

would the nomination of a Vicar-Apostolic be permitted to check the Government, the civil law would step in.

UNITED STATES.—Thanks the Pope

The Western Negro Press Association in session at Guthrie, Okla., adopted resolutions thanking Pope Pius X. for his expression of sympathy in response to the letter sent by the Press Association in 1903. In closing, the resolutions state that 'since the Catholic Church has taken such a bold and helpful stand against the outrages perpetrated against our race, we respectfully request Protestant bodies of this country to take similar action.'

Japanese Surgery and Medicine

Down to the date of their recent severance of the bonds of Oriental conservatism, the Japanese (says the Dublin 'Freeman's Journal'), like their neighbors of the vast Celestial Empire, were decidedly peculiar—from the European point of view—in their notions of the theory and practice of the art of healing. In the department of medicine they practised largely, and with very considerable variation as to means and method; but in that of surgery, their range was exceedingly limited. Their surgical armamentarium, like that of their Chinese neighbors, consisted almost solely—if not wholly—of the needle and the cautery. The 'acupuncture needle' was made to penetrate the skin at certain prescribed points, in the treatment of the most various diseases; from cholera, dysentery, and the 'endemic colic' of the country, down to the most trivial local rheumatic or neuralgic pains. A candidate for a diploma in surgery was placed, needle in hand, before a bronze mannikin, on the surface of which the recognised therapeutic points were indicated by small holes. This mannikin was draped with paper, through which he was required to penetrate the masked orifices when a certain disease was named. Accuracy of aim was, of course, an infallible testimony of the requisite skill. The cautery was applied in the form of a cylinder, or cone, made of certain highly inflammable vegetable products—leaves or pith—rolled into conical or cylindrical form, and placed on the skin over the affected region. This was set on fire at the apex, and allowed to burn itself out.

Their Medical Practitioners

were also druggists and botanists. Each was accompanied in his rounds by an attendant, who bore a small chest in which were twelve drawers. Each of the latter was furnished with 111 compartments, containing herbs and drugs. After examining the patient, the medical adviser selected the requisite remedies from this reservoir, and prepared and mingled them 'secundum artem.' Their science of the pulse was the most complex of any known to medical history—except, perhaps, that of their Chinese neighbors. An examination of the pulse required fully half an hour, at the conclusion of which the doctor professed to know all the conditions and the causes of the malady. As a rule they used but few remedies. They never let blood. They gave the patient none of the ordinary cooled form of diet—on the ground that the stomach in disease was unable to digest anything suitable to the healthy state. Otherwise, they gave the sick, as far as possible, what they wished for, relying on the view that nature was always the safest adviser, and never demanded what was likely to be hurtful to the constitution. The great object of their practice was the prevention of disease, and to this they believed that nothing contributed more effectively than

The Frequent Use of the Bath

There were three varieties of smallpox recognised in Japanese practice. The first corresponded to the disease known in Europe by that name; the second appears to have been identical with our measles; the third was a special endemic disease of the country, characterised by an eruption of watery pustules, and which the famous Jesuit, Pere de Charlevoix, was disposed to attribute to the excessive use of cold drinks by the Japanese. None of the varieties appear, however, to have been regarded as a very fatal disease. Dr Koempfer, the early Japanese medical explorer, tells us that the only treatment considered necessary was to envelop the patient in cloths of a red color. He also states that when one of the family of the Emperor was attacked by smallpox, not only was his bed and the walls of the bedchamber curtained with red, but all the attendants were obliged to wear garments of the same hue. Such practice, which was declared to be of untold antiquity, forms an interesting anticipation indeed of the experimental practice of the English John of Gaddesden, and its recent resuscitation, on the most scientific grounds, by some European and American physicians.

What scientific physician, even in the opening years of this ultra-scientific twentieth century, can be absolutely sure that he has advanced a really new discovery?

The Vatican Observatory

The demands of chronology and the necessity in the ecclesiastical year of regulating the various festivals of the Church with accuracy constitute the practical considerations (says the 'Glasgow Observer') which led the authorities at Rome to encourage the study of astronomy. The Rev. Dr J. A. Zahm, C.S.C., Professor of Physics in the University of Notre Dame, a well known writer and scientist, recently visited the observatory of the Vatican, and described it in a most interesting article. Rev. Dr. Zahm says:—

'As far back as the time of St. Polycarp, in the second century, there was a dispute as to the time when Easter should be celebrated. The question was taken up by Pope Leo the Great, and later on by Nicholas V., Sixtus IV., and Leo X., but without any satisfactory results. Not until 1582 was the controversy settled, when Gregory XIII. promulgated the reformed calendar, and made it obligatory throughout the Catholic world. The building in which the work of reformation of the calendar was executed forms a portion of the immense pile of buildings in Rome called the Vatican. The upper portion of the structure, in honor of its projector, is known as the Gregorian Tower. It is a large and massive structure, containing more than a score of spacious apartments. The room in which the calendar was reformed is preserved in essentially the same condition in which it existed in the time of Gregory XIII. In the centre of the floor is a large slab of marble, in which is executed the celebrated meridian of the noted Dominican, Ignazio Dante, one of the commission appointed for the reformation of the calendar. By means of this meridian and a small aperture in the wall, through which a solar beam was permitted to enter, he was able to demonstrate the necessity of reforming the calendar and the exactness of the system proposed by one of his associates, Luigi Lilio, of Calabria. The orifice through which the sun's rays were admitted appears as a minute white spot on the left-hand side of the picture. The calendar room is now used for the weekly meetings of the Vatican Astronomical Association, which are usually presided over by his Eminence Cardinal Moennig.'

The writer next proceeds to recount the history of the observatory, which has not been without its vicissitudes, down to the reign of the late Pope Leo XIII., in whom it found a cordial and most generous patron. He continues:—

'Pope Leo endowed the observatory with a sum ample to meet all current expenses, and set aside certain portions of the Vatican palace and gardens for its special use. Near the Gregorian Tower he gave a suite of rooms for the reception of a large heliograph and its appurtenances. This instrument, used for photographing the sun, is an exact duplicate of one employed by Janssen in his observatory at Mendocino. But by far the most important addition to the previously existing observatory was the famous Leonine tower on the summit of the Vatican hill. The two lower storeys are set apart for researches in terrestrial magnetism and seismology. In the upper storey is placed a large photographic equatorial, in size and design like the great instrument in the National Observatory of Paris.'

At the present time, Dr. Zahm says, the astronomers of the Vatican Observatory are busily engaged in executing their part of the colossal international chart and catalogue of the heavens, parts of which have also been assigned to the observatories of the United States. Photographs are also being made of the other heavenly bodies—the moon, planets, comets, and nebulae—and attention is likewise given to the photographing of stellar spectra and of cloud phenomena for meteorological purposes. Describing this feature of the observatory, Dr. Zahm says:—'The Gregorian Tower is singularly well equipped with instruments for investigations of all kinds. It is well provided with the latest patterns of automatic instruments, particularly in the departments devoted to meteorology. The library is already quite large, and is rapidly increasing in size and importance. It receives the published reports of more than three hundred observatories, in all parts of the old and new worlds, and in exchange for them it sends out to its correspondents the results of its own labor.'

The Rev. Father Maguire, of Lismore diocese, who has finished his studies in Rome, has returned to Australia. He has been appointed a Professor at St. Patrick's College, Manly.