

and sound judgment. He should have great patience and long-suffering ; for without this he will fail. He should have humility—will- ingness to obliterate himself. Above all, he should be a Spirit-filled man.

A NEW AND REMARKABLE ERA AT HAND.

The rationalistic wave, which has done so much to chill the life and enthusiasm of the Japanese Church during the last few years, is receding. The ultra-nationalistic feeling, which has handicapped aggressive missionary effort, is giving way. Since the war the signs of encouragement have greatly multiplied. The war itself has demonstrated, as nothing else could have done, that Christians are not unpatriotic. The attitude of Government officials is, therefore, becoming increasingly favorable to Christianity. Thoughtful people are beginning to realize the need of moral and religious culture, and that Buddhism and Confucianism are not sufficient. Christianity has acquired a prestige altogether out of proportion to the length of its history and the number of its adherents. Although on the one hand there are but 40,000 Christians, and on the other millions of Buddhists, the two religions are spoken of as equals, and where any distinction is made among educated men it is more frequently in favor of Christianity. In no non-Christian country are students and thinking men so accessible to the influence of Christianity. Wherever you go you find the people willing to hear the Gospel, and some who are drawn to it. The oldest workers told us that not for many years have the people been so eager to hear earnest evangelical preaching. The Japanese Church is better prepared than ever before in its history for a large and safe work. It is showing a great dissatisfaction with ultra-liberal thought, and has already become more practical and aggressive and less speculative. The experiences of the past few years have tried and sifted the Church. Its body has been purged not only of members but of leaders, having unworthy motives. The preaching is more Biblical. There has been marked and increasing emphasis on teaching about the place of the Holy Spirit, not only in the Japanese pulpit, but also in the religious press. The Japanese workers have also recently been holding special conferences for the deepening of the spiritual life, and all over the country individual members are giving themselves to prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The prayerfulness of the Japanese Christians greatly impressed us. In no country have we found the pastors and members of the churches in so many different places giving themselves to the ministry of intercession. Revival spirit is breaking out here and there in different parts of the Empire. The field seems to be

dead ripe. In our own experience, no matter in what part of Japan we were, and even if we had but one evangelistic meeting, we found a ready response to direct Gospel appeal, and there were always some who decided to take Christ as a Saviour.

The impression seems to be general that the tide has at last turned, and that Japan is about to witness another great spiritual movement like the one of the last decade, provided that the Church seizes the opportunity and makes aggressive effort. The revised treaties between Japan and other countries, which are now being made and which will go into effect within two years, open the largest opportunity which has ever confronted the Church of Christ in Japan. By these treaties the whole country will be thrown open for the first time for missionary residence and work, thus affording a great highway for the Gospel.

It would seem that God has overruled in the experiences of the last few years in preparing the Japanese Church better to improve this unexampled opportunity. The epitome of their Church history, given to us by an eminent Japanese pastor, comes to mind : "The first ten years of Meiji was a period of seed-sowing ; the second ten years was a period of harvest ; the next ten years, soon to open, will witness a great development and ingathering." Now is the last time in the history of the Christian enterprise in Japan when the home Church should withdraw or hesitate. On the contrary, she should stretch her powers to grasp and improve this opportunity.

Of Japan it is pre-eminently true that what is done by the Church in the West must be done quickly. If Japan can be made a Christian nation, it will not only be a mighty fact in itself, but will have a vast influence through the entire East and the Pacific island world. We should be solemnized by God's dealings with this people. The providences which have opened Japan have been simply marvellous. What other nation has in one generation been so widely permeated with the spirit of Christianity ? Dr. Verbeck told us that when he came to Japan there was not a single Christian, and edicts against Christianity were nailed up all over the Empire. About thirty years ago he baptized the first two Christians, and now there are over 40,000. God has always been in the life of this wonderful nation, but never more manifestly than now.

DID you ever notice how, in that wonderful ninety-ninth Psalm, David, in the midst of a torrent of praise, makes the practical suggestion that they bring an *offering* as they come into His courts ? How can we come into His presence, knowing the need of His world, and withhold what we might give ?—*Helping Hand*.