

third are Bible-women, while the first in the second row is Mrs. Harano, the pastor's wife.

Most of the others in the picture are students attending our English school in Kanazawa, and wearing the uniforms of the various government schools from which they come. Some of these, and others in ordinary dress are Christians.

The building in the background is our school and church building. On the afternoons and evenings of week days, except Saturdays, English classes are taught, and on Sundays regular preaching services, Sunday School and English services are held. The building itself occupies one of the finest sites in this city of one hundred thousand inhabitants, and is in the immediate neighborhood of the Normal, Middle and Higher schools.

Japan.

IN this country of Japan, which has come forward so rapidly of late years to take her place among the nations of the earth, the history of missions presents a series of changes more startling than any other mission field. Her commercial relations with western nations began as early as 1542, when Portuguese traders arranged a system of barter with the Japanese ports. Through this means the natives heard something of Christianity in which they expressed some interest. The news came to Francois Xavier, one of the leaders of the Order of Jesuits, and he reached Japan, August, 1549. Then aided by his interpreter he began his wonderful work. There is something stimulating in the picture of this great apostle "clad in the garb of a peasant and with straw sandals on his feet," making his way over mountains and through valleys on to the Imperial palace. The condition of the country, then separated into warring factions under various leaders, made it extremely arduous and terribly dangerous. Failing to capture the ear of the Emperor by his message he began to preach in the streets, but his inadequate command of the language made this difficult in the extreme. This self-sacrificing servant of the Most High went out to preach a gospel of salvation to the Japanese, and when disappointed with the failure of his purpose he set out for China, but died before he could begin work there. Truly he labored and others entered into his labors. As he fell from the ranks others took his place and carried on the work until, about 1590, there were 600,000 converts. Then the change came. Those in authority became suspicious of the political aims of Christianity. Still the work succeeded. By 1598 the Christians numbered a million and a half. Then came another contest between rival princes, and the victor commenced that persecution and slaughter of the Christians, which is unequalled in cruelty in the history of missions. Christianity was prohibited and almost stamped out. Copies of the edict against the "foreign religion" were put in every prominent place. It read thus: "So long as the sun shall continue to warm the earth, let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan, and let all know that the King of Spain himself, or the Christian's God, or the great God of all, if He dare violate this command, shall pay for it with his head." All means of connection with the outer world were cut off, while the Christians were subjected to all the cruelties that barbaric ingenuity could invent. We pass over these dark days until the visits of Commodore Perry, of the United States, in 1853 and 1854, led the way for a newer life to be given to Japan. Treaties were made with England, Russia and America, until by 1859 the door was open again for Christian missions. The midnight darkness

had passed. For ten years three missionary societies toiled in the field. In 1869 a resolution in the Government brought about a change of attitude toward foreigners, and there was a great influx of societies and missionaries. In 1873 the Methodist Church of Canada entered the field. From 1876 to 1892 ten societies entered.

The missionary problem of Japan has been, and is, grave and intricate. Bitter opposition to European civilization had to be overcome. When better acquaintance brought about the desire to share in the advantages of this great civilization of the West, the tendency was to make it conform to Japanese ideas. The way seemed open for "Japanising Christianity instead of Christianizing Japan."

Says Dr. Bliss: "The quick intelligence of the people, their easy assimilation of new ideas and adaptation of new methods, their courtesy and cordial friendliness of manner, their intense patriotism, eager to get every advantage for their country, even the lack of the sense of personality, making the individual subordinate to the nation, community and family, their thirst for knowledge and deference to those whom they recognize can help them—these all were and are favorable. On the other hand, the lack of a true conception of morals, manifest both in social and commercial life, a tendency toward vacillation, lack of fixedness of purpose, lack of appreciation of favors, and not infrequently ingratitude, perfect self-confidence—these have always been recognized as hindrances."

The period from 1859 to 1873 was one of preparation. The treaties gave foreigners the right of residence and trade in certain localities, and missionary work was chiefly teaching English, studying the language, publishing books and translating portions of the Bible. When the Imperial University was about to be established in 1870 at Tokyo, Guido F. Verbeck, of the Reformed (Dutch) Church, "was called to be its head and to organize a scheme for national education." Education in English was eagerly sought by young men, many of whom accepted the truth and became the leaders of New Japan. Of these, Joseph Hardy Neesima is a bright example. The story of his life is one of the most fascinating in the annals of missions, and will continue to furnish encouragement and hope to many a self-sacrificing life. From 1873 to 1879 the work of missions advanced rapidly. Difficulties there were, but the missionaries enjoyed greater freedom than in the preceding period. The mission schools were full, many young men were interested in Christianity, additions were made in church membership, and by 1889 it is reckoned there were nearly thirty thousand professed Christians in Japan. The present period is one in which the foundations are being tried. Complex problems as to organization of churches, relation of missionaries to native preachers, control of funds are causing difficulties in Christian communities, while the attitude of foreign powers toward the Japanese Government has not produced very great harmony. But the testing time has well-nigh passed, and God is working out His great design. During the war with China the action of the Christian soldiers and Christian communities, who proved themselves unflinchingly loyal, has done much to restore confidence in Christianity. The revision of treaties by England and America has also helped to bring about a better international feeling.

When Mr. Mott was making his tour of the world in the interest of the World's Student Christian Federation, he spent twelve weeks in Japan. Although the work of organization was extremely difficult because of the keenness of Japanese students, yet the end of his tour saw