

makes this difference? Surely God put no difference between us and them? If the life and love of Christ has lifted us in point of privilege to be equal with man, then "how much owest thou unto thy Lord?" The Macedonian cry "to come over and help us," which has been echoing and re-echoing from shore to shore down through the ages, reaches us to-day, and should find a ready response in the heart of every Christian.

We are glad for the success that has attended our efforts, and yet, when we consider how small a percentage of the Methodist women have yet been enlisted in this work, we realize we will have to work and pray a little longer ere we can claim the promise of heaven's windows being opened to pour upon us that great blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Whatever our Lord might have done, whatever He may do, His reliance is upon His friends. "Christ, the same yesterday and to-day," would still seek the lost, but He would do it on our feet; He would still minister, but He would do it with our hands; He would still warn, comfort, encourage and instruct, but He would do it with our lips. If we refuse to perform these offices for Him, what right have we to call ourselves members of His body in vital union with Him? Moreover, Christ teaches that the needs of men are His needs, that He is in the world hungry, naked, sick and in prison.

Dr. Starr says: "Not in song, not in conference, not at the Sacrament, not in prayer for personal blessing do we come so near to His kingly and loving heart as when we reach out in desire and plan to the ends of the earth, that they may also see His salvation. His promise to be always with us will only illustrate itself in our experience when we are going by prayer and gifts unto all the world

"For God in man brings man to God through faith and love and sorrow,
And toil and strife that lift the world towards a brighter morrow,
And blest are they to whom the gift ineffable is given
Through tears, through toils, through martyr fires, to light men on to heaven."

Christmas in Azabu.

(Written for the OUTLOOK.)

SINCE last September I have been teaching a class of young men in the Azabu Sunday School. At first everything seemed very strange—so different from anything I had been used to; but gradually I came to see that human nature is much the same in Japan as in Canada. I have become much interested in my class and in the general progress of the Sunday School. The young men in my class attend the Boys' school, and all know more or less English—generally less. There are four male teachers, and six of "our girls" have classes there and teach the singing.

Lately there has been much talk about Christmas, and I have been surprised to find what a place the pleasures of this season have in the minds of Japanese Christians. The little ones were trained to sing, recite, or read for the entertainment to be held on Christmas night, and no doubt in many homes it was talked about and longed for quite as much as by the little ones in Canada.

When the evening arrived, Miss Alexander and I went to the Boys' school, in which our services have been held since the Azabu church was rendered useless by the earthquake. The meeting opened at about six o'clock and lasted until nine. When we arrived we found that many had taken their places, and very good order reigned. A look of eager anticipation was plainly visible on the faces of the children, and on the mothers' countenances proud interest could be read. Our girls, whose kindness and courtesy to the foreign teachers is unbounded, had placed chairs for us at the front facing the audience, and as we came in one, of them gave us a programme printed in Japanese characters, but having under every item the interpretation written in English.

An audience of Japanese has a strong interest for me. I have been here long enough to have grown accustomed to their costume and features, but not long enough to know very much about their home-life, or to be able to guess the range of their thoughts as they sat waiting for the opening

exercises. In front were rows and rows of small girls and boys, evidently all dressed in their best; but what a contrast between the pretty silk dresses of the richer and the poor, dirty clothing of those who came from the humbler walks of life! I could not understand their low, happy chatter, but supposed it had reference to the Christmas-tree which stood on the other side of the minister's desk, decked with mysterious bundles. Behind the children sat the older people, the men on one side and the women on the other, many of the latter having babies on their backs or in their arms. As I looked at their faces I wondered how much of the true meaning of the rejoicings on this day was understood by them; to the hearts of how many came a thrill of joy and thankfulness at the return of the day on which Christ had come to earth to pay such a price for their souls. Some of them, I knew, had learned the old, old story; others had but a faint conception of its meaning, and perhaps to some one there, this was the first revelation of Christianity.

The opening hymn, "Rejoice and be glad, the Redeemer has come," was given out, and the organist played a few measures, then all joined in singing. But it was soon apparent that something was wrong. Presently I noticed that the organist had stopped playing, and was sitting with an expression of countenance in which dismay and amusement were mingled. All the older people stopped singing, but the little folks went bravely on to the end of the verse, notwithstanding the gentle efforts of the superintendent to make himself heard. Then I became aware that the children were singing a hymn to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne," which they had been taught specially for this evening. Explanations were made, and the first hymn was then sung and followed by prayer. Then came an address of welcome to the visitors by one of the male teachers; then recitations, singing, etc., which I found quite interesting, although I could not understand a word of them. It was very pleasant to see how well they performed their several parts and how nicely they behaved. Four little tots, who had to be lifted on and off the platform, which was raised about a foot from the floor, stood in a row, made their little bow, and together recited the words of Luke xviii. 17. Eight little girls recited the whole of Romans xii. without a break, and the singing was very good. The little ones learn these hymns and sing them in their own homes, and instances are known in which they have carried home to their parents enough of the truth to enable them to grasp the salvation of Christ. I heard of one case in which a woman was found dying in wretchedness and poverty, yet trusting in Christ, having heard of Him only through her little child. All these thoughts stirred me very deeply and made the tears rise more than once. But soon the giving of prizes changed my mood, for I could not help sharing the joy of the happy recipients. These prizes are given according to regularity of attendance, and every child received something. In many cases it was a pair of *geta*, or wooden footwear, for use in rainy weather. Sometimes both *geta* and umbrella were received.

As the names were called, each boy or girl hastened to the front, right up on to the platform, to receive the mysterious parcel from the superintendent's own hands. A low bow always preceded the accepting of the gift, but many, in the excitement of the moment, miscalculated the distance, and struck their foreheads against the parcel. Having received it, most of them made a second bow, even more profound than the first; but some were evidently so full of joy that there was no room for politeness in their little minds, and so they marched off, hugging their prize and beaming on everybody. I sat there and laughed until the tears came, and thought about a hundred went up to the platform one by one, I did not grow tired of watching them. One little girl in front of me cried for some reason, and in a twinkling she was wrapped close in the arms of one of the young men in my class, who talked to her and petted her until she was quite comforted. Another pretty little one had her *geta* pressed against her little heart, and hugged them as if they had been a doll, peeping in at the open ends of the wrapper every few moments to refresh her memory with another sight of their loveliness. The aforesaid young man persuaded her to lay them on the floor, which she obediently did; but as soon as he was