

it is chiefly in the decorations. Approaching the temple by a beautiful avenue, you come to a gateway of marvellous design. On the facade facing the avenue are four pillars, matched by four precisely similar on the side next the temples. These pillars are of wood, carved over the entire surface with simple scrolls, the same pattern being repeated from plinth to capital. On the face of the pillars, at intervals, instead of the repeated scrolls there are oval medallions, exquisitely carved with figures of birds, animals and men. On the inner side of the gateway one is surprised to notice that on one of the pillars the position of the scroll work is reversed. The reason assigned is, that the gateway, as first designed was absolutely perfect, but to construct it in that form would have been highly displeasing to the gods, and would have brought some terrible calamity upon the people; hence the carving on one pillar was reversed so as to avoid the danger of absolute perfection!

To attempt any description of the temples themselves is out of the question. The general style of architecture is the same as that followed all over Japan; but the perfection of detail, the harmony of colors, the gorgeousness of decoration, are such as defy all attempts at description. In one of the chief temples four pillars, with open-arched spaces between, separate the large room where worshippers assemble, from the sanctuary where the images of the gods sit in solemn state on the altar. Some idea of the enormous sums lavished by the old Daimios on these structures may be inferred from the fact, that each of the pillars just referred to cost \$80,000. Immediately behind the principal temple are the tombs of the two most famous men in the line of the Shoguns, and it is in honor of these men that the wonderful temples have been erected. But even here there are signs that "the old order changeth, giving place to the new." Time was when a multitude of priests thronged these avenues, and ministered at the altars; but revenues have declined enormously, and the priestly staff is proportionately reduced. Fees are exacted from all visitors, and this helps to keep the temples in repair. One cares not how soon the false worship may be supplanted by a purer faith, but it would be a calamity if the temples themselves were allowed to fall into decay. As specimens of the very best in Japanese art they are worthy of preservation.

A pleasant picnic to the waterfall of Urumi-na-taki, and an equally pleasant evening in the large house occupied by the teachers from Tokyo, where two hours were spent in converse, song and prayer, completed my visit to Nikko, and early the following morning the return journey was begun. It was a novel experience to be thrown upon my own resources among a "people of a strange speech;" but no mishap

occurred. Two stout coolies conveyed me in jinrikisha the twenty-five miles in a little over four hours, and then a few hours more in the cars landed me in Tokyo. Sailing day—July 25th—soon arrived, and accompanied by Dr. Macdonald, Dr. Eby, and Mr. Hiraiwa, I proceeded to Yokohama, and then on board the *Arabic*, a White Star liner of the O. & O. line. The swiftly changing panorama of my two months' sojourn in Japan passed before my mind, and I felt that I was leaving not only a land of superlative interest from almost every possible point of view, but was also leaving a band of as true-hearted and devoted men and women as ever labored for God in any mission field. Henceforth I shall think of them not as missionaries merely, but as brothers and sisters tried and true. As I clasped hands with some of them for the last time, at the gangway of the *Arabic*, I felt that the Church in Canada need have no fears in regard to our work in Japan. Fourteen days, in which there was but one day of really rough weather, and we steamed into the magnificent bay of San Francisco. Two days for rest, and then on, by the Union Pacific, to Ogden. Here we change to another line for Salt Lake City, where a night is passed; then on, by the Denver and Rio Grande narrow-gauge line, through scenery said by some to be wonderful, but by no means to be compared with that on our own Canadian Pacific. A day at Denver, a city of wonderful growth and possibilities, and we change to the spacious cars of the Burlington route, and rush through the foothills down to the fertile plains of Kansas and the Prairie States. Then on by Chicago and Port Huron; and on the 20th of August my long and arduous journey was complete.

HAMAMATZU CHURCH.

WE copy the following letter to the Editor of the *St. Thomas Daily Times*, from the Rev. W. G. H. McAlister, B.A., giving a description of a new church in Japan, which was built chiefly through the liberality of Amasa Wood, Esq., St. Thomas:

"The reputation of your fellow-citizen, Amasa Wood, Esq., is no longer provincial, but has extended beyond the broad Pacific to the interior of the 'Flowery Kingdom,' Japan. In the governmental division Tokaido of the Empire is the prefecture or ken of Shidzuoka. In this territory, amongst other regions there, the missionaries of the Methodist Church have a Shidzuoka District, comprising five circuits. One of these circuits is Hamamatzu, over which presides a native minister, Rev. B. Hashimoto. His circuit extends twenty-five miles each way, and includes twelve regular preaching places and several villages irregularly supplied. There was not in this whole circuit a church. This region and its needs being brought to the attention of Mr. Wood, he immediately initiated arrangements for a