

## FIELD STUDY FOR MARCH.

## JAPAN.

**M**OST of our readers are now quite familiar with the names of our four stations in Japan, Tokyo, Shidzuoka, Kofu and Kanazawa. Still, let us refresh our memories by looking them up once more on the map. If you have not a large map, in last year's report you will find a small one having our stations marked in red.

We have twelve missionaries now in Japan and six of these are on their second term of service. Four or five give most of their time to evangelistic work. Our new worker is Miss Bessie Alcorn. She is the daughter of a Methodist minister in Nova Scotia and has spent a number of years, both as scholar and teacher, at Sackville, N. B.

Another Charity School has been added to our work in Tokyo. This work among the poor will soon be further extended by the opening of a dispensary. In reference to this Miss Blackmore says:—

"Life with so many hundreds in this district is, at its best, but a long, desperate struggle with starvation; and sickness to them means not only pain without the means to secure medical attendance; but inability to work, even for one day, means inability to buy the poor and scanty portion of food which from day to day barely makes life and work possible."

In Kanazawa this class is reached through the Industrial Schools. By enabling the children and young girls to earn their living during the day, we have the privilege of teaching them in the evening and on Sunday. Some of these are later taken into our boarding schools as supported girls. Though for the most part these are girls of somewhat higher rank—most of them belonging to the old soldier and student class who suffered much in the revolution. These are usually very intelligent people and will certainly educate their sons, and will often do something towards the education of their daughters also. After inquiring into their circumstances to see that they really need the help the teacher makes an agreement with the parents. This binds the pupil to remain at school till the course is completed (six to eight years) and then give two years work to the Society. Not one of these supported girls has left the school other than an earnest Christian. From these ranks have come the Bible-women, the teachers, the matrons, translators, workers in every line; so that with no larger foreign staff a much wider work is possible.

For three or four years past the teachers of the Shidzuoka school have given a little party to the old ladies in the church. At the suggestion of the Bible-woman they also invited two or three who did not attend our services. One of these was a pious Buddhist without a spear of hair on her head, having had it shaved as a religious rite. The room was prepared to receive them by arranging all the rugs available in the centre of the room, as it would have been very tiring for them to sit on chairs. They were very much interested in looking at the curious things in *Sen seis*,\*—the bed especially. They thought it so odd for people to sleep on a shelf. Some enjoyed the foreign meal, but one old lady smelled at the bread and butter but could

\*Pronounced 'sen-sé,' teacher.

not seem to induce herself to taste *anything*. *What was not eaten* was carefully wrapped up in white paper, according to Japanese etiquette, and carried home as a curiosity. After tea the Bible-woman came in and talked to them. In a pleasing, winning way, so common among these people, she explained to them why *Sensei* had given them this *gochiso* (feast), that it was the love of Christ constrained them. Now they had had a *gochiso* for their bodies, but if they came to the church Sunday morning they would have a *gochiso* for their souls! Sunday morning the old Buddhist was there early. Before the service she came up to where the teachers were sitting, bowed very low and thanked them for their kindness. Japanese etiquette requires this of those who have been entertained; however, she stayed to the service and afterward came quite regularly. Some time afterwards she applied for baptism. But she could not think herself a sinner. There was no need for her to repent, though she thought it would be a good thing if her *daughter-in-law* would do so! After further study with the Bible-woman she was led to see her need of pardon and she is now a devoted member of our church.

A very encouraging feature in the Azabu school is the Alumnae meeting, spring and fall. The girls delight to return to the school home. These gatherings grow in interest. The last year or so, at the girls' suggestion, the exercises have been almost altogether religious, as they felt they needed that most, many in their own homes not being able to attend any service. The girls have been wonderfully faithful, some of them winning over their own families to Christ. Our brightest hopes centre around those who have made Christian marriages. Here, in the united Christian household, is the promise of the nation's future. R. E. D.

## QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

- What are the names of our four Mission stations in Japan?
- How many Missionaries have we now in Japan and what is said of them?
- Who is our new worker there and what can you tell of her?
- What addition has been made to the work in Tokyo, and how will it soon be still further extended?
- What does Miss Blackmore say in reference to the need of a dispensary for the poor?
- Through what is this class reached in Kanazawa and will you explain how?
- Of what rank are most of the girls taken into the boarding schools as "supported girls"?
- Are the parents in this rank intelligent, and if so, how will they show it?
- What agreement is made by the parents with the teachers?
- What remarkable fact is stated of these supported girls?
- What workers have come from the ranks, and what is the result?
- What have the teachers of Shidzuoka school done for two or three years?
- Who were among the invited at the Bible woman's suggestion?
- Who was one of them?
- Will you tell all you know about the party?
- How did the Bible woman talk to them after tea, and what did she say?
- On Sunday morning, what did the old Buddhist lady do?
- Will you tell the story of her conversion?
- What is an encouraging feature in the Azabu school? Do the girls love their school life?
- What suggestion of theirs has been carried out the last year or so, and why did they make it?
- What good things are said of the girls educated in these schools.
- Around what do our brightest hopes centre?