occurred in Tokyo on September 1st, 1923, over 680,000 houses were destroyed, the waves of the earthquake extending to such an enormous area as to have included several large towns.

The entire number of refugees exceeded 3,120,000.

The Japan Red Cross lost no time in administering relief to the victims and appropriated five million Yen for relief expenses.

The number of our Red Cross nurses engaged in these services was 2,500 in all, while the patients numbered 558,157.

As year by year the social work in Japan has been developing, the Japan Red Cross has enlarged its scope of work by establishing permanent dispensaries in important towns over the Empire as well as visiting medical units.

The employment of school-nurses is a new phase of work in Japan.

The proper authorities have come to recognise the necessity of creating and maintaining a unified standard of qualifications for nurses. In June, 1915, the Department of Home Affairs promulgated a regulation to that effect. According to this, no woman below eighteen years of age shall be permitted to become a nurse. A nurse must have at least one year of training; and have passed the necessary examinations for nurses; or have graduated from training schools authorised by the Prefectural Government.

In 1922, the whole number of trained nurses throughout Japan was 31,788. Applicants for nurses are yearly increasing. It is no exaggeration to say that the Red Cross nurses are the best qualified and the most thoroughly trained nurses in Japan.

The nursing profession has made a rapid development in Japan of late years, and yet there is every reason to believe that the education in this line should be improved more and more.

Letter from Miss Iku Todoriki.

Société Japonaise de la Croix-Rouge,
Tokyo.

9th February, 1926.

DEAR MADAM,—Allow me just to drop a few lines to you to let you know that I reached my country safe and sound before Christmas with such interesting things I obtained through your courtesy when I visited your institution there on my way home from Helsingfors, at which the International Congress of Nurses was held last July.

All the things shown me are still fresh in my memory, and are now being shared by me to my colleagues.

Thanking you again for the kindness and hospitality you have shown to me and wishing you a great success and prosperity of your work.

I am, Madam,

Yours sincerely,

IKU TODORIKI.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)