

JAPAN.

It was but recently that the empire of Japan was accessible to Protestant missionaries, and it must be admitted that the churches of England and America have not been slow to avail themselves of the opportunity thus afforded. The following may be regarded as the present condition of the missionary work there. Twelve societies, English and American, 107 missionaries (including ladies) are residing in Yeddo, Yokohama, Kohe, Osaka, Nagasaki and Hokodati. In five of these cities churches have been formed, the united membership of which is about 200. The Scriptures and other religious works are carrying light and salvation to places where the missionary cannot secure a hearing, by reason of the restriction which prevents his journeying more than twenty-five miles from a treaty port. Dr. J. C. Hepburn, the medical missionary of Yokohama, who combines the functions of surgeon, physician, translator, lexicographer, evangelist, and philanthropist, while on a visit to this country last year, Romanised his translation of the Gospel of St. John, and the American Bible Society printed it. In Japan it was hailed with delight by the missionaries and the natives who were acquainted with the Roman character. The benevolence of Christianity is daily illustrated in the relief from pain and sickness which is afforded at the mission hospitals and dispensaries. Schools for boys and girls are doing an important work in training up persons who, it is believed, will occupy useful positions in the Christian church not many years hence.

As Yeddo is the place where our excellent brother Cochran resides, our readers will be glad to peruse the following description of it. Yeddo or Jeddo is one of the five principal cities of Japan, and now the seat of government, which makes it the metropolis of the country. This city has a circumference of twenty-four miles, and covers a surface of thirty-six square miles. It is a very picturesque city, rising and falling over undulating ground covered with fine old trees. It has no less than fifteen hundred large temples, which, surrounded by their gilded globes, produce a beautiful effect. The streets are crowded with a busy multitude, but there are few wheeled vehicles. . . . As regards the character of the people generally, there is much in it to excite and keep up our interest. They are an inquiring people. There is great difference between Japan and China in one important respect, viz., the accessibility of the women. One has remarked that Paul's success in the first churches of Europe which he established owed much of that success to the superior social position which the women in those parts held over their sisters in Asia Minor. May the missionaries have a similar experience in Japan.