

Editorial and Contributed.

NOTES FROM JAPAN.

BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

A PLEASANT episode was a visit to the home of a wealthy Japanese gentleman in a southern suburb of Tokyo. Mr. Masuda has a lovely place; spacious grounds, laid out with Japanese taste; a beautiful house, built in the native style, but with foreign furniture in some of the rooms. Mr. Masuda has travelled a good deal, speaks English fluently, and is a very intelligent, gentlemanly man. His wife is a charming lady, but does not speak English much. The house in which luncheon was served is distinct from the dwelling, and has a history. The material is 140 years old. The house was presented many years ago by the Emperor to a physician who had rendered valuable professional service. Recently Mr. Masuda bought the building, and removed it to its present site. But a little trouble has arisen. The tiles and some other things have the Emperor's crest impressed upon them, and Mr. Masuda has been notified that his possession of these is objected to in high quarters; so they will have to be removed. Mr. Masuda has a small colony of silk worms, and speaks hopefully of this branch of industry. Silk is now the chief export of Japan, next to which comes tea. The country has great resources in metals, etc., but the lack of anthracite coal may prove a hindrance to development.

On the 12th of June I went with Mr. Hiraiwa to visit the Normal and Model schools in Tokyo. These institutions seem to be well equipped for their purpose. The students in the Normal school are admitted on examination, and are limited in number. Last year, thirty girls pre-ented themselves for examination; eight were admitted, and of these five were from our Woman's School at Azabu. The Government is in some respects a paternal one. It provides the students with everything, down to pocket money, and only stipulates in return for three years' service as teachers. Out of doors, classes were being drilled in calisthenics by a teacher employed for the purpose. In some classes the girls wore the native dress, but in others the foreign garb was universal. Among the boys and young men there was a kind of uniform of foreign fashion. In a class in the Model School a teacher was giving instruction in morals—a hint that might well be taken in Ontario. Between the Model and Kindergarten schools there is a space of perhaps one hundred feet square, covered with a trellis, and that in turn with the spreading, vine-like branches and abundant foliage of twenty-five or thirty wisterias. When these

are in bloom the sight must be beautiful beyond description. In the Kindergarten school the scene was pleasant. Thirty or forty children were there. A lady teacher (native) sat at a piano playing march music, to which the children, under the care of another teacher, kept time with feet and voice. Here the transition in dress showed itself. The little girls nearly all wore the native dress, but among the boys there was every degree of innovation from a pair of boots to full foreign costume.

Our next visit was to the University buildings. The enormous strides made by the Japanese in educational matters during the last twenty-five years is truly astonishing. Included in the University are five Colleges—Law, Literature, Science, Medicine, and Civil Engineering—besides a University Hall. Law and Literature are in one building, Medicine in a second, Science in a third, while Civil Engineering has the largest building on the grounds—a two-story brick structure of good design, surrounding a quadrangle, with a frontage on each of the four sides of at least 150 feet, perhaps more. The equipment seems to be admirable, and the best professors obtainable, foreign and native, are employed. The course in any one of the five colleges is three years, followed by two years in University Hall, which are employed chiefly in original research. It is a somewhat curious circumstance that instruction in the Medical College is given in German, while in all the others it is given in English. Text-books do not seem to be used except in reference libraries, instruction being given by means of lectures. Professor Dixon, of the College of Literature, showed me kind attention, and introduced me to the University Librarian, a Japanese gentleman, who kindly promised to furnish me with available documents relating to educational matters. The apparatus in the various schools and colleges seems to be excellent, and considerable extension is yet in contemplation

Thursday, June 13th, will henceforth be a red letter day in our branch of Methodism in Japan, as it witnessed the organization of our first Annual Conference in that country. Some twenty-three brethren, lay and clerical, assembled, and entered heartily into all the proceedings. After devotional services the Rev. D. Macdonald, M.D., was elected President, and the Revs. F. A. Cassidy, M.A., and M. Kobayashi, were elected joint Secretaries. When organization was completed, I addressed the Conference, sketching the origin of the Japan Mission, its growth, the movement toward independence, and ultimate autonomy, and urged the development of self-support among the native churches, a prudent extension of the work, and a careful consid-