

Azabu school. For nearly a year I was alone in the work, but was then joined by Mr. K. Fuse, who left recently to go to a theological school. He has been followed by Messrs. Matsumoto and Shibata. Matsumoto is over thirty years of age, of fine mental ability, an old school teacher, converted last year in Kanazawa, under Mr. Saunby. Shibata is younger, a humble, devoted preacher, also converted only last year, in the Central Tabernacle. In Love-feast the other day, he said that he prayed he might play a worthy Timothy to Dr. Eby's Paul.

Nagano has a bad name. A veteran missionary, the man who organized the first Christian Church in Japan, in 1872, said to me shortly after coming here: "There's little use in trying to do anything in Nagano as long as Buddhism remains alive, and that great Zenkoji temple stands there." Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and American Methodists have, in turn, given up Nagano, after a trial of several months or years—all before our day. Christianity is in bad repute. Greeks and Romans have been here—the Greek Church for twelve or thirteen years—but they are no help; by loose living and semi-heathen mummery, they have rather created a hindrance in the way. We have to live down not only the ordinary prejudice and hatred of a Buddhist stronghold, but also the ill reputation of professing Christians. I have preached in many places during the past month, and am more and more impressed with the difficulty of reaching the Nagano people. Nowhere else do the people seem quite so ashamed or afraid to be connected with us. Morally and spiritually, as well as topographically, the town is under the shadow of Zenkoji—and it is the shadow of death!

We have been for two years getting out stumps and stones, but have been able, too, to do some seed-sowing, and God has already vouchsafed the beginning of a harvest. Glorious days and a blessed harvest are in store for the men and women whom God honors with a place here during the next five or six years. With a good church and several preaching places—and a good organ and magic lantern, which I expect to have in a few weeks—we are prepared for strong advance work, both in Nagano and throughout the province.

JOHN G. DUNLOP.

Our Young Folk.

Gough and the Cigars.

THE least meddling with liquor or tobacco should be avoided. A famous temperance lecturer, who once in a while indulged in a cigar, tells us that, on one occasion, he had engaged to attend a meeting of children. Before he went, a friend said to him.

"I have some first-rate cigars; will you take a few?"

"No, thank you."

"Do, take half-a-dozen."

"I have nowhere to put them."

"You can put half-a-dozen in your cap."

I wore a cap in those days, and I put the cigars into it, and at the appointed time I went to the meeting. I ascended the platform, and faced an audience of more than two thousand children. As it was out of doors, I kept my cap on, for fear of taking cold, and I forgot all about the cigars. Towards the close of my speech, I became much in earnest, and after warning the boys against bad company, bad habits and the saloons, I said—

"Now, boys, let us give three rousing cheers for temperance and cold water. Now then, three cheers. Hurrah!"

And taking off my cap, I waved it most vigorously, when away went the cigars right into the midst of the audience. The remaining cheers were very faint, and were nearly drowned in the laughter of the crowd. I was mortified and ashamed, and should have been relieved could I have sunk through the platform out of sight. My feelings were still more aggravated by a boy coming up to the steps of the platform with one of those dreadful cigars, saying, "Here's one of your cigars, sir."

It is hardly possible to taste liquor or have anything to do with it without being found out; indeed, all secret sins sooner or later come to light.

A Beautiful Legend.

LIKE so much the legend of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, who did all for charity's sake—that is, for love's sweet sake. You know that the heavy load of bread which she was carrying, trying to conceal it from her husband's eye, all turned to roses, red and white, when he commanded her to open the pack which she was bringing to the poor. Gentle deeds of charity always turn fragrant and beautiful in our hands, even when custom or authority or fashion or prudence rebukes us for bestowing gifts. You give a loaf, and you let an angel into your heart.—*Annie H. Ryder.*

"What is Praying?"

CONVERSATION between two pupils in Wilmina Girls' School, Japan.

A (who came in as a boarder the day before, to B, who has been in school some months): "What kind of girls are those room-mates of mine? They seem to be just a little—well—queer! Are they not different from the other girls?"

B. "No, I think not. They are very nice girls. Why do you think they are queer?"

A. "Why, they act so strange. Last evening, just before we went to bed, suddenly they stopped talking, and, as if they had quarreled, turned their backs to each other, and began to talk the strangest kind of words I ever heard. I tried to understand, but I could make nothing out of it. I began to think they were not just like other girls, so I did not ask anything about it. Now, I would like to know why they do that. Is it some kind of a study, or what is it?"

B. "Why, they were praying; that is all."

A. "Praying! What is praying?"

B. (Not being a Christian herself, was a little puzzled by this straightforward question). "Praying is just—just talking to God and telling Him all about yourself."

A. "Well, I don't understand quite. I think I will just go and ask C.; she must know all about it, for she seems to be quite skilful in it."

(Goes back to her own room.)

A. "Will you please to tell me what you and D. were doing yesterday evening and this morning? B. calls it 'praying,' but I can't quite make out just what 'praying' is. I don't think B. knows much about it herself. You must understand, for you do it."

Then follows a long explanation of prayer.

A., listening intently, finally decides that prayer is a desirable accomplishment, and concludes by asking earnestly: "When I finish the preparatory class, may I pray too?"

Being assured that she may pray that very minute if she likes, she is delighted, and after that, morning and evening, in her own child-like way, she prays to the God of whom she never heard until a few days ago, and who will surely reveal Himself to her as He does not to the worldly-wise.

Do not think this story is imaginary. I assure you it all happened. The girl is not much more than a child in years, but is indeed a very babe in worldly wisdom. She knows a great many things, but about God her mind is surely a *tabula rasa*. Pray that on it may soon be found an image of the true God.—*Missionary Record.*

Snake Catching in India.

A NEW industry has sprung up in Delhi, India. Some enterprising natives are taking advantage of the government offer of two annas for every snake killed, to trade on the old traditional tree and serpent worship. August 4th is the great serpent worshipping day, and every Tuesday the pipal tree is worshipped by Hindoo women. Taking advantage of the reverence paid to snakes, a large number of men have set to work catching these reptiles. Then, taking them into the streets where pious Hindoos most abound, they announce that they are on their way to claim the reward, but that they are quite willing, for a *pice* or two more, to release the reptiles, and so save themselves from the sin of snake murder which their poverty would otherwise drive them to commit. The appeal is invariably successful.—*Selected.*