

as silently as the mist of the morning. Prince Maeda bade a sad farewell to his weeping warriors, the palaces were forever closed, and those radiant gardens, whose footpaths were only pressed by the feet of those of high degree, were soon made the haunts of the common crowd. And back to his own land went the German doctor, and nothing remained but this bungalow to witness to the first streak of dawn of the yet coming day of New Japan. The years which followed the fall of feudalism were filled with bitter days for the warrior and the common people. The very foundation stones of society were being upturned, and everything was simply tumbling about their ears. Occupation gone, income vanished, the horizon full of dark thunder clouds, hope dead, the poor Samurai longed for death as a release from his bitter degradation. And through these years this building partook of the general desolation, and all the more so because it was wholly unfit for the habitation of the Japanese. And so when Dr. Cochran and myself, in quest of a new centre for evangelistic work, pushed our way right across the main island and then away down the coast to this old dilapidated city of Kanazawa, we found this old building, right in the centre of the city, at a point where five roads converge and meet, and all unused awaiting the herald of the blessed Gospel. And what a blessing it has been to us! How our hearts were cheered when the building became our own, to feel that while as yet we had not a single adherent that at least the Master had given us an evangelistic centre worthy of a mighty effort in such a great city. Nor did the Saviour disappoint us, for although many were the deep discouragements which fell to our lot, soon we were able, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to collect and fashion a number of goodly stones for the spiritual building. And soon the old tabernacle, refitted and altered to suit the new conditions, had a soul-living church of about fifty members to be as a light shining in a dark place to point to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

But not only is it valuable for the use made of it now: it is so large that no matter how rapid the growth of the congregation, partitions can be removed so as to give accommodation for a very large number of people. And when it at last becomes too small, we still have a lot right there in the most eligible position in the whole city where we can build a church large enough to accommodate two thousand people, if need be. Let us pray for a mighty baptism of Pentecostal power upon the new-born souls in this old tabernacle, so that it shall soon not be able to contain the multitude flocking as doves to the windows for the Saviour's pardon and blessing.

JOHN W. SAUNBY.

The Bombay Decennial Conference.

MOST of our readers have heard something of the controversy which grew out of the action of the Decennial Missionary Conference, which met at Bombay last winter. On the strength of the first reports which reached England, Miss Frances Willard,

Lady Henry Somerset and Miss Bunting issued a circular letter severely condemning the action—or non-action—of the Conference in regard to the liquor traffic, the opium traffic and the State regulation of vice. There were many who felt that the issuing of the circular letter was premature, and that further information would greatly modify first reports. Dr. Buckley of the New York *Advocate*, with his customary promptness and love of accurate information, wrote at once to reliable persons in India to obtain the facts in the case. A correspondent gives the facts and sends a copy of Bishop Thoburn's letter in reply to Miss Willard. We append a digest of the information thus obtained as given by Dr. Buckley in the *Advocate* of August 17th:—

This Decennial Conference had no proper organization. The credentials of persons proposing to sit in the body as missionaries were not examined. Strangers sat there without right or title to do so, voting and participating. A business committee dictated what was to be done. While the great body consisted of conscientious and intelligent missionaries, two kinds of men, each equally to be dreaded at home and abroad—the fossil and the crank—were present. Bishop Thoburn, in his reply to Miss Willard and her co-signers, says that “the liquor traffic *was* discussed, and not a word of objection was made to it;” that the opium question was discussed “with the utmost freedom,” and “not a single missionary objected to the discussion.” The discussion of “regulated social vice” was freely admitted, “ladies, however, being excluded.” Only one missionary out of six hundred or more was even suspected of favoring the Contagious Diseases Acts. Bishop Thoburn says he could not trace the rumor to any responsible source.

The explanation of what took place, and which has been so grievously misrepresented, is as follows: The first of these Decennial Conferences, representing all India, was held in 1872. At that time a missionary presented a resolution in writing. Immediately a venerable English missionary arose, and in substance said: “Mr. Chairman, my ear detected the word *resolved* in that motion. A resolution is more than a motion. It becomes permanent action. I object and protest against the admission of any resolutions.” From that day till this the majority of each Decennial Conference has been opposed to the admission of all resolutions.

The ground of this has been the fear that controversial questions might mar the harmony of the occasion, and Bishop Thoburn affirms that “reform questions have had very little to do with the feeling” against adopting “resolutions.”

At the late session the Business Committee, consisting of nine representative men, was appointed with full powers to lay down rules and have general charge of the proceedings. This committee at first decided to admit no resolutions; but there was a general demand for them, and after five days it yielded, and announced that at the closing session “a few resolutions” would be admitted. But an avalanche came upon them. “All manner of interests clamored for a hearing, and the committee was compelled to decide that only such resolutions should be presented to the conference as would probably be adopted without debate.” Among the resolutions selected by the committee was one condemning an Act relating to the regulation of social vice. Just before this matter was brought forward a painful controversy, almost threatening the disruption of the conference, had arisen between certain Baptists and certain Presbyterians from Scotland. When this subject came up, the resolution was read, and adopted with the utmost enthusiasm. “A very few voted against it, not on its merits, but on the old ground that resolutions were out of place.” The Bishop says: “They would, I doubt not, have been quite as prompt to vote against a resolution approving the Lord's Prayer.”

Immediately after a leading missionary arose and said that he was *not* opposed to the principle involved, but *was* opposed to *resolutions*, and moved a reconsideration. The chairman, who was Bishop Thoburn, ruled him out of order because he had not voted in favor of the resolution, and