

ment of gospel blessing. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, and to all whom the Lord our God shall call unto Him." "Afar off"; as far as China and Canada in miles of distance, as far as 1892 in the years of time.

Fourth. As Pentecost solved the question of the variety and character of the preachers, so it also solved the question of finance. All the unnecessary wealth of the Church was laid at the apostle's feet! How much would be at the disposal of missionary agencies if one-third of all the income which the professing Church of to-day wastes in luxuries and sensuality could be applied in aggressive Christian work? Give us a universal Pentecost, and there will be no retrenchment for want of funds, no hundreds of student preachers eager to go to the high places of the mission field, but compelled to wait for the supplies that are represented by worldly wealth. I am convinced that if the Church of to-day would assume the same attitude to the Holy Ghost that the Church of Pentecostal days occupied, there would not only be abundance of money for all its needs, but the money would, as in those days, "be laid at the feet" of those who lead its movements, needing not the spell of oratorical art, nor the smiling persistency of individual solicitation to extract unwilling shekels from unspiritual pockets for the secular support of the cause of God.

(To be continued.)

"THE LANGUAGE."

BY J. G. DUNLOP, M.A., NAGANO, JAPAN.

"HOW are you getting on at the language?" is a common salutation, especially among missionaries who have not been long in the land; and "the language" rivals the weather as a popular staple of conversation and a never-failing stand-by.

"How long before you can make yourself understood?" That depends. You will in a very few weeks know enough to manage your household; though, to be sure, you may make some little mistakes. You may some day, for instance as I have known a lady friend of mine do, tell the cook to boil the dish-cloth for dinner; or order the boy to say his prayers when you only meant him to mix up some starch; or send out to buy a crocodile to catch rats, when you had in mind nothing more formidable than a wire trap. A very few weeks will give you enough for the minor businesses of life, for travelling and bargain-making, and running a house. But that's not learning the language.

In the first place, how much do you want to learn? Do you mean to attack it on the European plan and take only soup and fish, or fish and steak, or roast and dessert, or do you propose to sit down to a complete bill of fare, and go through it? In other words, do you wish to learn not only to speak the language, but also to read and write the Chinese characters, the hopeless mask in which the whole literature of the country is dressed? In this case, you may count on being a school boy or school girl under tuition to the end of your days. Or will you be satisfied without writing the characters, if you can only read a couple of thousand of them? Or does your ambition carry you no further than the Romanized Japanese?

You tell me you do not care about the characters, that three-fourths of the missionaries don't, anyway; and you want only enough to tell the old, old story, "simply, as to a little child?" "How long will it take to learn enough for that?"

Well, you will buy a dictionary and a couple of grammars, and you will hire a teacher for a couple of hours a day, and you will spend about as much time studying alone—say, four hours in all; and probably after twelve or fifteen

months, you will venture to give your first address in Japanese.

Now, wait; wait till I tell you how that address is made, before you run off with the idea that you have "got the language." You first write it out in English and give it to your teacher to translate; then at his dictation you write it in Romanized Japanese; then read your essay over and over; and finally, with much fear and trembling, you face your audience. Before you are half through you have probably made up your mind you will not try again for three or four months.

"But can't I translate it myself?"

Can't you fly? No, you can't. It will be a good many months yet before you can attempt translation on your own account.

By-the-way, I said twelve or fifteen months, but it is as likely to be twice that number; for you will be quite an exception if you have four hours per day for the language from the beginning. Like as not you will find yourself living in a house with other Europeans, and you will have to teach English, or in English, several hours per day; so that, on the whole, you hear and use nine or ten times as much English as Japanese. Is it any wonder you do not learn Japanese fast? Imagine a man trying to give up tobacco by coming down to nine cigars a day instead of ten, and staying there! You will be an accomplished Japanese speaker by the time he has become an abstainer.

Yes, it will probably be nearly two years before you read your first address, and nearly four years before you begin to speak in public without manuscript. I have an amusing recollection of a green young missionary—very young and very green—who read his first sermon three months after he landed in Yokohama. Needless to say he did not try again for a twelvemonth.

It is slow work. Half the battle is won before you leave Canada if you have a tongue that readily takes to strange sounds, and if you are at all a mimic.

"How young ought I to be?"

The younger the better; though, strange to say, the two men in our mission to day who have the freest use of Japanese, were both over thirty when they came to the country. None of the younger missionaries during their early years in Japan have got on faster than these two men; and few as fast.

You may be twenty and miss it, or forty and get it. Age has little to do with it. *Labor omnia vincit* here, as elsewhere, and a determination to make the study of Japanese of first importance during your first three years, and let all other study and reading, if need be, go to the wall.

The fact is that not more than one in a dozen missionaries has "got the language;" that is, has such a command of it that he can use it in public or private nearly or quite as well as his mother tongue. Of the remaining eleven, perhaps two can worry through an extempore address, of a kind; and three or four more have got up into garibaldies and knickerbockers—are in the manuscript stage; while the rest are still in baby's long clothes.

Don't let this frighten you. Remember, the majority of missionaries at any time are new comers; that is, are in their first term; and it is therefore of the nature of things that those proficient in the language should be but a small percentage of the whole.

Come to Japan, or go to China, Korea, or India with this firmly fixed in your mind before you ever board the ship: "Whatever else I do or leave undone, *I am bound to get the language.*" Depend on it, other things being equal, the man or woman who has acquired a working knowledge of the vernacular is far more useful, has much more surely taken root in the land, and is a great deal more likely to stay, than the one who has not.