

Mission Field.

[From the S.P.G. Mission Field for April.]

JAPAN.—[CONTINUED].

For examples of a readiness to hear, and of opportunities, the following are remarkable:

"The Christians in the large fishing village of Ito are very anxious that a successor should be appointed to Mr. Kuibo, through whose earnest preaching there are some inquirers now asking for further instruction. Eighteen miles south of Ito there is a town of about a thousand inhabitants, called Matori, on the sea-coast. The chief of the police, the head of the hospital, and other of the important people in the place are favorable to our Church. It is a difficult place to reach by land from Ito, owing to a steep intervening mountain range; but there is a steambateau alternate days running between the two places, so I hope to carry the Gospel there when another catechist is sent to Ito.

"On my way back from Inui, in the Totomi district, last August I passed through Futatabi and Nakaizumi, so as to explore the southern part of the district. Nakaizumi is forty-one miles distant from Shizuoka, and has a railway station. Although Nakaizumi is in the neighborhood of Mitsuke of ill-fame, the morals of the place are very good. An attempt was made to transfer some immoral houses there from Mitsuke, but the chief men of the place offered a strenuous resistance to the scheme, and prevented its being carried into execution. This makes me feel that it would be a hopeful place in which to establish a Mission.

"I heard during December that in Hamamatsu, a large and important town on the railway, fifteen miles from Nakaizumi, there are some inquirers who are anxious to listen to our preaching, and Mr. Ishida, the catechist, who wrote to me from Inui pressing me to comply with their wishes. When I am next in Totomi I hope to pay them a visit. I hear that a member of our Church in Osaka has lately gone to live there. If we could open work at Hamamatsu, and send a catechist there, it would bring us within sixty-seven miles of our Mission in Nagoya. Indeed, for various reasons I earnestly desire to see a catechist sent to Hamamatsu or Nakaizumi."

From the report of the Rev. A. E. Tida, who is in charge of Shimosa and Kazusa, we take the following account of the conversion of a depraved persecutor of the Church:

"The congregation at Matsuzaki, the neighboring village, had been without a catechist till quite recently, and, having been subject to persecutions by certain bad men, the Christians had begun to grow cold and indifferent. By the providence of God, however, it has survived the danger thus far. Since last summer Mr. S. Tida has been working there as catechist. God has heard our prayers, and the most notorious of the persecutors has at last begun to listen to the Gospel. In August or

September he came and stood outside the church, and began to listen to the prayers and sermons. Gradually he felt compunction for his evil deeds, and in October he called on the catechist, and, expressing deep regret for his bad conduct, earnestly requested to be admitted into the Church. At first there was no one who believed in his sincerity, but, to the great wonder of us all, he who beforetime had been a great drunkard broke off his evil habit; afterwards he went to the catechist's house and learnt about the existence of God, sin, the Atonement, death and judgment, the Resurrection, and eternal life. At last, on the fourth Sunday in Advent, he was admitted as a catechumen in the presence of God and of His whole congregation in St. Paul's Church, Matsuzaki. In this we all gratefully acknowledge God's mysterious power and guidance."

Mr. Tida reports growth, progress, and new openings in many directions.

We now turn from the capital and its neighborhood to the Society's work in the South of Japan, where the Rev. H. J. Foss is in charge of the important Mission of Kobe. Mr. Foss reports great progress in the educational agencies, and tells of his having the advantage of the help of several unpaid teachers. New work here too is opening up in many ways. Connected with Kobe is the Mission in the island of Awaji, the peculiarities of which are described by the Rev. C. G. Gardner.

(To be continued.)

MANY people are troubled over the mysteries of religion, but it is the things I thoroughly understand, and especially the Ten Commandments that worry me.—Rev. Sam. P. Jones.



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