

## CONSTANTINOPLE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

*The Cholera Epidemic.*

No case of death from cholera has latterly occurred either among the general public or among the soldiers garrisoned in the city. This, at least, is the official report appearing in all the local newspapers. Whether it is true seems to be doubtful. People in Constantinople are generally afraid to give to the medical authorities notice of a cholera case, making every possible attempt to keep the matter secret. The public here are under the impression, in the majority of instances, that the municipal physicians only aggravate the situation by their unskilful meddling and exaggerated measures of precaution. In some quarters, and that not altogether among the lower classes, there actually exists a belief that it is in the interest of the medical authorities to poison suspected cases in order so much the surer and the speedier to stamp out the epidemic. In these unfortunate circumstances it is quite likely that cases of cholera still occur, but the authorities are not aware of it. Thus, a medical man told me only the other day that he attended this week a genuine cholera case which did not appear in the official report. However this may be, the epidemic can be considered, to all intents and purposes, as having disappeared from Constantinople. But the Minister of the Interior has decided, in conjunction with the municipal and medical authorities, to continue for a long while yet, perhaps throughout the whole winter, all the prophylactic and precautionary measures which have been adopted from the very first. This is a laudable decision, and if consistently and strictly carried out might make it impossible for another cholera epidemic to reappear in the spring, as is the usual experience here with epidemics. The local newspapers speak in laudatory terms of the zeal and sagacity of Talaat Bey, the Minister of the Interior, who presides over the Sanitary Commission. He takes great personal interest in the hygienic well-being of the city. He visits the sources of water-supply to ascertain the state of the canals, as well as the sanitary condition of the aqueducts and lakes. Lately he made a little expedition of this sort, and found that the Deros water, which supplies a large section of the metropolis, is quite unsuitable for drinking purposes. Necessary measures to improve matters are being taken. Talaat Bey has undoubtedly done very much to stem the progress of the epidemic of cholera. Cold, wintry weather prevailing at the moment when I am writing these lines renders its own great help to all the energetic human efforts.

*Hospital Steamboats.*

The Ottoman Government has decided to purchase a number of hospital steamboats for the transport of soldiers when ill. These steamboats will have all the necessary requisites for an up-to-date medical service. Each will possess a dispensary, bath-rooms, ice factory, wards, &c. Their displacement will be 2000 tons and they will be able to attain great speed.

*New Slaughter-houses.*

I understand that the municipality of the city intends purchasing the free part of the quarter Koutchouk-Vlanga in Stamboul in order to construct a number of spacious slaughter-houses. These will be equipped with all the necessary requisites, will possess a chemical laboratory, a special cabinet for veterinary surgeons, a reservoir for the collection of the blood of the slaughtered animals, depôts for straw and grass, a restaurant, and a coffee-house. It has long been felt that proper slaughter-houses were the great need of a city, where about 2,000,000 cattle are killed annually.

*A New Asylum.*

The *Osmanischer Lloyd* announces that the condition of the asylum for insane people at Scutari being very unsatisfactory, it has been decided to erect a new institution of that kind in San-Stephano. A sum of 50,000 Turkish liras was originally asked for the purpose. This sum, however, has been found insufficient. It is thought that it will require £120,000 in order to build an asylum of the proper dimensions and with the necessary equipment. To facilitate matters, £20,000 will be allowed annually from the municipal budget. The plans of the buildings are ready and

have lately been submitted for examination to the Council of State.

*Disastrous Earthquakes in Turkestan.*

Distressing details have come from Vernyi, Turkestan, of the disastrous earthquake that lately visited that unhappy Russian province. It lasted for five minutes, and the first violent shock was followed by several others of lesser violence. This earthquake is one of the most calamitous that ever befell Russia. The full extent of the terrible destruction is not yet exactly known. Some idea, however, can already be formed of the enormous loss of human life, of property, and of cattle. Up to now, so say the local newspapers, more than 2000 dead bodies have been found and many hundreds are missing. Some say that the number of the last amounts to 10,000. Many thousands of different cattle, the principal possession of the native population, perished in the earthquake, and a far greater number became victims of the extraordinarily cold weather that was prevailing at the time, of hunger, and of the snow-storms. Many rich families became beggars, many camped in the snow-covered fields, the temperature being about 30° C. below zero, and the death-roll will be heavy if help is not forthcoming. Mothers are unable to feed their children, and the mortality among the latter is appalling. The Russian Government is doing its best to alleviate the crying misery, but its means seem to be limited, for it would be necessary, to begin with, to construct some 100 villages and to purchase cattle for thousands of families. The Tsar has shown great sympathy for the stricken population, mostly Mahomedans, and has sent a large sum from his private purse, and the Tsarina has opened a list of subscriptions. Every offer is gladly accepted—money, clothing, building material of every description, petroleum, flour, &c. Twenty-three years ago Turkestan was visited by a somewhat similar earthquake, but it was not of such a calamitous extent. Help this time is also being sent from different parts of the Turkish Empire.

Jan. 24th.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

*The "Johns Hopkins Idea" in New York Medical Institutions.*

A PLAN to unite the faculty of medicine of Columbia University and the Presbyterian Hospital of New York city has been under consideration for some time, it being proposed to create the same relationship between these institutions as exists between Johns Hopkins University and Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Md., with which Professor William Osler was so long connected. This linking of the University with the hospital and the medical school seems to be in the air, for there was recorded in THE LANCET of June 11th, 1910, that the Washington University in that city was, in pursuance of the same idea, to have its own hospitals with the necessary laboratories adjacent thereto. The donation of £300,000 from an anonymous source will certainly hasten the consummation of this union in New York also. The gentleman who acted as intermediary between the anonymous philanthropist and the two institutions has himself offered the sum of £40,000 in addition, and has furthermore proposed to endow and fully equip a surgical pavilion of 150 beds. It is understood that the University, in return for the privilege of making all nominations to the hospital staff, shall meet the expense of all scientific and educational work associated with the hospital. Each institution will maintain its own corporate existence. Those who are appointed as visiting physicians and surgeons to the new hospital will be expected not to occupy similar positions elsewhere. The Presbyterian Hospital had already made plans to build an extension which will adjoin the Rockefeller Institute for Pathological Research.

*Leprosy in the United States.*

Nine lepers were exhibited to the members of the Academy of Medicine on the evening of Dec 29th, 1910. In an effort to dissipate the prevalent superstitious horror of this disease the nine patients, who included a negro girl, a male negro, an Italian with advanced tubercular leprosy, a Russian, and a Chinaman, were brought to the Academy in the public tramcars, coming from various remote suburbs of the city.