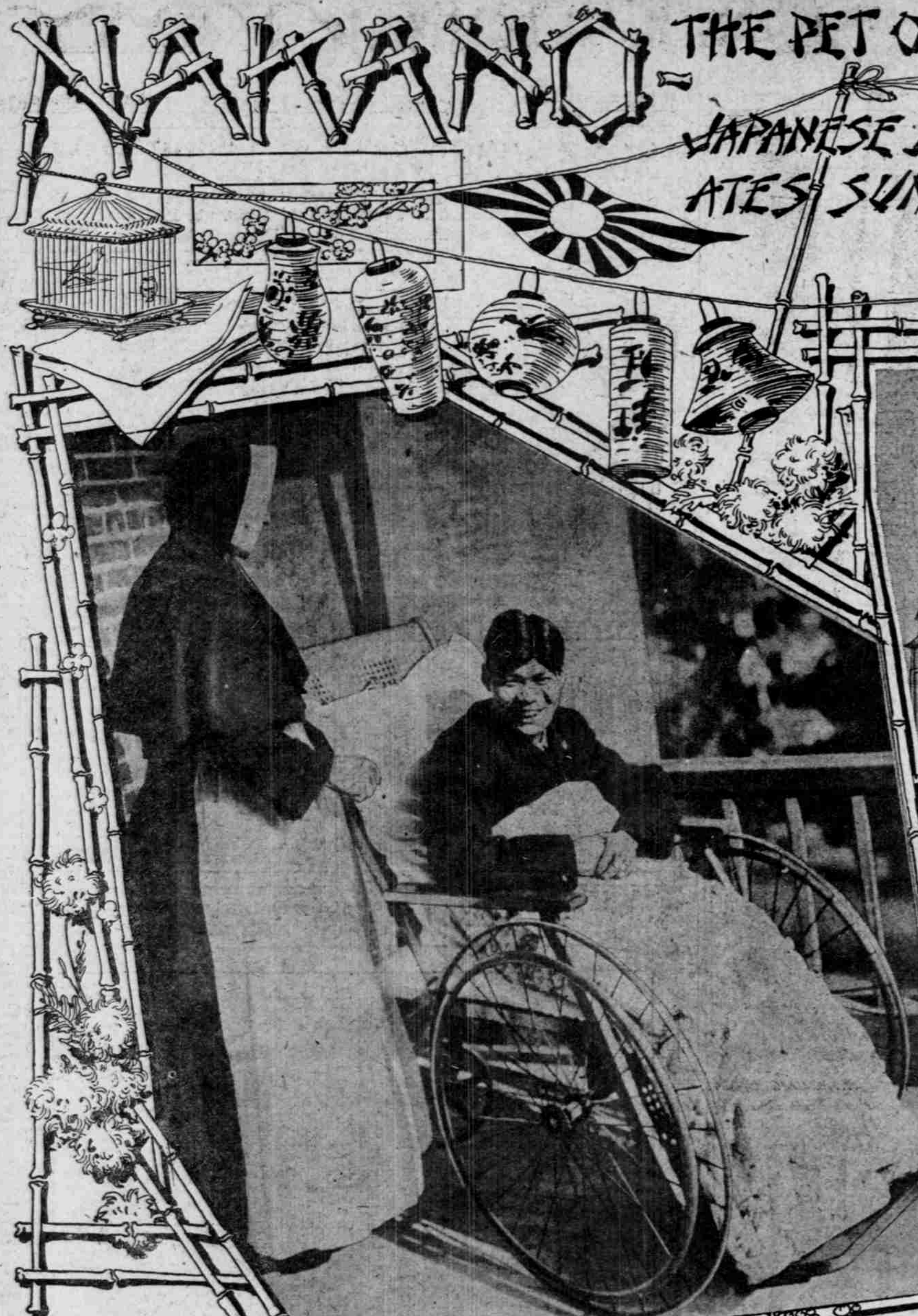


# THE PET OF ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL, JAPANESE BOY CRIPPLE WHO RADI- ATES SUNSHINE AMONG PATIENTS AND NURSES.



ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL

陶器社

NAKANO ENJOYING A BRIGHT DAY  
AND A GOOD JOKE



NAKANO'S CORNER IN THE JAPANESE WARD

On the third floor of St. Vincent's Hospital a pathetic scene is enacted daily—so cleverly veiled by a happy smile and a contented look that the scores of visitors who come and go at the great brick hospice on the hill fail to realize that "earth's but a waiting place" for little Nakano, the Japanese cripple. And it is no small wonder that they do not see beneath his shining eyes the sore little heart, for Nakano is happy in a way and the happiness all shows on the surface. Only the kindly sisters whose contact with all phases of suffering gives them deep insight into human emotions can read through those bright Oriental windows what is written on the soul of the hospital's pet—for Nakano is the pet of St. Vincent's.

Nearly five years ago the accident in which many were killed and from which Nakano escaped with a broken back occurred. It seemed that the boy would die, too, for a broken back generally means death. But the Great Reaper was not ready for him and his life was spared. It was meant that he should stay here and bear his cross as an example for others, and that is what he is doing today. Who will say it was not the hand of Providence which placed this boy amidst the sick and dying that his fortitude, courage and humility might be an example for them to follow? He is crippled for life and his existence is bounded by the four walls of the hospital, but withal no word of complaint is heard from this model invalid, and his patient endurance is conceded by his bright face. There are days when his sufferings are greater than others and he does not appear for his promenade through the hall in his wheel chair. On those days the joyrides after Nakano are many, and the visits to the immaculate Japanese ward are frequent, for all the patients on the floor become accustomed to seeing him pass their doors or have him stop for a few words of cheerful greeting, and when he does not come both Sisters and nurses are busy answering inquiries.

**His Post of Honor.**  
In the ward where all Japanese patients are cared for, Nakano occupies the post of honor. He greets all newcomers and acts as official interpreter for the Sisters, nurses and physicians. Many lives have doubtless been saved through his ability to interpret so that the doctors were able to work on these cases intelligently, and the life of more than one of his countrymen has been brightened through his suggestions and wholesome advice, for Nakano is a Christian and believes in the Golden Rule. Behind his recognition of "Christians" lies a heart-story. When this boy was brought to the hospital his life was despaired of, and as he lingered between life and death,

he learned through some source that if he was spared from the grave he would be a helpless cripple. He gave no intimation that he knew this, and to all appearances he was as unconcerned about his condition as patients who were only bedridden for a week. Being a model patient and having comparatively few wants, no particular attention was paid to him until one day the Sister in charge of the floor was called aside by a Japanese visitor who had just left the ward. He told her that little Nakano was trying to get the means to commit suicide—in fact, the boy had begged him to bring certain poisons that he might take them and die easily, so as not to distress the good Sisters who were so kind to him. Then Sister Blank went to his bedside and had a long talk with the brave little sufferer. (It is a rule at St. Vincent's not to give Sisters' names for publication.)  
"I asked him if he had ever heard about God and Heaven, and he said no," replied Sister, when I asked her about the incident. "So I told him as simply as I could the story of Jesus and the principles of our religion. I tried to impress upon him that his life belonged to God, and that it was wicked for him to attempt to destroy it himself; that if he bore his cross bravely and lived a good life he would have a place in Heaven when the proper time came for him to die."

**Notable Conversion.**  
"It was easy to see that he was deeply impressed, and he readily promised me that he would not make another attempt at self-destruction—and I felt that I could trust him. From that day there was a change in him, and he began to look bright and contented. I have never had to talk to him about things he should not do excepting that one time, and I have never observed a case where the quiet acceptance of religion brought such apparent happiness and peace of mind. The first thing the poor child did was to have some of his Japanese friends bring him a Bible printed in his own language, and if you will notice it on the stand by his bed, you will see that it has been constantly used. Nakano's religion is not ostentatious, he does not even care to talk about it, but we who are with him all the time have opportunity to observe what a comfort it is to him. Every night and morning he quietly says his prayers, and many times each day the little Bible is in his hand. His smile is always as brave as it is bright, and we love him for his bonny disposition and his wonderful courage."

**Nakano's Home.**  
And then we went to the Japanese ward to see Nakano. A row of spotless white beds lined either wall, and the bed of the one "permanent boarder" was easy to distinguish. Plants, birds and pictures differentiated it from the others, even if the boy's smiling face was unlike those of his companions. That little cot and the corner in which it stands is Nakano's only home, and he has tried to make it as cheerful and bright as his own sunny nature. The pictures, mostly from the Sunday papers illustrate various victories in the late Japanese war, and impartial in American politics—the families of President Roosevelt and Alton B. Parker, once a candidate. On a small stand at the head of the bed were plants, several Japanese books, a plate of fruit sent in by some more favored patient, and one half-faded carnation, which he was fondly treasuring as his only bouquet.  
"How do you do?" I said to him.  
"I am well, thank you," he said with peculiar emphasis as I greeted him. When I asked him his first name he was puzzled for a moment.  
"My name is Nakano—N. Nakano. That is all. Oh, he make to make Jimmy like you talk. In Japanese Naichi Nakano, that's me."

