

use of English text-books. But the best of all is, his soul seems to be aflame with the one desire of making known to his fellow-countrymen the truth of the gospel which has saved himself. I am not sure but he may yet become one of our best native evangelists. I am giving him suitable instruction with this end in view.

THE SABBATH IN JAPAN.

One of the difficulties of missionary work here has been that there is no Sabbath; and the official classes have been unable, in many instances, to attend the services, on account of public duties from which they could procure no release. Some have been deterred from making a profession of faith in Christ, as it would involve the obligation to keep the seventh day holy. In some instances this would involve loss of employment and of the means of livelihood. But Providence has removed this obstacle out of the way sooner than we expected. A notification has been issued by the Prime Minister abolishing the *ichi-roku* holidays, and proclaiming that for the future the first day of the week shall be regarded as taking their place. It may be necessary to explain that the *ichi-roku* days are those which have a 1 or a 6 in their ordinal numbers. Thus the 1st, 6th, 11th, 16th, 21st, 26th, and 31st of the month were holidays on which business at the public departments was suspended. The following is the notification as it appeared in the *Japan Weekly Mail*.

[NOTIFICATION 27.]

(To In, Sho, Shi, Cho, Fu, and Ken.)

It is hereby notified that up to the present time the first and sixth days have been observed in the Government offices as the days of rest. But, from the first of April next, all Government offices will be closed on Sunday and will be open only until noon on Saturday.

SANJO SANYROSHI,
Prime Minister.

March 12th, 1876.

The probable cause for this notification is, no doubt, in the first place

the convenience of the public departments, as foreigners in the service of the Government claimed Sunday as a day of rest, at least from work; which, in addition to the *ichi-roku* holidays, involved a considerable loss of time. A second reason for the change is supposed to be an attempt to approximate little by little to the customs and observances of the western nations, in virtue of which they hope for the removal of the *exterritoriality clause* from the treaties with foreign powers, by which they may obtain jurisdiction over foreigners resident in Japan. But whatever may be the object of the Government of this nation in adopting Sunday as a day of rest, the movement is one which will materially aid us in our missionary work, and may even foreshadow some further step in favour of Christianity.

We have had a very pleasant visit from the Rev. E. E. Jenkins, M.A., who is on a tour inspecting the W. M. Missions in China and India. He came to Japan from England, direct, but being pressed for time could only stay with us a few days. We were glad, however, to have even a call from one so conversant with missionary work; and who has rendered such effective service in the high places of the field. He strongly advises us to purchase ground and erect suitable mission premises here as soon as possible. And in this advice I fully concur. I shall have something further to say about it, that may be more suitably communicated to the Treasurers, and by them laid before the Committee of Consultation and Finance.

When are we to see the long-promised reinforcement to our mission? Do send us a couple of good men — married — with missionary hearts, to help us in this work. I deeply sympathize with the society in the present embarrassment from financial pressure. But unless we are strengthened at once we may nearly as well abandon the field. There can be no legitimate expansion of our work. We shall lose prestige. Every mission in Japan is strong in numbers