

mean more work. In proportion as you are successful, so will your labors be increased. As Walt Whitman said, "It is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary." And I am sure you welcome that. While life and strength last, effort, sacrifice, exertion, faith, encouraged and unresting, will be ceaselessly contributed, irrespective of results or of reward to the causes upon which you are engaged.

A HALF A CENTURY IN JAPAN.

(By Clara A. Converse, Yokohama, Japan.)

Fifty years ago there was no Bible in Japan, no Christian, no missionary, nothing but a bitter prejudice, a bitter hatred of the name of Christ. Forty years ago there were a few missionaries, but no Bible, no church. Thirty years ago there were a few churches, but the dreadful edicts forbidding Christianity were still on the public bulletins all over the Empire. During the next ten years, a sentiment in favor of everything foreign was in vogue, and Christianity had freer sway, but again the anti-foreign, anti-Christian feeling revived. Twenty years ago, a Christian to be a teacher in a public school, needed to hide the fact of being a Christian or lose his place. Children in the public schools who attended the Christian Sunday School were ridiculed by their schoolmates. Eight years ago a rescript from the Minister of Education forbidding any religious instruction in any school, whether in school hours or not, brought great anxiety to the missionary body, and together they entreated God to remove the dark lowering cloud which was threatening the very existence of the mission school.

Strange as any miracle in Bible times, and as sudden, the cloud lifted. To-day, only eight years from that time of deep anxiety, the country is open everywhere to the teaching of the Bible. There are Bible classes in connection with the Normal Schools and the Imperial University. Our missionaries in Morioka, in Kyoto, in Himeji, everywhere, are having wonderful success in giving the Gospel to the great student body.

At a Teachers' Convention in May of last year, held in Yokohama, the keynote of the public addresses was the need of developing and strengthening the moral natures of the pupils. A Christian statesman stood upon the platform and before an audience of over a thousand told a story something like the following:

A conceited young man said to me, "Teacher, I'll have nothing to do with religion." I looked at him in his proud self-sufficiency and said, "Young man, you will have nothing to do with religion? Then your life will be a failure." After a few words more the young man said, "But if a religion, what religion

should I choose?" "Any religion rather than no religion," was the reply. The young man, moved by the intensity and earnestness of his teacher's manner pressed him further to know what religion was best. Then Mr. Nitobi replied, "Any religion is better than no religion, but I know of no religion that can transform the character and give a man the power to stand in the midst of temptation except the religion of Jesus Christ." Such words were spoken by a man of high standing, not in a church, but before a large audience of teachers, and perfect quiet reigned throughout the house as he spoke.

In the same Convention, a Buddhist priest, speaking on the subject, "Temptation and Will," said that the reason so many backslide and make failures of their lives is because the will is not properly trained. To make his meaning clear he used as an illustration the story of Christ's temptation, telling it just as it is written in our blessed Bible. Mr. Fujimoto, in giving the report of the meeting to our girls, with tears streaming down his cheeks, said: "What are we Christians doing? Is it because we are cowardly and slow to speak that God is raising up in the Buddhist fold those who proclaim His Word?" In coming out of the hall after one session of the Convention was over, a young lady said to one of our graduates, "It really would seem from what we have heard that to be a good teacher one ought to be a Christian."

Such is the condition of Japan to-day. Such the attitude of the people—the educated people—toward Christianity. To-day is the day for active, aggressive work of the best kind in the wonderful land in the wonderful East. Not only for the men, but also for the women.

Thirty years ago there were few girls in the primary schools. To-day throngs of girls are eager for an education, not only in the primary and grammar grade, but the high school and the college are being sought by hosts of young ladies. They have a healthy, noble ambition to become for their country what they see the American lady is for hers. The Christian missionary has taught Japan the meaning of womanhood, the power of woman. The stamp of the missionary has been set upon many of the strongest characters of Japanese women. Madame Takahira, wife of the Japanese Ambassador in Washington, was once the pupil of Miss Kidder. She received from this noble missionary an impress which has made her life a power for good in the high circle in which she has moved.

May the strong womanhood of America go out in sympathy to this womanhood which is earnestly reaching out after the good and the beautiful in life and character. May we not be slow in giving of our abundance of Christian thought and Christian ideals all that the women of this island kingdom are ready to receive and so hasten the glad day of our Master's reign throughout the earth.—The Helping Hand.