

SPIRIT OF BENEVOLENCE.

The spirit of Florence Nightingale so influenced a Japanese that he built a special shrine to honour her.

The following account is extracted from an article in "Japan To-day and To-morrow," published annually by the Osaka Mainichi.

"Florence Nightingale, known throughout Christendom as the incarnation of love and devotion, is deified as a Kannon, the goddess of mercy in Buddhism, in Japan.

"On a hill-top, near Hanayashiki, in Kawabe-gun, Hyogo prefecture, there stands a stone memorial to Gyoki, one of the famous priests of ancient Japan, rising upon a square platform spread over with white gravel.

"It makes one feel strange to find the name of the British woman, with the insignia of the Red Cross, placed on a tall square wooden pillar erected to the right of the platform. The Japanese characters on the tablet read, 'Florence Nightingale Kyuku Kanzeon,' the last two words meaning in effect, 'The goddess who saves people from hardship.'

"On two other sides of the pillar are written words of praise for the great woman and the dates of her birth and death.

"The wooden monument was erected on August 13th, 1932, the anniversary of the death of Florence Nightingale. During the year 1934 it will be replaced by a large stone monument carved partly after the design of her tombstone in Hampshire, England, and partly in accordance with the Buddhist style. An adjoining plot is also provided for the construction of another platform, where the spirit of Nightingale is to be enshrined with the first monument.

"An aged and earnest Buddhist, Tsuyu Nakayama by name, lives in a house close to the spot just described. He belongs to no sect. He has devoted his life to the enhancement of the mercy of Buddha. He is known among only a small number of people, as he does not propagate his beliefs. He heads a group of Buddhist societies called the Fukudenkai.

"In attempting to find out something about this strange priest and the strange monument to Florence Nightingale, the following story was discovered by the writer.

"The old priest became a patient at the Red Cross Hospital of Osaka, in March, 1932, to undergo an operation for cancer. It was his first experience in a big hospital during the 70 years of his life, but almost like a miracle, in spite of his advanced age, he recovered from this usually fatal malady.

"During his stay at the hospital, he was greatly impressed by the self-sacrificing service of the nurses. They awakened his interest in Florence Nightingale, the 'first nurse in the world.'

"He had the nurses tell him about the great English-woman and he also read about her. He found finally a perfect coincidence between the humane efforts of the fair Christian and the mercy of Buddha. He felt it his duty, finally, to bring this spirit of Florence Nightingale closer to the Japanese people, especially nurses.

"He had already found that it was as a pioneer in their work that most nurses had looked up to Florence

Nightingale. Mr. Nakayama wanted to deepen their feeling of respect into one of worship. The nurses must adore her, he thought, so that they would believe in her love and follow her teachings even after they had given up their profession.

"Mr. Nakayama had an artist friend paint a portrait of Florence Nightingale, and this he hung up in his room. Before the painting he placed a miniature shrine dedicated to the woman and an ever-burning light.

"Mr. Nakayama explains that the light is in remembrance of the fact that Florence Nightingale made her solitary rounds of the Scutari hospital with a lamp in her hand every midnight, visiting the beds of the wounded soldiers, both friend and foe, after the battles in the Crimea. He pointed out that the lighted lamp was to the wounded like the visit of a deity, bringing hope and courage to the dying men.

"The light being a symbol of this great love for humanity, Mr. Nakayama wants it to burn for ever. He has provided a watchman to look after it.

"He declares that it will not be long before the Nippon nurses will gather on the hill where the monument is erected from every corner of the country to observe services annually or biannually for the soul of the English nurse.

"Furthermore, Mr. Nakayama states that it does not matter what religion the nurses may have. He wishes only that they offer adoration to Florence Nightingale as if she were their mother, and foster in their hearts the love that embraces enemies as well as friend."

(Communicated by the Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies.)

THE HOSPITAL WORLD.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital is to have a new block of buildings to provide accommodation for 150 medical beds, and the King has agreed that it shall be known as King George V Building.

The hospital has received a donation from Mr. Joseph H. Jacobs for the installation of a new 200-kilovolt X-ray therapy apparatus in the radiological department. The gift is made in honour of His Majesty's Silver Jubilee.

About 10 years ago St. Bartholomew's Hospital, with the help of the British Empire Cancer Campaign, began investigations on the treatment of cancer cases with this type of X-ray, and on account of the promising results obtained, the method has now passed into the general routine treatment of the hospital.

The Duke of York will open the new buildings of the Middlesex Hospital on May 29th. He will be accompanied by the Duchess of York and will meet many of those friends of the hospital to whom the success of the undertaking is due.

The Duke of Kent has consented to lay the foundation-stone on July 12th of the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, which is to cost £125,000. He will be welcomed by Canterbury Corporation.

The Board of Governors of the Royal Waterloo Hospital, London, has decided to hold evening sessions of the electrical and massage department for the treatment of paying patients. The service will be available to women who, though not ordinarily eligible for hospital treatment, are unable to afford the usual fees for massage over a protracted

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