

Medical Aid

Father de Rotz Passes on His Knowledge

Medical Scale (Father de Rotz Memorial Hall)

Model of the Pelvis of a Pregnant Woman (Father de Rotz Memorial Hall)

From the nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, it was common for French priests to provide medical care in the countryside. Father de Rotz (1840–1914) was no exception. During his missionary work in Japan, he passed on to the people of Nagasaki and Sotome the knowledge of medicine and medical treatment that he had learned during his theological education.

First, after hearing about the dysentery and smallpox the people of Urakami had contracted, he imported French medicine. In the Shitsu area in 1885, during an outbreak of typhoid, he opened a pharmacy at the Shitsu Aid Center and conducted medical exams for patients.

After he moved to Sotome, another dysentery epidemic occurred in East Shitsu in 1891. De Rotz immediately built a special hospital ward, isolated the victims, and founded a first-aid corps of young volunteers to nurse the patients.

Also, to lower the prevailing high infant-mortality rate in Sotome, he imported an anatomical model of a human body, which he used to instruct midwives.