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Why Japan Needs Christ and Why Christ Needs Japan

MRS. F. C. STEPHENSON

THE Key to Asia" is the significant name given to Japan by missionary statesmen, and the relative position she occupies in the Orient is an insistent and urgent call for her speedy evangelization.

In the days of long ago Japan looked to China for her code of morals, her religions, her literature, her art and her education; but when she opened her doors to western civilization she ceased to look back, and her old standards were forever abandoned.

Japan sought help from all the world in the readjustment of her national life, in the organization of her educational system, in establishing her army and navy, in introducing and developing modern transportation systems and in advancing her commercial and industrial interests. Anything which would contribute to her material and intellectual progress was adopted and adapted; but with her religions she was not only satisfied, but was bitterly opposed to the entrance of Christianity. She had not studied the underlying principles of western civilization, nor recognized that it owed its best to the Christianity which she despised.

During the past generation Japan has made marvellous advancement. A representative government, an educational system recognized the world over for its completeness from kindergarten to university, an army which has achieved, a navy modern and well equipped, railway and shipping facilities up to date, and an ever-increasing world trade, all testify that Japan has fairly won the place she holds in international councils and in the sisterhood of nations.

While Japan has taken her place among the nations of the world, she holds a unique position in the Orient. She controls Korea; her victory over Russia did much to arouse China into independence; Siam sent her embassies to inquire regarding Japan's greatness; the

unrest in India is attributed by some to the spirit of Oriental leadership which Japan is exerting, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly.

What shall Japan's leadership be? It is the privilege of the Christian Church to answer this question. The old Oriental life has, to a very large extent,

is it possible to reach the Japanese and train them as Christians? This question is answered by the organization and work of the Japanese Churches, by their outstanding leaders and by the missionaries they are beginning to send out. The native leaders in Christian work today, became Christians when to leave the faith

of their fathers meant sacrifices of which we know nothing. Now Christianity is no longer regarded as a foreign religion, and although its communicants number only about one hundred thousand, these figures do not represent the number who come under the influence of Christianity.

Japan's educational system is surely preparing the way of the Lord, and the great number of students in all centres of education constitutes an almost unparalleled opportunity for leading men to Christ and enlisting them in His service. Can these students be reached? Yes. The following extract from a private letter from the Rev. P. G. Price, who sailed last autumn for Japan, is an appeal for workers to which we hope some of our young men will respond: "The recent Mott meetings at the Methodist Tabernacle, Tokyo, were of special value, as they have shown what can be done among students. These meetings were held for two nights only, but the first night one hundred and twenty signed the pledge cards to pray and study, and give their allegiance to Christ if, after due investigation, their reason and conscience permitted. The second evening three hundred and eighteen others signed the same pledge. In addition to this one hundred and eighty came out immediately for Christ without the need of further examination or investigation. I have never heard a more direct appeal to flee from sin

than Mr. Mott delivered. I have never seen so large a percentage of response to the Gospel message. It was not an educational appeal, but one to flee from sin and to receive power to overcome sin. I would say, however, that practically every man who made decision on these two evenings has been taught



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given way to new thought; old civilization, old philosophies and old religions are being displaced. Their old faiths are slipping away. What shall we give in their place? Japan must be prepared for leadership, and that leadership must be Christian.