Then we talked as best we could, and he told me of his daily life—so little to us who are well and can go out into the world—so much to this fragment of what would have been an intelligent man had not fate laid her strong white hand too heavily upon him in his youth. Merit incidents mean much to him—a wave of friendly greeting from the little girl in the children's ward, a "how do do, Nakano," from the lady in the blue room, a loving pat on the head from a gentle sister or a white-capped nurse—even the grunt of recognition from the cross man down the hall—all go to make up the sum and total of his daily life. Of mornings Nakano generally stays in bed for the poor lame back is weak and he cannot tax its strength too severely. He is awake early,

however, gets cleaned up for the day, straightens up his table and helps the sister in charge of the ward as much as he can. His two birds are never forgotten, and he superintends their feeding and care. One of these birds, Dick, was given him by the sisters and the other by Japanese friends. He loves them both, and joyfully anticipates—"someday make nests, someday have little birds"—but it is doubtful if either Dick or Bob will nest this Spring.

**Afternoon Visiting.**  
After the midday dinner Nakano is dressed and the steward helps him into his wheel chair, this a gift from friends also. He bears the distinction of being the only patient in the hospital who owns his own chair, and he is very proud of it. A pitiful little figure he makes as he sits huddled up in his blankets, but his happy face and greeting makes one forget that he has no back to support him and that he must forever be a helpless heap of humanity. It is in the afternoon when he wheels himself up and down the hall that the other patients get a glimpse of him and learn what fortitude and humility mean; for if Nakano with his heavy cross can smile and not complain, why should they whose illness is of brief duration rail at fate?

"How do!" "How do!" Oh, me pretty well, how you?" Nakano is kept busy saying, as he wheels up and down the long hall. Sometimes a convalescent calls him into his room; others ask him to stop at the door and chat. Those who are able to exercise in the hall walk by his chair and talk of things which will interest him. One day last Winter, now almost a year gone by, a kind-hearted woman who had been a resident of the third floor several weeks, gave Nakano two blooming plants as she was leaving. He was delighted beyond measure at the fact that the plants were both in bloom, and clasped them in his arms as a child does its fondest possession. He would not consent to have the nurse carry one of the plants, but with one tucked in either armpit he managed to wheel his chair to the ward nurse show his new garden to his friends there. The other day the donor of the plants called at the hospital and went into the Japanese ward to see Nakano.  
"Hi—do—I know you—you give me flower," and he seemed just as grateful as the day she had presented the plants and given him so much pleasure.

**Universal Pet.**  
That Nakano is the pet of St. Vincent's Hospital there is no doubt, for he is loved by all the sisters, the nurses, attendants and patients. There are busy-times when the little favors and attentions which go to make up the bright spots in his life are necessarily neglected. These are sad times for the boy, but he has no word of complaint, no whys or wherefores are demanded. His fondness for the sisters, who are so kind and indulgent to him, amounts to little short of adoration; his appreciation of everything that is done for him is a lesson to us all. He has come to know many Japanese who visit friends at the hospital, and they all take an interest in him. During the war they brought their home newspapers and he was enabled to keep up with the progress of events in his native country quite well.  
"Do you think he would like to go back to Japan?" I asked a sister.  
"I think that would make him very happy."

And when I asked Nakano the same question he laughed outright with joy at the idea, and looked at Sister with a world of meaning in his shining brown eyes.  
"Me go Japan?" he inquired credulously—then laughed pathetically, with the joy all gone out of it, but the brave smile still on his face.

**Joke Was on the Bishop.**  
Exchange.  
Bishop Niles, of New Hampshire, had a singular experience while attending the recent Episcopal convention in Boston. The bishop, who is a very tall, heavy man, was seated on one of the low settees in the Public Garden, and when he started to get up found that he had great difficulty in regaining his feet. While in the midst of his struggles a wee tot of a little girl came along and offered her assistance. "The bishop ceased trying to rise, and, after surveying the little girl critically, replied that she was too small to help. The little girl persisted that she could help, but the bishop was just as sure that she could not. "Well," said the little girl, finally, "I've helped grandpa lots of times when he was lots drunker than you are."

MARION MacRAE.