

(opening and closing circuit)—in a current is an essential to the development of the proper muscle function, viz., contraction.

But further observation will show that application of the electrodes to the nerve supply is sufficient to induce contraction of the muscle so supplied and stimulated, and thus we have demonstrated the most commonly used properties of the alternating current. These results are accompanied by the usual local congestion, and last only during the period of contact. The power of currents to relieve pain will be mentioned when the modes of electrical treatment are discussed.

Space will not permit us to do more than mention the experiments which, during the course of demonstrations given last year, we were able to show, proving—

(1) That with *small* alternating (medicinal) currents there is practically no electrolysis.

(2) That alternating currents control the functions of nerve and muscle.

(3) That though *sensation* may *appear* to be continuous, there are very marked differences between the effects of application of the alternating and continuous currents.

(4) That high potential alternating currents may easily be passed through a patient, though there be no contact with electrodes, though this is not the case with continuous currents.

(To be continued.)

## REPORT OF THE MEDICAL MISSION WORK.

### ST. HILDA'S MISSION.

#### I.—NAGASAKA MACHI, AZABU, TOKYO, JAPAN.

[WE are greatly indebted to the kindness of an esteemed correspondent for the following most interesting account of the work of the St. Hilda's Medical Mission in that country, which we feel sure will be eagerly perused by our readers anxious for information respecting their work in other parts of the globe.—ED.]

THIS branch of St. Hilda's Mission was started in January, 1889. At first there was no building which we could use except an old lodge by the gate at the entrance to the grounds. This house consisted of one room only, and as we were obliged to have a caretaker, we could only have a small part of this room screened off to use for our drugs. At first there was no Doctor; the Nurse worked alone. It was slow work, as you will see by the number of patients given.

On January 29th, the Nurse was asked to go and see a young woman with hip disease. The case

was one in which we could do very little good, but she was told how to dress the wound, and lint and ointment given to her; but we heard afterwards that she preferred her own old fashioned Doctor, who gave her a piece of dried bear's liver to charm away the disease. The second patient was an old woman with severe spinal disease. Here we were able to make her comfortable, and she had many visits, and we only lost her because she went away to her own county. We have heard of several patients through Miss Thornton, the head of the Itinerant work; the women who attend her classes generally tell her of some one who is ill.

From January to May, 1889, there were only four patients. In May, the Nurse went into the country to a place called Tokaichiba with Miss Thornton, who went to do Mission work. Here there were twelve patients in seven days, and no doubt there would have been many more, but unfortunately we were not able to remain longer than a week. The work was very encouraging, owing to the inhabitants so rarely taking medicine, that it was wonderful to see the marvellous effect a small dose had upon them.

To give one instance. A child of six had been ill with measles and, though convalescent, had ceased to gain strength. The mother said it could not walk or stand; this we certainly saw. After a few small doses of iron, spirits chloroform and glycerine, given every four hours, the child rapidly improved, and in three days the mother came back leading the child by the hand to show us how well she could walk. But there was also the sad side. A poor woman, eaten up with skin disease and deep sores owing to great constitutional weakness; besides she had made herself worse by utter neglect. She applied for treatment and was supplied with a strong tonic, lotion, and ointment; but before leaving she asked if she could be cured. When told that though she could not be cured, still she could be so considerably relieved as to make her life fairly comfortable, she refused treatment and left her medicine and went away.

Another case was a fine man of thirty, desperately ill with typhoid fever. Two Doctors had been attending him, but had given him up to die; the wife sent and begged us to go. We went and found he had not been ordered any special diet. We impressed upon the people to give nothing but milk, and to give him a Japanese tea-cupful every hour (these cups hold about an ounce). They carried out these directions, and a few weeks after our return to Tokyo we heard of his wonderful recovery.

From May to September was a broken time. Part of it we were absent from Tokyo, because of

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