



Religious Intelligence.

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS IN JAPAN.

At a time when Japan political is absorbing so much attention, it is natural that Japan religious should also be a subject of interest. The Rev. David S. Spencer, for twenty years a missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Japan, in a recent issue of *The Christian Advocate*, gives a rather clear presentation of the work done by the various Christian denominations in that land. Mr. Spencer regards the present war as the struggle of Protestant civilization against the onward movement of the Greek Church as represented by Russia. Russia, he says, stands for the Orient, Japan for the Occident. He looks upon Japan as representative of English and American Christianity and commerce.

Nevertheless, Mr. Spencer recognizes the immensity of the work Christianity has yet to do in that land. The following figures will convey some idea of the facts as they are:

"The Roman Catholic Church, under the lead of most earnest and scholarly men, claims a membership of 56,000, the Greek Catholic Church a membership of 23,000, and the Protestant families a membership of about 55,000. These Protestant believers are almost equally divided between the families known as Presbyterian, Congregational, Episcopal, and Methodist, while the Baptists have an interesting and growing work. These Protestants preach the Gospel regularly in 1,140 stations. There are some 500 organized churches, with 370 church buildings; 50,000 children are in the Sunday-schools. About 125 schools are open daily for the instruction of 12,000 students. One mission press, the Methodist Episcopal, sent out last year more than 700,000 volumes of books and tracts, more than 21,000,000 pages of Christian literature, over the broad land. The power

of the press is evident when we consider that there are more people in Japan who read the morning paper than can be found in all the Russias; where eighty-one and a half per cent. of the children of school age are enrolled in her schools, an aggregate larger than in all Russia; where the English language is a required study in all her schools, and where the government sympathizes with all the best methods of developing the mind and building strong social and political institutions."

As yet, however, we find only one in a thousand of the Japanese population who believes in the Christian faith, while in America ninety-one and two-thirds per cent. affirm such a faith. But when we consider that Protestant missionaries began their work in Japan for the first time in the year 1859, and that political events in 1888 placed Christianity at a decided disadvantage for nearly twelve years, when we remember these things, we feel that the work done there since 1899 has been, in very truth, marvellous.

BISHOP THORBURN ON WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE.

This is what this eminent authority says with exclusive reference to his own Church, the Methodist Episcopal:

"If asked for an estimate of the men needed, I should say that we should enlist at least 250 missionaries within the next twelve months. Do not be startled in that this number seems large. If you had the view which I possess of the actual extent and imperative demands of the work, you would wonder at my use of so small a number as 250. The painful fact is that we have become accustomed to figures which are altogether out of proportion to the vastness of the work which we have in hand. We should send 75 missionaries to south-