

very soon the foot of the missionary trod the sacred soil of the land of the gods.

In tracing the rise and progress of Protestant mission-work in Japan, up to the year 1883, I quote from an historical sketch of "Protestant Missions in Japan," prepared by the Rev. J. F. Verbeck, D.D., for the Osaka Conference of Missionaries which was held in that year :

"Before the close of 1859, the year of the actual opening of the country," says Dr. Verbeck, "the missionaries of three Protestant Churches were fairly established on this virgin soil. The history of Protestant missions in Japan divides itself conveniently into two periods of nearly equal length. The first period extends from the summer of 1859 to the end of 1872, and may be called the period of preparation and promise. The second period runs from the beginning of 1873 to the present; it has been a season of progressive realization and performance. The former was, with the exception of a joyful day of harvest near its close, a time of learning and sowing; the latter a time of reaping as well as of sowing for future harvests. The goodly number of those who have patiently and hopefully laboured, through well-nigh the whole or large portions of the two periods, well know the marked difference between the earlier and later."

The situation of the first missionaries was often a trying one. With much that was agreeable, there was more that was perplexing. Danger, too, was not infrequently imminent; for it was the time of attacks without either provocation or warning, and of assassinations from patriotic motives.

"The missionaries soon found that they were regarded with great suspicion and closely watched, and all intercourse with them was conducted under strict surveillance. When the subject of religion was mooted in the presence of the Japanese, his hand would, almost involuntarily, be applied to his throat, to indicate the extreme perilousness of such a topic. We were regarded as persons who had come to seduce the masses of the people from their loyalty to the 'God-country,' and corrupt their morals generally.

"The missionaries shared with the other foreign residents in the alarms incident to a disturbed state of the country, and were sometimes exposed to insult and even assault. The swaggering *Samurai*, armed with two swords, cast many a scowling look at the hated foreigners, whom they would gladly have expelled from their sacred soil. Any Japanese bookseller who sold a Bible would have to go to prison.

"Among the enactments of the Imperial Government was the